

The great Atonhymn and Psalm 104: A comparative approach

by

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Great Aton Hymn was composed in Egypt probably sometime during the reign of Pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton), who reigned from *circa* 1350 to 1334 BCE. This hymn was composed to praise and worship the Sun-god Aton. Psalm 104 is an ecstatic celebration of God's dominium over the vast panorama of creation (Alter 2007:362).

It was during the reign of Pharaoh Thutmose III (*circa* 1479-1425 BCE) that Egypt's empire reached its maximum size. He created an empire that stretched from Nubia in the South, northward through Canaan to beyond Syria, and to the north east as far as the Euphrates.

Canaan, which is situated on the narrow corridor that links Asia and Egypt, thus also belonged to the Egyptian Empire (Lemche 1999:43). The occupation of Egyptian troops in Canaanite towns is well attested in the Amarna Letters and in Egyptian inscriptions (Redford 1992:204-206).

All the important trade routes passed along this corridor. It is therefore quite possible that the Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104 could have reached the respective poets while the various trade missions were travelling up and down Canaan¹.

Hebrew poems are in their origin intricately rooted in the ancient Near Eastern world that goes back to the late Bronze Age (1600-1200 BCE)². It is quite possible that

¹ Buitendijk (1969:xxvii). Similarities of structure, phraseology and style between the Psalter and the ancient Near Eastern poetic compositions indicate only that Israel shared a common literary heritage with her neighbours.

² Alter (2007:xiii-xiv). As previously unknown texts in the various ancient Near Eastern languages have been unearthed and deciphered over the past century, it has become clear that the psalmists not only adopted the formal system of poetry from the antecedent literature of the region but also tapped their predecessors for verbal formulas, imagery, elements of mythology, and even entire sequences of lines of poetry.

Israel became acquainted with the Egyptian hymn through the world of the Bronze Age cities of Canaan.

While most commentators stress some kind of relationship between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, caution is usually expressed about why there seems to be some kind of relationship³. It is postulated that the Phoenicians, because of their close commercial and cultural contact with Egypt, brought the hymn into their own literary history, and that the Hebrews obtained it from the Phoenicians (Dahood 1970:33).

1.2 Actuality and relevance

What influence does an extra-biblical text have on a biblical text? How does the extra-biblical text influence the writer's understanding of God of the Hebrew Bible and the biblical text? Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn are both relevant to this discussion. While the psalm is part of the canon of the Hebrew Bible, the Great Aton Hymn is an extra-biblical text. Although it is not found in the Hebrew Bible, it is very similar to Psalm 104, while it also reflects many differences.

It is possible that the extra-biblical literature might assist the writer to understand the biblical text even better. How will the Great Aton Hymn help the writer to understand Psalm 104 better?

Psalm 104 brings the importance of everything that God has created to the attention of humankind. When reading Psalm 104, it is impossible not to praise God. God created humankind and then gave him everything he needed.

There is a delicate balance in nature between its living and its non-living components. God created this balance. The obvious, visible elements are easy to see, but the invisible interrelationships between everything living and non-living can only be seen by the observant with a green lens. This lens makes it possible to continually focus on God and all that he has created, in a balanced way (Augustyn 1997:250).

³ Breasted (1934:368) called attention to the extraordinary similarity between Psalm 104 and the Sun-hymn of Akhenaton. Craigie (1974:13) states that Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn are parallels of subject matter or motif, but that there is no suggestion of a direct relationship or of a translation of the Egyptian passage into Hebrew.

Psalm 104 is a Psalm of **Praise**. ‘Praise the Lord, O my soul.’ Praise may spring from God’s majesty in the world of nature, or praise in worship and adoration. Giving praise becomes one of the most elementary characteristics of being alive (Vos 2009:8).

Psalm 104 is also a hymn of **creation** (Broyles 1999:108). The ancient Israelites had no word for **nature** other than the idea of the activity of God of the Hebrew Bible himself (Alexander & Alexander 1975:14). It was God who spoke in the thunderstorm (Ps 104:7), he blessed in the rainfall (Ps 104:13). God breathed in the wind (Ps 104:3c-4a), as he judged in the earthquake (Ps 104:4b) (Alexander & Alexander 1975:14).

Psalm 104 opens and ends with **praise**. Yahweh, the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, is praised and everything that he has made is praised. Elements of **wisdom** are found in the lists of animals and plants that are **created** by Yahweh. These elements include that man is made aware of all the relationships that exist between everything that Yahweh has created. The calling for the banishment of the **wicked**, is an indication of its element of **lament**.

1.3 Problem statement

The question of Egyptian influence upon Psalm 104 was probably faced after the discovery of the fourteenth-century Great Aton Hymn at Amarna (Breasted 1934:368). What is the relationship between them? Which one was influenced by the other?

There are different theories of how the ideas that are found in the one, could have been carried to the other.⁴ One of the theories is that there had always (continuously) been direct contact between the Egyptians and the Hebrews.

Many of the motifs and themes that are found in the Great Aton Hymn and in Psalm 104 were not restricted to one particular country or even to one specific period of

⁴ Breasted (1934:367) writes, it is obvious that the Hebrews were acquainted with the great Sun hymn of Akhenaton.

history. The Great Aton Hymn made use of images that had been in circulation for many centuries. In similar manner Psalm 104 made use of these same images.⁵ Similarities of concepts and wordings like lions (v 21); darkness and sunrise (vv 20, 22); humans coming out for their day's labour (v 23), clearly prove a common background of both texts.⁶ Why are these specific motifs found in both these texts?

According to Clifford (2003: 149-150), whatever influence the Great Aton Hymn might have had on Psalm 104, and any borrowed material has been thoroughly assimilated into the faith in the Israelite God, Yahweh and transformed to express the creation mythology and Hebrew cosmology. To allege that Psalm 104 copied from the Great Aton Hymn is therefore probably less possible.⁷ Psalm 104 wants to stress that it is the Lord Yahweh that is God, and that Aton (or any other god) is not the god of life.

The Egyptians worshiped images of animal shaped objects, theriomorphic deities and celestial bodies (Grogan 2008:174), while the Israelites worshiped the living and only God. The Egyptian concept of god was completely different from that of the Hebrews. The gods of the Egyptian pantheon who played some part in the daily religious life of the Egyptians were very varied in character and infinitely various in forms. Numerically the Egyptian pantheon was immense. In pre-dynastic Egypt each district or city had its own deity or cult-object. The significance of these deities increased or diminished, according to the political fortunes of the districts or cities (Yapp 1979:129).

In Psalm 104 the psalmist worshipped the Creator of the sun, while the Great Aton Hymn worships the sun itself. Indeed, the psalm's apparent allusion to this famous hymn seems designed to call attention to this very point (Kidner 1975:368). Psalm

⁵ Baikie (1926:321). It has to be considered that such ideas as occur in both the Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104, are natural to men of all lands and times in contemplation of the wonders of nature and life. There is no need to imagine that there was borrowing on the part of the later author, who in all probability did not know that there was such a place as Akhetaton much less that there were such hymns as those to Aton.

⁶ Gerstenberger (2001:224). Cf. Broyles (1999:26). As the Bible adopts languages held in common with other people, so it appropriates imagery and figures of speech. We should not conceive of this practice as "borrowing", as though biblical writers were somehow deficient, but simply as good communication. The biblical poets spoke of new things in terms common with and understandable to other people.

⁷ Black & Rowley (1964:432); Cf. Terrien (2003:715-6). Also Gerstenberger (2001:224).

104 praises God of the universe (Gillingham 1994:270-271). The Great Aton Hymn praises the god of the world, the known world of that time which stretched from the Grecian islands in the West to the northern part of the Euphrates in the East (Breasted 1959:311).

The existence of a Sun-god was not new to Pharaoh Akhenaton. He had been brought up with a Sun-god as part of the pantheon. The Sun-god had been the object of adoration in Egypt as far back as we can trace any records at all (Baikie 1926:306).

What was new, was the worship of this Sun-god (Aton) as the only god. This Sun-god was not only the supreme and universal god in Egypt at a time (*circa* 1350-1334 BCE), but also recognized as the only god. Monotheism had arrived (Baikie 1926:314). Akhenaton declared the pantheon of gods “*persona non grata*”, and said that Aton would be the only god in Egypt and in all the “world”. Akhenaton proclaimed that his god was not a local, or a national one, but a universal god, by whom all things consisted and were maintained, and to whom worship was due from all creatures, animal or human (Baikie 1926:304). Akhenaton regarded himself to be the only representative of Aton on earth. Only he and his wife Nefertiti, could communicate with Aton.

The substance of Akhenaton’s beliefs with regard to his god is contained in the two famous Hymns to Aton, the “Great Aton Hymn” and the “Smaller/Shorter Aton Hymn” (Baikie 1926:320). When reading these two hymns, it is obvious how much Akhenaton adored his god Aton.

There is a lively academic discussion about the possible date for the composition of Psalm 104. The psalm is in any case very old (Gunkel 1967:2-13). The possibilities vary from pre-exilic,⁸ to exilic,⁹ to post-exilic.¹⁰ How can it be concluded from the

⁸ Buitendijk (1969:166-185) advocates that the author of Psalm 104 was a disciple of a prophet of the pre-exilic time. Redford (1992:387) states that Psalm 104 was written during the second quarter of the first millennium BC.

⁹ Gillingham (1994:213) states that the ‘creation’ hymns (e.g. Pss 19A and 104) could have been composed during the exile (586-520 BCE).

¹⁰ Burger (1987:30). Cf. Breasted (1934:366). There has been an immoderate tendency to regard the psalms as of very late origin, and even to place them all after the Babylonian exile.

content of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn which one was written earlier and which one later? This study is an attempt to suggest a possible setting.

The manner of writing for the Egyptians, when the Great Aton Hymn was composed, and for the Israelites when Psalm 104 was composed, also differs. At the time that Aton was written (*circa* 1350 BCE), the Egyptians were using hieroglyphics (Breasted 1959:xiii). Egyptian thinking was always in graphic form. The Egyptians did not possess the terminology for the expression of abstract thought. They thought in concrete pictures (Breasted 1959:7).

During the period 400-600 BCE the Israelites were probably writing with pen and ink on parchment. It is logical that a much more refined type of language would emerge where the thoughts of the writer could be expressed clearly. The finer nuances of a language could not be expressed in hieroglyphics.¹¹

As a result of writing in hieroglyphics we find that the Great Aton Hymn is a cumbersome piece of writing.¹² For example, the image of the ‘chick in the egg’ which is used in the hymn, was for the Egyptians writing the hymn the most absolute expression of the god’s complete and constant care for the world (Hornung 1983:200).

1.4 Aims and objectives

Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, have been chosen as the objects of research for this dissertation. When the Book of Psalms came to the attention of the general public the psalms were already divided into five books. Psalm 104 is part of Book IV in the *Psalter*.

¹¹ Buttenwieser (1969:159) infers that one of the thoughts which the two passages have in common (the lions stirring at night) is expressed with much greater effect in the psalm than in the hymn. For example in the hymn, there is a diffuse description of how mankind is wrapped in sleep; and this description separates in two parts the description that when night falls, the wild beasts are astir. The first part ‘When you set in western lightland, Earth is in darkness as if in death,’ is separated from the second part ‘Every lion comes from his den.’

¹² Buttenwieser (1969:182-3) writes that Akhenaton’s monotheism was fundamentally crude and materialistic, and that the monotheism of Psalm 104 cannot possibly have been awakened by it. The psalm’s monotheism must have arisen from a more advanced world of thought, which could have been no other than spiritual prophecy.

The Great Aton Hymn is inscribed on the Western wall of the tomb of the courtier Ay at Tell el-Amarna. Though the hymn was undoubtedly composed for recitation by the king, it was here adapted to recitation by the courier Ay (Hallo & Younger 1997:44-45).

In order to address the research problem the objectives of this research are to:

- do a literature review of studies that have been conducted on Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn;
- do an analysis and exegesis of Psalm 104 in order to assist in the interpretation of the psalm;
- do an analysis and exegesis of the Great Aton Hymn in order to assist in the interpretation of the hymn;
- compare Psalm 104 with the Great Aton Hymn. Make a synthesis by comparing their similarities and differences in a synthesis; and
- make a synthesis of results.

1.5 Methodology

This is a literature and an exegetical study of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn. A review of the literature used for this study is outlined.

For the exegesis of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, the following methodological aspects are addressed:

For the synchronic analysis the form and the structure will be considered. For the form of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, it is important to know the *genre* to which each one belongs; and why they belong to that specific *genre*. Also to be considered is how this *genre* is to be identified.

To discern the structure of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, they will be divided into stanzas which will be analyzed in detail. Their macro- as well as their micro-structures are defined. The motifs that are found in both Psalm 104 and in the Great

Aton Hymn, are identified. The reasons why these motifs occur in both texts are also discussed.

For the diachronic analysis their historical context and literary context will be studied. The historical elements of the psalm and the hymn will be studied to help with their dating. Three interpretations of Psalm 104 are compared, to show how they differ and how they agree with one another. Five translations of the Great Aton Hymn are compared to show how they differ and how they agree with one another.

The literary context is examined to find out where and how Psalm 104 fits into the *Psalter* and also into Book IV. How does Psalm 104 function within Book IV, and why does it specifically fit between Psalms 90 and 106?

1.6 Hypothesis

Although written more than five hundred years apart, Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn have much in common. Although they look very much alike, they also differ from each other in many respects. Psalm 104 is not a copy of the Great Aton Hymn. It is a composition in its own right, but it did make use of the same ancient Near Eastern traditions, motives and images that the author of the Great Aton Hymn had also used. The Great Aton Hymn is most probably older than Psalm 104.

1.7 Chapter division

In *chapter one* a road map is drawn of the work that will be undertaken in this study. This includes the background, actuality and relevance, the problem statement, the aims and objectives, the methodology and the hypothesis of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn.

The literature relating to Psalm 104 and to the Great Aton Hymn will be analysed in *chapter two*. Information regarding their respective backgrounds will be outlined, to investigate why Psalm 104 is located in Book IV of the *Psalter*, and why the Great Aton Hymn is only found hewn out of rock at Tell el-Amarna. A literature review will help with the comparison of their respective stanzas and motifs. *Chapter three*

comprises a synchronic and diachronic analysis of Psalm 104. For the synchronic analysis the form and the structure of the psalm are dealt with. For the diachronic analysis the historical context of the psalm is discussed. The literary context of Psalm 104 is investigated.

The material found *inside* the psalm is the exegesis of the written text in the psalm i.e. the synchronic approach. Three different translations of Psalm 104 are compared with each other to see where and how they agree, and how they differ from each other. To what type of literature does this psalm belong? Where and why does this psalm fit into the whole book of Psalms, as well as into Book IV, and why between Psalms 103 and 105? For the micro structural study the psalm is divided into stanzas, and each stanza discussed in detail.

Finally the material relating to the *background* of the psalm, the historical element (the diachronic approach) will be discussed. What will help to try to determine the date of the composition of this psalm? Was it composed before, after or in the exile? In *chapter four* an analysis will be made of the relevant material found *in front* of the hymn, material found *inside* the hymn, and material found *behind* the hymn.

The material found *in front* of the hymn is the reader's perspective of the hymn. Does the fact that it is an Egyptian hymn influence the attitude taken toward the hymn? The material found *inside* the hymn is the exegesis of the written material of the hymn i.e. the synchronic approach. Five different translations of this hymn are compared with each other to see how they agree and how they differ from each other. To what type of literature does this hymn belong? What motifs are found in the hymn and why are some of them repeated? For the micro structural study, the hymn is divided into stanzas, and each stanza discussed in detail. Finally the material relating to the *background* of the hymn, the historical elements (the diachronic approach) will be discussed. What will help to try to determine why it has so much material in common with Psalm 104. Why was the hymn composed and by whom?

Chapter five is a synthesis. In this concluding summary the results arrived at in chapters three and four will be compared with each other. Their similarities and differences will be compared. In *chapter six* a conclusion will be arrived at.

1.8 Orthography and terminology

1.8.1 Orthography

During the course of this study the following three Bible translations are consulted: New International Version (NIV), New International Version readers (NIV readers) and Revised Standard Version (RSV). For the study of the Great Aton Hymn, five translations are compared, i.e. the translations done by Davies (1908:29-31), Breasted (1934:281-286), Williams R J (1958:145-148), Lichtheim (1997:44-46) and Hays (2014:23, 358 -361).¹³

For the referencing in the text as well as for the bibliography, the adapted Harvard Reference System was used. The list of abbreviations found in the New International Version of the Bible was adhered to. The abbreviations of the books of the Bible comply with the list found in the New International Version of the Bible.

When referring to an entire line in Psalm 104 this is regarded as a *verse* in this dissertation. When referring to a part of a line in Psalm 104 this is regarded as a *stich* in this study.

1.8.2 Terminology

The following terms are used during the course of this discussion.

Alternating parallelism ABB`A`, where lines 1 and 3 correspond or balance each other, and lines 2 and 4 correspond or balance each other (Willis 1987:56).

Anthropocentric Human – centred.

Antithetical parallelism Where the second stich says exactly the opposite to the first stich (Burden 1986:50).

Chiasm Is formed when two stichs form a cross over pattern.

Concatenatio An ongoing chain (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:39)

Cosmology A study of the origins and eventual fate of the universe.

¹³ CB Hays (2014:357-361) and RJ Williams (1958:145-148) are the only two scholars who number the lines of the Great Aton Hymn.

Diachronic	Concerned with phenomena as they change through time.
Emblematic parallelism	Where one of the lines illustrates the other line by a metaphor or a simile (like/as) (Sugden 1928:154)
Geocentric	Earth – centred.
Hendiadys	An expression of a complex idea by using two words, usually nouns, connected with & (Watson 1995:324).
Hyperbole	A conscious exaggeration to gain effect.
Inclusio	To create a frame by placing similar material at the beginning and end of a section.
Introverted parallelism	Where the first line is answered by the fourth line, and the second line by the third line (Sugden 1928:154).
Merism	When a ‘part’ is mentioned but means the ‘whole’, thus ‘part’ of a ‘whole’. E.g. foundations = whole earth.
Metaphor	The meaning is conferred through images rather than literally. An implied comparison in which a word or phrase ordinarily used for one thing is applied to another.
Metonymy	The property of a thing is mentioned rather than the thing itself.
Monolatry	The exclusive worship of one god without excluding the existence of others.
Monotheism	Belief in the existence of one God.
Mythology	A collection of myths or a study of myths.
Parallelism	A couplet where the second line of the couplet is parallel to the first.
Personification	Something which is not alive, is referred to as if it were a person.
Polytheism	The belief in, or worship of, multiple gods.
Pun	Words of same sound with different meanings; play on words.
Rhetoric	The art of persuasion by means of language.
Simile	Is formed by the presence of the word “as” in a sentence.
Stanza	A subunit within a poem (Watson W G E 1995: 161).
Stich	Is a synonym for the word “line”.
Synchronic	Events of a particular time, without reference to their historical context.

Synonymous parallelism The second stich repeats the first stich.

Synthetic parallelism The idea expressed in the first stich is expanded, elaborated, explained or taken further by that of the second stich.

Theriomorphic Having an animal form.

Theophany The appearance of Yahweh.

Tradition Traditions are historical motifs and images that were used by the Israelites, on which they based their actions in the past, in the present and in the future.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter a literature review of major trends in the books and articles that were consulted during this study are discussed. This discussion is based on the research problems that were identified.

2.2 Several research foci

The *first research problem* has to do with the possible dates when Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn could have been composed.

There is much speculation about when Psalm 104 was written. It could have been during the pre-exilic, the exile itself (586- 538 BC)¹⁴ or during the post-exilic period. Many arguments have been put forward and much discussion has taken place. However, seeing that there is no proof for any of the three possible periods, it remains a matter of conjecture.¹⁵

The following writers all agree that Psalm 104 is of *pre-exilic* origin, although each one has a different argument for his viewpoint. Craigie (1974:19) conjectures that Psalm 104 in its original setting is to be associated with the dedication of the temple constructed during the reign of Solomon; while Day (2000:99) argues that the use of the *Chaoskampf* motif implies that Psalm 104 was well known in the pre-exilic period; and Buitenwieser (1969:165) reasons that Ezekiel, while copying 31:13 from Psalm 104 made a mistake as birds do not live in trees that have been felled. Since Ezekiel 31 dates from the first decade of the Exile, it follows that Psalm 104 must be pre-exilic.

¹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonian_captivity Babylonian Captivity 2015.02.03 11:51 AM

¹⁵ Gillingham (1994:208) is of the opinion that given such a vast time-span (of some eight hundred years) for the composition of the hymnic psalms, it is clearly impossible to date with certainty the hymns within the Psalter. According to Wilson GH (1985a:84) the historical allusions which the psalms contain are not sufficiently precise in most instances to command universal agreement over the dating of the individual psalms. Also Berlin (2005:75) and De-Claissse-Walford (2006:456) suggest that this psalm could have been written during any one of the three possible periods.

Habel (2001:92) suggests that Psalm 104 was most likely written in the Babylonian *exile*. Having come from arid hill country to the fertile lands around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the Israelites would have been impressed by the abundance and goodness of this land. Gillingham (1994:208) states that Psalm 104 celebrates this goodness.

Some time during the *post-exilic* period the Hebrew language ceased to be a spoken language.¹⁶ A feasible factor for determining the time of composition, could be this decline of the Hebrew language.¹⁷ There came a time when ‘compositions of such exalted Hebrew style¹⁸ as Psalm 104’ could simply no longer be produced (Buttenwieser 1969:xvii, 10 and 18). In spite of the Hebrew language not being a living language after *circa* 250 BCE there are still writers who postulate a post-exilic origin for the composition of Psalm 104.¹⁹ While Breasted (1934:366) says that there is an immoderate tendency to regard the Psalms as of very late origin, and even to place them all after the Hebrew exile.

As a result of the language question mentioned above, this writer favours the pre-exilic or exilic periods as possible eras for the origin of Psalm 104. *Contra* the opinions of Seybold and Von Rad.²⁰

Depending on which argument is used for determining the possible time of composing Psalm 104, it could be of pre-exilic, exilic or post-exilic origin.

¹⁶ Gunkel (1998 :322) and Buttenwieser (1969 :18) are both of the opinion that because the Hebrew Language ceased to be a spoken language, the hymns that were written from the beginning of the fifth century BCE, utilized known expressions, but that they completely lack the power and energy of the older poetry. Thus Psalm 104 which is poetry of the highest level (Seybold 1990:70) could not have been written during the post-exilic period.

¹⁷ Buttenwieser (1969:xvii, 10-18). A language being organic is capable of growth and development only so long as it is part and parcel of the life and soul of a people. By the second half of the third century BCE the Hebrew language had ceased to be a living tongue. It had entered upon a stage of rapid decadence.

¹⁸ From as far back as 1882 the beauty of Psalm 104 has been sung by amongst others [Perowne (1882:233) and Robertson (1898:172)]. They both write about this wonderful psalm of nature. Cf. Seybold (1990:70), who regards Psalm 104 as poetry of the highest level, and according to Kidner (1975:367) the sharpness of detail and sustained vigour of thought put this psalm among the giants.

¹⁹ While Prinsloo (1991:152) is of the opinion that Psalm 104 should be dated post-exilic he also says that no definite conclusion can be made regarding its origin.

²⁰ For Seybold (1990:188) the motif of the dragon indicates a post-exilic composition. Cf. Von Rad (1979:360), who looks at utterances such as ‘the earth trembles’ and ‘the mountains smoke’ to indicate the later hymns.

According to Weigall (1911:157) the Great Aton Hymn was composed during Akhenaton's ninth or tenth year of reign. Many different dates are given for the period of Akhenaton's reign. For example: 1350–1334 BCE,²¹ 1353-1336 BCE²² or 1368–1352 BCE²³ Depending on which dates are used Akhenaton ruled for sixteen or seventeen years.²⁴ This means that the Great Aton Hymn could have been composed during the years 1342-1341 BCE, 1345-1344 BCE or 1360-1359 BCE,²⁵ when Akhenaton was twenty or twenty-one years of age.

The *second research problem* to be discussed has to do with the reciprocating influence that Psalm 104 and Great Aton Hymn, could have had, or could not have had on each other. Many writers are of the opinion that there is a great deal of similarity between these two songs,²⁶ despite the fact that they seem to have been written many hundreds of years apart.²⁷

Was the Great Aton Hymn influenced by Psalm 104? Was Psalm 104 influenced by the Great Aton Hymn or not? If Psalm 104 was influenced by the Great Aton Hymn was this influence direct or indirect? In which way did Psalm 104 make use of the Great Aton Hymn? And finally, by which route could knowledge of the Great Aton Hymn have travelled to Psalm 104? Each of these questions are discussed in turn.

Was the Great Aton Hymn influenced by Psalm 104? To find a possible answer for this problem it is necessary to go back to the two oldest recorded songs that are found in the Old Testament. These were composed by Moses (Exod 15:1-18) and Miriam

²¹ http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/educational_site/ancient_texts/e... 2013/11/06 03:56 PM.

²² Samson (1972:4-7).

²³ <http://www.maat.sofiatopia.org/aten.htm> 2013/11/06 04:19 PM.

²⁴ <http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/akhenaten.html> 2015/01/30 11:17 AM.

²⁵ Weigall (1911:157).

²⁶ Hornung (1999:122) finds the resemblances between the long Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104 striking. According to Day (2013:212) there is currently no consensus amongst scholars about how exactly we should explain the parallels between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn. Also Clifford (2003:149) finds the two strikingly similar.

²⁷ Dion (2009:61-62) finds it hard to explain this relationship between the Great Aton Hymn of the fourteenth century, and Psalm 104 which may not be older than the fifth century. Because (to Dion) it is a fact that somehow the biblical writer had access to this source of inspiration, and used it. Sanders JA (1987:34) again warns that extreme caution should be used in treating ancient Near Eastern parallels to biblical material; The one has only in modern times been retrieved from some very ancient and remote moment in antiquity, while the other is embodied in a canonical and cultic collection that has survived the 'repetition' and handling of many generations, before becoming stabilized in the form we have it.

(Exod 15:20-21) after the Israelites had crossed the Reed Sea.²⁸ The crossing of the Reed Sea possibly took place during the reign of Rameses II (*circa* 1279-1212 BCE).²⁹ This Pharaoh was from the nineteenth dynasty, and was the generally admitted pharaoh of the exodus. While Akhenaton was from the eighteenth dynasty.

Akhenaton, who probably composed the Great Aton Hymn,³⁰ could have reigned from *circa* 1350 to 1334 BCE.³¹ It is not sure when Psalm 104 was composed, but we do know that it was not before the songs of Moses and Miriam. Psalm 104 was therefore composed after the songs of Moses and Miriam, by which time the Great Aton Hymn had already seen the light.³² The Great Aton Hymn was therefore probably not influenced by Psalm 104.

The second question in this section has to do with the influence that the Great Aton Hymn could have had on Psalm 104. *Was Psalm 104 influenced by the Great Aton Hymn, or was it not?*

Day (2013:213-223) argues that apart from the few verses (20-30) that are somewhat similar, there is no further proof that the psalmist of Psalm 104 was actually influenced by the Great Aton Hymn.³³ Or it can be argued, as many have, that Psalm 104 was indeed influenced by the Great Aton Hymn.³⁴ If it is agreed that this is possible it still has to be seen if this *influence was direct or indirect*.

²⁸ <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/miriam-bible> Miriam: Bible. 2015/02/02 03:17 PM.

²⁹ <http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/dynasties.htm> Ancient Egyptian History: Dynasties. 2015/02/02 03:03 PM. Cf. Aharoni & Avi-Yonah (1979:40).

³⁰ See first research problem. The Great Aton Hymn could have been composed during the years *circa* 1342-1341 BCE, *circa* 1345-1344 BCE or *circa* 1360-1359 BCE. Although many different dates are given for his reign by the different historians, the duration remains 16 to 17 years.

³¹ http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/educational_site/ancient_texts/e... 2013/11/06 03:56 PM.

³² Seybold (1990:192). The Biblical psalms are for the most part far younger than the corresponding documents of the Egyptian culture. The interdependence if one exists, or rather, the line of influence, will therefore always be one-directional.

³³ According to Dion (2009:59), after the enthusiasm of the first discovery of the Great Aton Hymn in 1905, more cautious or even quite negative views of the relationship between this Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104 have come to prevail. Cf. Seybold (1990:207), who is of the opinion that the two poems are autonomous constructions, each with its own importance.

³⁴ Dion (2009:48) gives both views by stating here that ever since the discovery of the Great Aton Hymn, much scholarly attention has been given to the influence of this Egyptian poem over Psalm 104. Cf. Terrien (2003:715) who says that the influence of the Akhenaton prayer (on Ps 104) is undeniable. Also Longman & Enns (2008:602) who argue that although there is some connection between these two songs, with the Egyptian exercising some kind of influence on the construction of the Hebrew, there are also indications of other influences on Psalm 104.

It is possible that the Great Aton Hymn could have been sent to all the Egyptian provinces³⁵ during the reign of Akhenaton. In which case the author of Psalm 104 could have had direct access³⁶ to the Egyptian hymn, a few hundred years after it had been composed. However as there is no proof of this, it is improbable that Psalm 104 could have had *direct contact* with the Great Aton Hymn.³⁷

There is a possibility that Psalm 104 could have had *indirect* access to the Great Aton Hymn, by means of the use of the ‘common poetry’ of the ancient Near East. Israel was throughout her entire history culturally and politically a part of the larger world around her (Bright 1967:127). It is therefore possible that these countries of the ancient Near East exercised some kind of influence on each other. This probably also included influencing their poetry.³⁸ The people in the various countries of this area did not live in a vacuum,³⁹ they shared a common⁴⁰ literary heritage.

In the next question the manner of *how Psalm 104 made use of the Great Aton Hymn* is investigated. The poet of Psalm 104 could have made use of the Great Aton Hymn in different ways. If he physically had the hymn in sight or even if he had just heard

³⁵ Buitenvieser (1969:162-3) states that Canaan was an Egyptian province and as such under the direct influence of Egypt at the very time that Akhenaton wrote his Great Aton Hymn, and had it broadcast throughout his empire. Day (2013:222) explains it as follows: “The cult of Aton only had prominence during the few brief years of Akhenaton and his immediate successors; after that it fell into oblivion. So it is only during that period that we can easily envisage the Great Aton Hymn of being passed onto the Levant.”

³⁶ Weigall (1911:156-7) and Breasted (1934:368) both argue that in the face of the remarkable similarity between the Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104, one can hardly doubt that there is a direct connection between the two compositions. According to Mowinckel (1962:178) it is possible that Psalm 104 may even have been directly influenced by the Great Aton Hymn. Also Buitenvieser (1969:161) wonders at the possibility of the Great Aton Hymn being re-discovered in the days of the poet of Psalm 104, although he concedes that there is no knowledge of this having happened.

³⁷ Berlin (2005:75) is of the opinion that most scholars today doubt any direct relationship, ascribing the similarities in language between the two poems to the similar themes of the two. Cf. Terrien (2003:715) concedes that the influence of the Great Aton Hymn is undeniable, but questions whether the poet of Psalm 104 was directly acquainted with the hymn. Terrien bases this idea of his on the fact that the poet of Psalm 104 ignored the splendid Egyptian line: “Thou didst create the world according to thy desire” (line 54).

³⁸ Gerstenberger (2001:406) states that there is an intimate affinity between Israel’s poems and those of the neighbouring people and cultures.

³⁹ When Psalm 104:1-4, 32 acclaims Yahweh as the ‘true God of the skies’ is this a case of the Bible ‘borrowing’ from pagan culture? Broyles (1999:25) says we should not conceive of this practice as borrowing, but simply as good communication.

⁴⁰ According to Gerstenberger (2001:224) the similarities of concepts and wordings extending over parts of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn clearly prove a common background of both texts. Cf. Contra David (1982:27) however who is of the opinion that it is pure speculation to argue that the similarity between the two poems is as a result of a common source. Also Feinberg (1947:294), who argues that although the Hebrew psalmody is seen as a part of a world literature, yet it has the inspiration of the Spirit of God.

of it,⁴¹ he could have used it as a *model*⁴² to glean ideas⁴³, but not use any of the lines or words.

The poet could however have *copied (borrowed) the lines and words*⁴⁴ and used them *just as they were*. Or he could have (*copied*) borrowed the lines and then *adapt*⁴⁵ them to fit in with the Hebrew concept of God.⁴⁶ Feinberg (1947:294) maintains that ‘similarities arise, not from borrowing, but from the same background of world thought.’

The last question to be discussed in this section is to look at the *various routes* by means of which Egyptian thoughts could have been incorporated into Hebrew psalmody. These routes could have been one or more of the following: through the mediation of Canaan or Phoenicia, through the writing schools and scribes found in Egypt and in Israel, or through knowledge of other Egyptian poems.

During the period of Akhenaton’s reign, Canaan was a province of Egypt.⁴⁷ The el-Amarna letters show that many rulers throughout Canaan and Western Asia were in

⁴¹ Weigall (1911:156-7) wonders whether Psalm 104 is not derived from Akhenaton’s original poem. Day (2000:101) suggests that Akhenaton’s hymn to the sun is Psalm 104’s basic source.

⁴² Buitendijk (1969:158) maintains, that the view that Psalm 104 was modelled after the famous hymn, grossly exaggerates the real relation between the two poems. This view is derived from a mechanical comparison rather than one based upon appreciation of inner meaning.

⁴³ Craigie (1974:21) suggests that the fact that Psalm 104 finds parallels with the Great Aton Hymn as well as with other Egyptian sun hymns may well indicate an association of ideas rather than a literary relationship.

⁴⁴ According to Anderson, B W (1983:44) Psalm 104 is a striking example of the borrowing of hymnic elements. It has long been recognized that this psalm, both in form and content, is related to the beautiful Great Aton Hymn. Clifford (2003:149) is of the opinion that Psalm 104:19-23 seems to draw on the mythology surrounding the Great Aton Hymn.

⁴⁵ Although Dunn (2009:265) and Weigall (1928:52) both agree that Psalm 104 is simply an adaptation of the Great Aton Hymn, Seybold (1990:192-3) and Alter (2007:366) on the other hand both agree that this psalm does not have to be an adaptation. Alter (2007:366) stresses that because poetry in all eras works through allusion, it is hardly necessary to understand this poem as an adaptation of Akhenaton’s hymn.

⁴⁶ Bright (1967:127) suggests that Israel’s poetic forms, her psalms and her wisdom, all had their parallels among neighbouring peoples. Israel borrowed only what she could assimilate. ... and what was borrowed was adapted to Yahwistic faith. Buitendijk (1969:182-3) agrees with this when he writes: Psalm 104 though influenced by the Great Aton Hymn, is a new creation, transcending the hymn in religious spirit as well as poetic quality. Whatever the author appropriated from the hymn he recast and transformed to make it harmonize with his own spiritual outlook, in particular with the monotheism that stirred his soul.

⁴⁷ Moran (1987:xxvi) remarks that the correspondence (of the Amarna letters) with Canaan reflects the Egyptian administration of its territories in Canaan. Cf Aharoni & Avi-Yonah (1979:49).

frequent contact with the Egyptian court⁴⁸ as well as with the rulers from Ugarit.⁴⁹ The geographical area that was known as Canaan (from *circa* 3500-1200 BCE)⁵⁰ was later known as Phoenicia (*circa* 1200-539 BCE). The Phoenicians are widely thought to have originated from the earlier Canaanite inhabitants of the region. Thus, if the poet of Psalm 104 came to know of the Great Aton Hymn after *circa* 1200 BCE then the Phoenicians could also have been the intermediaries.⁵¹

The writing schools and the scribes in Egypt and Western Asia (Canaan, Phoenicia and Palestine) could no doubt also have played a role in transmitting ideas between these countries.⁵² The last possibility to be discussed, that could have played a role in acquainting the Hebrew poets with Egyptian Poetry, is the influence of other Egyptian poems.⁵³

A most extreme and fantastic view about the composition of Psalm 104, is to be found in the contention that Akhenaton himself was the author of the psalm (Blackman 1926:177). Although Baikie (1926:321) says that such an idea is simply to talk nonsense, this view was championed by Weigall (1911:156).⁵⁴

Hart (1999:45) however cautions that much more historical evidence and proof of transmission are required even to begin to formulate a theory of interconnection

⁴⁸ Kraus (1989:298) says we must assume that the cities of Canaan of the late Bronze Age were well acquainted with the Egyptian ideas of the Amarna time.

⁴⁹ Craigie (1983b:149-150) reminds that there is reference to Ugarit in various letters from the archives of el-Amarna. Though the evidence is indirect, they establish nevertheless that Ugarit was well-known in both Egypt and in Canaan.

⁵⁰ Aharoni & Avi-Yonah (1979:22).

⁵¹ Dahood (1970:33) postulated that the Phoenicians because of their close commercial and cultural contact with Egypt, brought the Great Aton Hymn into their own literary history and that the Hebrews obtained it from the Phoenicians. Gressmann (1926:18-19) argues that Psalm 104:20-30 came into Hebrew psalmody through the medium of Phoenicia. Hence the mention of the Lebanon and its Cedars. Also Terrien (2003:715), who states that in all probability the poet of Psalm 104 perhaps learned the whole Egyptian hymn from the Phoenicians.

⁵² Mowinckel (1962:189) advocates that the knowledge of the Great Aton Hymn could have been carried to the Hebrews during the time of David and Solomon. They entered into diplomatic contact with other kingdoms, and had scribes for their correspondence. The scribes had to learn the languages of the surrounding nations and in this way they could also have become acquainted with the literature of those nations.

⁵³ Day (2013:224) argues against this idea, because he says the recent attempts to claim that the Atonistic imagery was mediated to Psalm 104 through later Egyptian hymns to Amun-Re are unconvincing since no truly impressive parallels have been found.

⁵⁴ Weigall (1911:156) was of the opinion that considering Akhenaton's peculiar ability and originality, it was quite possible that he could have been the author of Psalm 104.

between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn. As yet such suggestions are purely speculative.

The *third research problem*. Look at the content of each text (Ps 104 and the Great Aton Hymn). Was it composed 'in one sitting' or process, or did it gradually come together? Did the text gradually grow to where we find it today?

The psalms are poetic compositions made up of units. These units can be employed in various ways. For example, one unit in which the creator, Yahweh, is praised may develop into a creation psalm (Westermann 1989:13-14).

Many psalms were destined to repeated use as cultic hymns, they were therefore subject to the modifications of language and style which would take place in the course of history (Weiser 1961:25). As a result of this a form of analysis was developed whereby a re-reading ('relecture') could be discerned (Seybold 1990:107). This means that the modification of an original psalm, or the addition of verses, are proposed as indications of the process of 'relecture'. By this process, a psalm that originally had a very specific purpose, might be modified for different use in a later life (Craigie 1983a:46-7). This later stage of the psalm is not a new theology, but a growth and development from the initial nucleus (Craigie 1983a:41).

The suggestion of Spieckermann (1989:32-46,) concerning the developmental stages of Psalm 104, is noteworthy. According to him there is a short pre-exilic original version embedded in Psalm 104⁵⁵, and an expanded post-exilic version. The basic pre-exilic version consists of three parts (I:1a -4; II:10f, 14-19, 20-23; III:24a b, 27-29a, 30, 33). Psalm 104 became a creation psalm by means of extensive redactional labour during the post-exilic period (vv 5-7, (8), 9, 12f, 19, 24ab, 25f, 29b, 31f, 34, 35a) (Spieckermann 1989:48).

Seybold (1990:106) points out that a whole series of additions appear to come together at the end of Psalm 104 (vv 31-35). From verse 31 the structure becomes loose and isolated requests pile up.

⁵⁵ Psalm 104 is in part very old (Mc Carthy 1967:99).

For the development of the Great Aton Hymn turn to chapter four; see the diachronic analysis.

2.3 Synthesis

This dissertation is addressing the research problems in chapters three and four. The *first research problem* has to do with the possible dates when Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn could have been composed. The *second research problem* has to do with the reciprocating influence that Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, could have had, or could not have had, on each other. The *third research problem*. By looking at the content of each text (Ps 104 and the Great Aton Hymn), was it composed ‘in one sitting’ or process, or did it gradually come together? Did the text gradually grow to where we find it today?

CHAPTER 3

PSALM 104 - DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC ANALYSES

3.1 Introduction

This part of the study is divided into a diachronic analysis, and a synchronic analysis of Psalm 104, as well as the third part of this chapter, which is a discussion of traditions in the tradition history (*Traditionsgeschichte*). For the diachronic analysis the historical, the social (customs) and the cultural (values and norms) contexts, as well as the literary and the rhetorical contexts are examined. The historical elements of Psalm 104 is analysed to help with its dating. The literary context is determined to find out where and how Psalm 104 fits into Book IV as well as into the *Psalter*. Also, how does Psalm 104 function within Book IV?

3.2 Diachronic analysis

3.2.1 Historical aspects⁵⁶

3.2.1.1 The *Psalter*⁵⁷

Psalm 104 is today part of Book IV of the *Psalter*. According to Wilson G H (1992:136) the *Psalter* has an intricate and difficult shape. How did the *Psalter* come to be formed? How and when and by whom? We are still far from being able to explain exactly how the *Psalter* reached its present arrangement and size. Cheyne (1888:xiii) thinks that it is probable that the five-fold division developed out of an earlier four-fold division. While Snaith (1951:19) reckons that there is a certain amount of evidence which suggests that at the time of the Chronicler the official

⁵⁶ Dever (2001b:16) defines a text as a product of a particular time, place, culture and language that must be placed back in that context to be understood at all. Cf. Birch (2001:295), who explains that it is enriching and illuminating to discover as much as possible about the social, historical, and theological contexts out of which ancient texts arise.

⁵⁷ Hossfeld & Steiner (2013:241) express the importance of the unified order of the Book of Psalms in its early reception history by referring to St Jerome who refers in his metaphor of the *Psalter* as *domus magna* --- a great house. Cf. Gerstenberger (2001:411), who states that the *Psalter* became either a prayer-book for the early Jewish congregation, or a scroll for private edification by meditating on the Word of Yahweh.

Psalter ended at Psalm 106, Westermann (1981:33) suggests that the original *Psalter* may have been Psalms 1-119.

The *Psalter* was composed⁵⁸ by putting together⁵⁹ smaller collections of psalms⁶⁰ as well as single psalms. Delitzsch (1952a:21) explains the ordering⁶¹ of the psalms in the *Psalter* by comparing it with an old Semitic mode of arranging things in according to the principle of homogeneousness.⁶² Although many of the psalms were composed⁶³ in the pre-exilic period, the *Psalter* dates to the post-exilic period (Bandstra 2009:393).

By looking at certain markers it can be seen that originally (way, way back) the *Psalter* was divided into three books⁶⁴. One of the markers is the use of our Lord's names, *Elohīm*⁶⁵ and *Yahweh*⁶⁶. Another indicator is the Hallelujah Psalms⁶⁷.

⁵⁸ The different writers put the date for the final stage of the compilation of the *Psalter*, anywhere between 500 BCE and 100 BCE. Mc Cullough (1955:10) presumes the date to be somewhere between 400 and 200 BCE. Cf. De-Claisse-Walford (2006:456), who suggests that the *Psalter* was most likely shaped into the form in which we have it in the Bible by the late post-exilic community. While Futato (2009:6) postures the date to be by the end of the fourth century BCE.

⁵⁹ Westermann (1989:8) says the collecting together of the psalms was a gradual process that lasted for centuries. Cf. Gillingham (2008:7) who explains that the compiling and the editing of the *Psalter* was being undertaken by scribes and priests living in Judah. Also Keil & Delitzsch (1871:842) reckon that the *Psalter* bears the impress of one ordering mind.

⁶⁰ Oesterley & Robinson (1958:186) are of the opinion that the *Psalter* was originally formed by gathering together a number of independent collections. One of these collections could have been the group of Hallelujah Psalms, and Psalm 104 is one of these psalms.

⁶¹ Westermann (1989:8) states that the 150 psalms have no logical order. Futato (2009:16) argues that "the idea that the psalms are a random anthology" is being replaced by the conviction that the *Psalter* has been intentionally shaped, so that the whole communicates a message that is crucial for interpreting the parts. Also Whybray (1996:12), Mc Cann (1992:119), and Howard D M (1999:1-4) suggest that the final arrangement of the *Psalter* was not haphazard and random. While De-Claisse-Walford (1997:32) is of the opinion that the exact process by which the *Psalter* came into existence is lost to the pages of history.

⁶² For example, the hand and the hollow of the hand, the water and the fish, the back and the front of the head have been placed together. In like manner the psalms follow one another according to their relationship as manifested by prominent external and internal marks. Contra to this opinion, Gunkel (1998:2) stated that although sometimes related psalms stand together in the collection of the *Psalter*, more commonly, no internal relationship can be discovered between neighbouring psalms.

⁶³ Anderson A A (1972a:30) suggests that it is very likely that most psalms were composed by skilled poets. Eidevall (2010:21) agrees that the poets and scribes of the psalms were no peasants, shepherds or hunters. Their perspective was priestly, temple-oriented and city centred. Also Ridderbos (1963:51) asks why should the Hebrew poets not have been trained poets?

⁶⁴ Beckwith (1995:10) suggests that prior to its five book division, the *Psalter* was a composition of three books only.

⁶⁵ According to Campbell (2001:9) *Elohim* is the common noun for God, while Routledge (2013:83) says that *Yahweh* is the personal name of God, revealed to Moses (Exod 3:14-15: 6:3).

⁶⁶ According to Keil & Delitzsch (1871:838); and Oesterley & Robinson (1958:186); and Beckwith (1995:9) and Wilson G H (1985a:197) a group of 42 Psalms (42-83) (books II and III) is designated the Elohistic *Psalter* because here the regular designation of the deity is *Elohīm*. This group has on its one side Psalms 1-41 (book I) and on its other side Psalms 90-150 (Books VI and V), that use the name

At this stage Psalm 104 was then a part of Book III of the *Psalter*.

At a later stage the redactor(s)⁶⁸ subdivided⁶⁹ the *Psalter* into five books⁷⁰, probably with the deliberate intention of matching the Five Books of Moses⁷¹. This division into five Books brings to light certain movements within the *Psalter*⁷². Apart from the movement mentioned in footnote 72, Brown (2009:664) notes the presence of two other movements, that is, the thematic shift from earthly to divine kingship, again with Psalm 89 as the dividing point as well as the decreasing number of psalms attributed to David, from the beginning to the end of the *Psalter*⁷³.

Yahweh predominantly. Sabourin (1969:7) refers individually to these three collections as the Yahwistic *Psalter*, the Elohist *Psalter* and the later Yahwistic collection. The reason the authors of the psalms preferred *Elohim* over *Yahweh*, or vice versa, is no longer evident.

⁶⁷ Beckwith (1995:7) states that the transition between Books IV and V comes in the middle of the Hallelujah Psalms. Psalms 104-106 at the end of Book IV are three of these psalms, but the rest are in Book V (Pss 111-113, 115-117, 135, 146-150). Zenger (2011:39-41) explains that Psalms 101-103 are the first appearance of a group of Hallelujah Psalms in the *Psalter*. Also Miller (2003:89), Oesterley & Robinson (1958:186) and Sabourin (1969:7) all refer to this group as such. And Wilson G H (1985a:16) is of the opinion that the function of these Hallelujah Psalms is that they serve to mark divisions within Books IV and V.

⁶⁸ According to Moll (1960:11) the division into five books was certainly the work of the last editor/redactor. Gillingham (1998:218) is of the same opinion.

⁶⁹ Although according to Bullock (1988:115) the antiquity of this division cannot be established. While Mc Caw & Motyer (1970:447) say that it was begun as early as 300 BCE.

⁷⁰ While Wilson G H (1992:130) can find no convincing explanation for the purpose of the fivefold division of the *Psalter*, Anderson A A (1972a:27) suggests that the reason for this division is no longer known. However Hayes (1998:154) argues that this division was probably to be understood as an editing device employed by the final redactors. Anderson R D (1994:225) reasons that the division has not been imposed upon the *Psalter*, but that it is inherent to its formation. Oesterley & Robinson (1958:185), as well as Dahood (1965:xxx) and Westermann (1989:8) all refer to this as an 'artificial' division.

⁷¹ According to Purkiser (1967:128) and also Wilson G H (1985a:200) we first learn of this tradition from the rabbis in the midrash on the psalms (or commentary on the psalms). Craigie (1983a:31) suggests that there is no firm internal correspondences or analogies that can be established between the five Books of Psalms and the Five Books of Moses.

⁷² According to Wilson G H (1985a:23; 1992:130), Gerstenberger (2001:412) and Bellinger (2012:33) this five-fold *Psalter* reflects firstly the move from individual and lament psalms, dominant in the first part of the Book, to community and praise psalms, in the latter part of the Book. Hossfeld & Steiner (2013:246) explain that Psalm 89 is recognized as the main caesura in the *Psalter*; a turning point from lament to praise. Also according to Futato (2007:80) this movement in the *Psalter* is not a random anthology, it is proof that the psalms have been purposefully arranged. And Brown (2009:664) argues that these movements tie this collection of separate collections into a book. Also Dillard & Longman (1994:219) suggest that another movement that can be detected is from the relatively infrequent occurrence of hymns at the beginning of the *Psalter*, to hymns being the majority at the end of the *Psalter*.

⁷³ Sanders J A (1967:13) says that it is very clear that attribution to Davidic authorship did not come after the *Psalter* was fixed, but was applied to a smaller collection of psalms and to individual psalms over a long period of time.

One of the pointers that was used for the division into five books was the doxologies that are found at the end of certain psalms⁷⁴. There is today no consensus about whether these doxologies were always a part of the psalms to which they are attached⁷⁵, or whether they were added at a later stage⁷⁶. And if they were added at a later stage, why were they added? Could it have been to assist with the dividing of the *Psalter* into Books?

According to Wilson G H (1993:72-4) in this process of forming a five-fold structure there were probably two distinct periods of editorial activity⁷⁷, resulting in two segments, the first segment including Books I to III⁷⁸, and the second segment including Books IV and V⁷⁹. Books I to III were already fixed while the last two Books were still in a state of flux (Brown 2009:664). These two sections can be respectively called the *Davidic Psalter* and the *Yahwistic Psalter* (Koorevaar

⁷⁴ Howard D M (1999:5) notes that the first four books of the *Psalter* are each concluded by a psalm ending with a short doxology. The first three conform with regard to their endings, 'amen and amen', while Psalm 106:48 does not end this way.

⁷⁵ Wilson G H (1985a:82,140) suggests that the doxologies are integral parts of the compositions they accompany. These particular psalms could even have been selected for their particular positions because they already possessed a suitable doxology. Anderson R D (1994:225) and Sanders P (2010:686) agree with Wilson that the doxologies at the ends of the five books should be seen as integral parts of the psalms they are attached to, and not as editorial additions. Also Bullock (1988:116) for example states that the doxology of Psalm 106 (Ps 106:48) already belonged to the psalm in antiquity, since it was a part of the psalm in 1 Chronicles 16:35-36. Psalm 106:48 and 1 Chronicles 16:36 are identical, so which one is the original? According to Wilson G H (1985a:185) it seems obvious that the doxology of Psalm 106 is derived from the narrative of 1 Chronicles 16:36. On the other hand Miller (1986:12) explains that one can identify obvious use of certain psalms in the composition of other psalms, as found for example in 1 Chronicles 16:36 which is composed out of Psalms 105:1-15; 96:1-13; and 106:1, 47-48.

⁷⁶ According to Moll (1960:10) the doxologies are of a later origin than the psalms to which they are attached. While Anderson B W (1983:22) asserts that each of the first four Books concludes with a brief doxology that is not a literary part of the psalm with which it is associated. Also Brown (2010:110) states that the doxologies stand apart from the particular psalms to which they are attached. Koorevaar (2010:580) and also Sanders P (2010:677) agree with this. And Terrien (2003:16) suggests that the doxologies that mark the end of the first four books were possibly added in imitation of several collections of Sumerian psalms from the twenty second century BCE. Cohen (1945:357) says that the conclusion of Book IV, Psalm 106:48c is peculiar to the ending of this book and suggests that the verse was actually included in the recital of the psalm and is not an editorial addition.

⁷⁷ Terrien (2003:17) notes it appears that the last compilers of the *Psalter* have not attempted to follow a chronological or thematic order. They chiefly thought to preserve.

⁷⁸ Books I-III tell about the fall of the Davidic line. According to Howard D M (1999:6) it is accepted by most scholars today that the major break in the *Psalter* is to be found after Book III at Psalm 89. That there has to be a break after Psalm 89 is shown by the evidence from Qumran, where the manuscripts containing Psalms 1-89 from Books I-III are predominantly in agreement with the Masoretic Text's order and arrangement, whereas in Books IV - V, there are significant variations.

⁷⁹ Wilson G H (1985a:34,209-219), Wilson G H (1986:123) and Mc Cann (1993:95) all suggest that Books IV-V answer the problem documented by Books I-III, by stressing that Yahweh is King and that Yahweh can be trusted in the present as Yahweh had been trusted in the ancient Mosaic past before the Davidic monarchy ever existed.

2010:564). There is a clear contrast between the compilation of Books I to III, and that of Books IV and V (Holladay 1993: 76)⁸⁰.

When the *Psalter* was re-divided from three Books into five Books, Book I remained as it was, Book two was divided into two books to form Books II and III, and Book three was divided into two books to form Books IV and V (Beckwith 1995:6-7).⁸¹

With this division Psalm 104 was then a part of Book IV, as it still is today.

When the Qumran community were working, praying and singing⁸² the psalms, these psalms were not arranged as we have them today (Wilson G H 1983:377-8). According to scroll (11QPs^a)⁸³ and fragments of scrolls (4QPs^d and 4QPs^e) that were found at Qumran, Psalm 104 is juxtaposed with other psalms. In 4QPs^d Psalm 104 is preceded by Psalm 147 (Sanders J A 1967:12 and Wilson G H (1983:382), in 11QPs^e Psalm 104 is preceded by Psalm 118, and in 11QPs^a Psalm 104 is followed by Psalm 147. This shows that at that time Books IV and V were still in a state of flux, compared to the stable nature of Books I to III⁸⁴. Psalm 104 was therefore in a Book which was at that time still in a state of flux.

3.2.1.2 Book IV⁸⁵

Wilson G H (1985a:207, 214-5) refers to Book IV (Psalms 90-106) as one of the *later* books meaning it only became fixed at a late stage. He also suggests that this book is

⁸⁰ Futato (2009:17) indicates that Books I to III primarily use the author from the titles to organize the material, whereas books IV and V are built around the *genres* of “Thanksgiving Psalms” and “Hallelujah Psalms”.

⁸¹ According to Koorevaar (2010:584) Books IV and V form a pair of twins through the subject of exile and return. That Books IV and V together were at one stage a single collection distinct from the other three books is attested to by the Hallelujah Psalms that appear only in these two books (Alter 1985:xix).

⁸² Sanders J A (1967: 11) and also <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essenes>. The Essenes lived at Qumran more or less during the period from 300 BCE until circa 75 CE. So the scrolls that were discovered in caves near the Dead Sea in 1947, were probably written during this period.

⁸³ Bullock (1988:145) remarks that the vellum scroll, composed of four separable leaves came to the attention of scholars in 1956.

⁸⁴ Sanders J A (1967:13) is of the opinion that without the invaluable Qumran caves literature, we should not have thought, probably, in terms of the *Psalter*’s becoming fixed by sections progressively from front to back.

⁸⁵ Wilson G H (1985a:215) calls Psalms 90-106 the editorial “centre/heart” of the final form of the *Psalter*. Howard D M (1993:756), Holladay (1993:78) and Brown (2010:112) all suggest that this grouping stands as the “answer” to the problem posed in Psalm 89:49 as to the failure of the Davidic covenant with which Books I-III are primarily concerned. The cry of dereliction in Psalm 89:49 says it all “ O Lord, where is your former great love, which in your faithfulness you swore to David? The answers are: Yahweh is King; Yahweh has been our refuge in the past, long before the monarchy existed, and will be our refuge now that the monarchy is gone.

especially the product of purposeful editorial arrangement. Although Book IV as a whole constitutes a coherent structural unit, it can be subdivided into *two* sections (Hossfeld 2011a:16). These two sections are parallel to each other: Psalms 90 - 100 and Psalms 102-106, while Psalm 101 is positioned in the middle between these two sections⁸⁶.

Purkiser (1967:130), Howard D M (1999:9) and Koorevaar (2010:589) on the other hand divide Book IV into *three* sections: Psalms 90-94, 95-100, 101-106, or Psalms 90-92, 93-100, 101-106.

Book IV appears to have been formed in stages. According to Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:138) it is possible that the **first stage** could have been when the originally independent Psalms 101-106, were assembled into pairs as follows, Psalms 101-102, Psalms 103-104 and Psalms 105-106. This arrangement could also have been overlapped by, instead forming two triads, a Davidic triad of Psalms 101-103 and the first Hallelujah triad of Psalms 104-106 (Hossfeld & Zenger:2011:16).

Gärtner (2010:485-486) writes that a **third stage** could have been when Psalms 101-106 were joined onto Psalms 90-100, which means that a **second stage** could have been the assembling of the psalms to form the group, Psalms 90-100.

How is Book IV separated from Book III and Book V? To separate Book III from Book IV⁸⁷ and to separate Book IV from Book V⁸⁸ contrasting organizational techniques were used to distinguish two segments from each other⁸⁹.

⁸⁶ According to Brown (2009:676) Psalm 101 is here forming a new beginning which is emphasized by its attribution to David.

⁸⁷ Although Books III and IV are separate from each other, they also belong next to each other. Miller (2000b:93) gives one reason for this when he says that Book IV concludes with a response to the claims and queries found at the end of Book III, declaring that “for their sake he remembered his covenant and out of his great love he relented “ (Ps 106:45). This same note of compassion is found again and again in Book IV (e.g. Pss 100:5; 103:4,8,11,17; 105:8-10,42; 106:2,7). A second reason that separates Books IV and V is by an authorship change. According to Anderson R D (1994:237) and Wilson G H (1985a:57) the heading ‘A Psalm of Moses’ to Psalm 90 creates a break between Books III and IV.

⁸⁸ Wilson G H (1985a:126-7, 162), Bullock (1988:115) and Zenger (2011:39-41) state that the first appearance of a group of *hllwyh* (Hallelujah) Psalms in the Psalter is found in Psalms 104-106, which coincides precisely with the conclusion of Book IV as indicated by the doxology at the end of Psalm 106. The last grouping of such psalms (146-150) in Book V occurs at the very end of the whole Psalter. This suggests that the function of the groups of *hllwyh* Psalms was to mark the conclusions of these two Books. Which means that they also mark the division between Books IV and V. Anderson R D

Psalm 90 is the only psalm in the *Psalter* ascribed to Moses⁹⁰. Change of heading (by Moses) is conspicuous by its absence between Books IV and V. Here we find the *hllwyh* (Praise the Lord) and *hwdw* (O give thanks) psalms performing the same function of indicating divisions (Wilson G H 1985a:157-199).

Psalm 107, the first psalm of Book V is also used to separate Books IV and V. Psalm 107 is a *hwdw* (*hodu*) psalm and it is here used to *introduce* a segment⁹¹. Psalm 107 is also part of the *hodu-triad* (Pss 105-107) (Wilson G H 1985a:194).

One of the elements which contribute to the distinctive character of Book IV is its high proportion of ‘*untitled*’ psalms (psalms without superscriptions) (13 out of 17) (Purkiser 1967:130)⁹². According to Wilson G H (1985a:173,214-5) these ‘*untitled*’ psalms have a function within the Books, i.e. to provide a transition between groupings within the Books. Wilson G H (1985a:177) observes that there is a clear tendency toward combination of the untitled psalms in Book IV into larger compositions (Psalms 103-104 and 105-106).

By its central message Book IV confirms that praise is the final goal of the *Psalter*. Because of its position this book responds to the cry of dismay voiced in Psalms 89,

(1994:240) observes that the boundary between Book IV and Book V is much more fluid than any of the other boundaries. There is no authorship change here, in fact, both the last psalm of Book IV and the first psalm of Book V lack any superscript. The fact of the fluidity between Books IV and V, and the common use of a group of Hallelujah Psalms, would seem to indicate that the two Books were compiled together. Possibly these books were compiled during the time of the literary work done by Nehemiah.

⁸⁹ Wilson G H (1985a:207) remarks that while Books I-III each conclude with a doxology, and Book V concludes with a series of Halleluyah Psalms, Book IV combines the two methods by closing with a series of Halleluyah Psalms (Pss 104-106) as well as a doxology in Psalm 106:48.

⁹⁰ Anderson R D (1994:237) and Jungling (1998:782) observes that Moses is mentioned seven times in Book IV (The title of Ps 90; 99:6; 103:7; 105:26; 106:16, 23, 32). Outside of these instances the name of Moses appears only once in the *Psalter* (Ps 77:20). De-Claissie-Walford (1997:7) explains that the ‘shapers’ of the *Psalter* placed this psalm at the beginning of Book IV in order to turn the reader’s/hearer’s attention away from David and the monarchy, and back to the beginning, back to the ‘honeymoon’ period of ancient Israel’s relationship with Yahweh...the Exodus and back to complete reliance upon Yahweh.

⁹¹ Wilson G H (1985a:220) and also Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:2) indicate that Psalm 107 introduces the final section of the *Psalter*. It does so as a response to the plea of the exiles expressed in Psalm 106:47: ‘Save us, O Yahweh our God, And gather us from among the nations’. *Contra* to these writers Anderson R D (1994:240) argues that the idea that Psalm 107 begins a new section seems to him a little far fetched.

⁹² According to Wilson G H (1985a:173) an untitled psalm is covered by the superscript of the preceding psalm.

to the effect that all the national hopes pinned on the Davidic covenant have come crashing down into the real world of defeat and exile (Wilson G H 1992:139-140).⁹³

3.2.1.3 Psalm 104

Spieckermann (1989:46-48) and Köckert (2000:275) are both of the opinion that Psalm 104 was composed in stages.

Köckert (2000:275) suggests that the first *expansion* to Psalm 104 occurred after 700 BCE. From this we may deduce that it is possible that the *original* part of Psalm 104 was composed *before* 700 BCE⁹⁴. Köckert also suggests that a further post-exilic *expansion* occurred⁹⁵. From this it would seem to be a probability that, according to Köckert, the original verses of Psalm 104 were: verses 1c, 2b, 3abc, 4ab, 10ab, 12ab, 13a, 14abc, 15abc, 32ab and 35abcd.

According to Spieckermann (1989:46-48) the original verses of Psalm 104 could probably have been: verses 1aB – 4, 10f, 14 -19, 20 -23, 24aAb.27 – 29a, 30 and 33. The original (first) part of Psalm 104, according to Köckert (2000:275), reads as follows:

- 1c You are clothed with splendour and majesty,
- 2b he stretches out the heavens like a tent,
- 3a and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.
- 3b He makes the clouds his chariot
- 3c and rides on the wings of the wind.
- 4a He makes the winds his messengers,
- 4b flames of fire his servants.
- 10a He makes springs pour water into the ravines;

⁹³ Westermann (1980:13) writes that psalms had originated in actual life situations. The events out of which the psalms arose did not themselves take place in worship, but rather occurred in the lives of individuals or in the life of the nation. *Contra* to Westermann, Tremper Longman (1988:14) is of the opinion that the psalms were written in the context of temple worship.

⁹⁴ Buttenwieser (1969:166) argues that Psalm 104 is pre-exilic. However Seybold (1990:189) discusses an ancient oriental world-map on a clay tablet, and does not give the pre-exilic date as a possibility for Psalm 104.

⁹⁵ By subtracting the first and the second expansions (given by Köckert 2000:275) from Psalm 104, the following verses remain; which could possibly be the original verses composed before 700 BCE.

- 10b it flows between the mountains.
12a The birds of the air nest by the waters;
12b they sing among the branches.
13a He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;
14a He makes grass grow for the cattle,
14b and plants for man to cultivate -
14c bringing forth food from the earth:
15a wine that gladdens the heart of man,
15b oil to make the face shine,
15c and bread that sustains his heart.
32a he who looks on the earth and it trembles,
32b who touches the mountains and they smoke.
35a But let sinners vanish from the earth,
35b and the wicked be no more.
35c Bless the Lord, O my soul.
35d Praise the Lord.

By comparing the arguments of Spieckermann (1989:21-49) and Köckert (2000:259-279) concerning the development of Psalm 104, it is possible to come to a tentative conclusion about what the original portion of the psalm could possibly have been. It is of interest to note that this psalm was not written in one sitting, but was composed in different stages.

3.2.2 Social and cultural contexts

3.2.2.1 David

It is not possible to accurately establish what happened a few millennia ago⁹⁶. Dever (2001b:101), however, helps to more or less define the time in which Psalm 104 could have been composed⁹⁷.

⁹⁶ Blenkinsopp (2001:75) says it as follows “the prospect of writing Israel’s early history involves probabilities and guesses, the challenge is great to establish what happened three or more millennia ago.”

⁹⁷ ...much of the material in the great prophetic books reflects Israelite “daily life,” even if unintentionally and incidental to the theological message. ...many aspects of the picture of daily life...fit in, and only in, the Iron II period (*circa* 1000-600 BCE) and therefore must have originated in a real history of a real, not fictional, “Israel” (Dever 2001b:101).

Although Psalm 104 is untitled in the modern Hebrew Bible, there are three sources that credit David as the author. In the Septuagint⁹⁸ as well as on Fragment EI from manuscript 11QPs^a from Qumran⁹⁹, Psalm 104 is designated to David. And then Wilson's argument about the consequence of Psalm 104 being preceded by Psalm 103, which is a Davidic psalm¹⁰⁰, it is therefore not impossible that David could have composed the original (first) part of Psalm 104¹⁰¹.

For this discussion the hypothesis is that David might possibly be the author¹⁰² of the first¹⁰³ part of Psalm 104¹⁰⁴.

David was very talented¹⁰⁵. He composed¹⁰⁶ and sang many poems and songs¹⁰⁷. He also played¹⁰⁸ and invented musical instruments (Am 6:5).

David ruled¹⁰⁹ from *circa* 1000 – 960 BCE,¹¹⁰ which means it was in the Iron I (1200-900 BCE) and Iron IIA (1000-900 BCE) periods. Therefore the people living in this period will be discussed in this section.

In the time of the monarchy, religion¹¹¹ penetrated the entire social life of the nation. As king, David was constantly at war¹¹² with the neighbouring countries¹¹³.

⁹⁸ Wilson G H (1985a:180) and Barker (1986:59) explain that although the author of Psalm 104 is unknown in our modern Bible, David is given as the author in the Septuagint.

⁹⁹ Sanders J A (1967:20) indicates that the 'Psalm of David' designation is added to Psalm 104:1 in line 6 of Fragment EI of manuscript 11QPs^a.

¹⁰⁰ According to Wilson G H (1985a:173) an untitled psalm is covered by the superscript of the preceding psalm.

¹⁰¹ Barnes (1950:80) explains that although Psalm 104 is ascribed to David in the Syriac, the Arabic, the Greek, and the Latin versions, it is not known on what authority this is claimed. That David *may* have composed this psalm cannot be doubted, but there is no certain evidence that he was the author.

¹⁰² Eidevall (2010:21) says that the poets and scribes (of the psalms) were no peasants, shepherds, or hunters. Their perspective was priestly, temple-oriented and city-oriented.

¹⁰³ See the discussion on Spieckermann and Köckert under the sub heading 3.1.1.2 Psalm 104.

¹⁰⁴ The religion of that time was most probably monaltic and not monotheistic.

¹⁰⁵ Merrill (1974:231) is of the opinion that in the reign of David poetic literature reached its peak in finesse and prolificacy. Cf. Boadt (1984:236). Also Dever (2001b:105) explains that Biblical texts reflect the creative, literary imagination of a very few of the elite classes.

¹⁰⁶ For example: David's lament for Saul and Jonathan (2 Sa 1:19-27); David's Song of Praise (2 Sa 22: 2-51); David's last words (2 Sa 23:2-7) and David's Psalm of Thanksgiving (1 Ch 16:8-36).

¹⁰⁷ 2 Samuel 23:1 "Israel's singer of songs".

¹⁰⁸ David played his harp (1 Sa 16:18, 23).

¹⁰⁹ Meyers (2001:71) explains that with the ascendance of David, we see the first rudimentary indications of statehood. Cf. Davies, Richardson & Wallis (1955:40).

¹¹⁰ According to Shafer-Elliott (2013:7) the dating of biblical texts is problematical in any research.

¹¹¹ De Vaux (1988:271) writes that even war at that time was a religious act.

¹¹² Meyers (2001:83) explains that as a result of David's military conquests in the tenth century, beyond Israel's borders, spoils of war (1 Sa 27:9; 2 Sa 8:7-12) as well as prisoners-of-war (2 Sa 12:31) were brought to Israel. These were used for the massive public works of the tenth century.

Although David seems to have been a kindly man¹¹⁴, his rule was not popular¹¹⁵ with his subjects. In his early years as monarch he was chivalrous, but this also disappeared later on when the moral tone of his court was low¹¹⁶.

Because the monarch regarded the state as his own private property, the survival of the people (the peasants) was seriously threatened. The rulers needed land as a source of revenue. So the monarchs could either buy¹¹⁷ the land he wanted, or simply confiscate¹¹⁸ it.

If it is true that a poet composes and sings a Psalm of Praise to the Lord when he is happy, then it is possible that David could have been happy while he was composing the first part of Psalm 104

Where could Psalm 104 possibly have been composed? And *why* was it composed? Possible answers are:

- In the field in Bethlehem where he was tending to his father's sheep (1 Sa 16:1).
- In Hebron where he was king over the house of Judah (2 Sa 2) for 7 years.
- In Jerusalem (the city of David) where he was king over all Israel and Judah (2 Sa 5) for 33 years.

What could have been the reason for David to compose Psalm 104?

It is possible that the tradition-historical motifs and images influenced David when he was composing some songs and poems. Apart from the 73 Psalms that are designated

¹¹³ Mears (2011;150) states that when Israel's boundaries extended from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, David's wars with the outside nations ceased. Then he sought to find what he could do to improve and beautify his kingdom.

¹¹⁴ He treats the lame Meribaal generously (2 Sa 4:4).

¹¹⁵ Davies, Richardson & Wallis (1955:58) explain that despite the glory of David's conquests at war, his reign weighed heavily on his subjects by reason of the heavy levies of service which he imposed on them.

¹¹⁶ See Davies, Richardson & Wallis (1955:199).

¹¹⁷ As when David bought the threshing floor (2 Sa 24:24).

¹¹⁸ As when David took over the real estate belonging to Saul's family (2 Sa 9:7; 16:4).

to David in the *Psalter*, there are also laments, prayers, and psalms in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles.

The following are a few examples to show how the *tradition* could have influenced David while he was composing the original (first) part of Psalm 104, as well as his other songs and poems.

For the following comparisons the translations found in the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible were used.

David's Song of Praise in 2 Samuel 22 and the traditions of the Exodus exhibit the following:

- 2 Samuel 22:10: He parted the heavens and came down; **dark clouds** were under his feet.

Exodus 19:9: The Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a **dense cloud,**"

- 2 Samuel 22:16: The valleys of the sea were exposed and **the foundations of the earth laid bare ...**

Exodus 14:29: the Israelites went through the sea on **dry ground,**...

- 2 Samuel 22:20: He brought me out into a **spacious place...**

Exodus 15:22: Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the **desert of Shur.**

David's Song of Praise in 2 Samuel 22 and Psalm 104 exhibit the following:

- 2 Samuel 22:11: He mounted the cherubin and flew; he **soared on the wings of the wind.**

Psalm 104:3bc: He makes the clouds his chariot and **rides on the wings of the wind.**

- 2 Samuel 22:34: He makes my feet like the **feet of a deer**; he enables me to stand on the **heights**.

Psalm 104:18: The **high mountains** belong to the wild **goats**.

The last words of David and Psalm 104 show:

- 2 Samuel 23:6: But **evil men** are all to be cast aside like thorns.

Psalm 104:35: But may **sinners** vanish from the earth.

And the **wicked** be no more.

David's Song of Praise in 2 Samuel 22, the Exodus tradition and Psalm 104 illustrate:

- 2 Samuel 22:8-9: The **earth trembled** and quaked, the foundations of the heavens shook;...**Smoke** rose from his nostrils; **consuming fire** came from his mouth,...

Exodus 19:18-19: Mount Sinai was covered with **smoke**, because the Lord descended on it in **fire**. The **smoke** billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole **mountain trembled** violently,...

Psalm 104:32: he who looks at the **earth, and it trembles**, who touches the mountains, and they **smoke**.

David's Psalm of Thanks in 1 Chronicles 16 and Psalm 104 show:

- 1 Chronicles 16:30: Tremble before him, all the earth! **The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.**

Psalm 104:5: He set the **earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.**

- 1 Chronicles 16:32: Let **the sea resound, and all that is in it; ...**

Psalm 104:25: There is **the sea**, vast and spacious, **teeming with creatures beyond number**.

David's Prayer in 2 Samuel 7 and the Exodus tradition illustrate:

- 2 Samuel 7:24: You have established **your people Israel as your very own** forever, and you, O Lord, **have become their God**.

Exodus 6:7: I will take you **as my own people**, and **I will be your God**.

Psalm 104 and other tradition-historical motives:

- Exodus 16:4: Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and **gather** enough for that day.

Psalm 104:27-28: These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you give it to them, they **gather** it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

- Deuteronomy 31:16: The Lord said to Moses, they will forsake me and break the covenant I made with them. On that day I will become angry with them..., **I will hide my face from them**,...

Psalm 104:29: **When you hide your face**, they are terrified.

By looking at the many examples of tradition-historical correspondences that occur between Psalm 104 and the various songs and prayers attributed to David, it is possible that either David himself could have been the author of Psalm 104, or another possibility being that the similar words and phrases were simply available to all the poets of that time, or later poets could have used the motives.

3.2.2.2 Addressees (*Sitz(e) in Leben*)

What were the main characteristics of the people addressed by Psalm 104? *What* can be known of their social location; or the social network within which the writers and hearers/ readers communicated. *What* customs are mentioned or alluded to in the text that must be understood in order to comprehend the text.

In this section an attempt will be made to paint a picture of the lives of the ordinary people¹¹⁹, just before and at the time of David.

a Villages

Before any monarch reigned on a throne in Israel, and then later throughout the entire monarchic periods, the vast majority of the people¹²⁰ were dispersed over the landscape¹²¹ and settled in small villages¹²². The overall picture is one of small farming villages¹²³ with at most a few hundred inhabitants¹²⁴. These villages can be classified into four groups according to size¹²⁵.

¹¹⁹ Pardee (2001:171) explains that throughout the entire biblical period more than 90% of the population was engaged in the typical Mediterranean-rim economy of raising livestock, mostly sheep and goats, and growing crops; and they lived in villages consisting of a cluster of households. A pattern which is attested archaeologically from the earliest period of Israel's existence.

¹²⁰ Boadt (1984:246) refers to them as the "people of the land"; and says that they were the major rural landholders. Cf. Knight (2011:70).

¹²¹ Knight (2011:117) writes that in sheer numbers the villages occupied a remarkable position in Israel's social history. It appears that the vast majority of the region's population, resided in these villages, scattered by the hundreds over the countryside. Cf. Meyers (2001:73).

¹²² According to Dever (2001a:123) archaeological excavations have brought to light some 300 small unfortified hilltop villages of the early Iron I period. (The twelfth century to the eleventh century BCE). Cf. Shafer-Elliott (2013:38), who reports that hundreds of new small villages were established during the Iron I and Iron II periods. Also Meyers (2001:73) says that most villages consisted of groups of houses situated on hilltops, with no surrounding enclosure or defence walls.

¹²³ Meyers (2001:72). Refer also to Numbers 35:2 from which one can deduce that land for pasture and farming by the inhabitants of the villages, surrounded the settlements.

¹²⁴ Blenkinsopp (2001:171).

¹²⁵ Meyers (2001:72) suggests that the smallest village occupied an area of about one acre with only six or so dwellings; while the largest villages were about two acres in extent. Cf. Dever (2001b:123), who writes that a village consisting of several clusters of houses would be called the 'tribe' or 'clan'. Also Knight (2011:124) further states that it is of importance to note the small scale of some village societies: with only around 75-150 inhabitants in each village.

Some of the villages were found far away from the cities/towns, while others were in the nearby vicinity of the cities/towns¹²⁶. The rich and powerful people lived mostly in the cities/towns¹²⁷.

b Houses

Meyers (2001:73) describes the 'four-roomed' houses¹²⁸, while Dever (2001c:123) describes a cluster of several houses¹²⁹. These Iron-Age dwellings evolved as a result of the needs of its inhabitants¹³⁰.

c Households

The household was not necessarily confined to a single dwelling, but might take in an entire village¹³¹. The household was the basic unit of everyday social life in ancient Israel.

The people who lived in these villages had a very hard life. They were farmers and were very much dependant on the weather. They were also very poor and struggled to survive in a *subsistence economy*. *Literacy* was not normally found in the villages¹³². *Religion* penetrated every aspect of their lives¹³³. Although the people living in the

¹²⁶ Knight (2011:120) writes that the cities usually had villages around them to help supply their needs for food and other products.

¹²⁷ Boadt (1984:246) explains that the ancient towns mostly had a community of one to three thousand people, crowded inside walls on the top of a small hill. These towns had fortified walls.

¹²⁸ Meyers (2001:73) shows that the small dwellings of three or four rooms, which probably held living and working quarters for nuclear families of 4 or 5 people, as well as stabling areas for the animals, were often clustered around a beaten-earth courtyard. Shafer-Elliott (2013:14) also describes the 'four-roomed' house. Such a house had a back broad room with one to three (usually three) rooms running perpendicular to the broad room, often divided by pillars.

¹²⁹ Dever (2001b:123) suggests that the cluster of several houses, sharing common walls, courtyards, and other features, are in reality a multi-generation extended family.

¹³⁰ Shafer-Elliott (2013:16) writes that the form and function of the dwelling reflect the daily needs of the average ancient Israelite, who practiced farming and animal husbandry. Their houses had to be functionally practical. Cf. Boadt (1984:246), who remarks that the houses may have been two stories high.

¹³¹ Pardee (2001:169-172). Cf also Blenkinsopp (2001:171).

¹³² Knight (2011:2, 96) explains that the masses found living in the villages must have developed legal systems of their own to guarantee the orderly functioning of their social groups. As the people possessed neither the competence, nor the need to commit their store of rules and laws to writing, these lived on in oral form.

¹³³ Knight (2011:54) reports that archaeological findings confirm that a popular domestic, village oriented cult flourished throughout the country of ancient Israel. Cf Blenkinsopp (2001:xx), who states that religion in the household appears to have included an ancestor cult, household deities, and

villages did not have an easy life, it is still quite possible that they could have had music¹³⁴ or poetry in their lives¹³⁵.

The Israelites kept a number of feasts every year. Merrill (1974:139) notes that one of the more important was the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles. This feast fell just before the autumn rains began. If it did not rain famine was very possible. Boadt (1984:276) explains that the rain would make it possible for the seeds to be planted for the next harvest.

d Family life

Family life was patriarchal in structure. The father had the final power of decision under Mosaic Law, that was denied to a woman (Boadt 1984:255). Woman belonged to the private sphere¹³⁶, and the local well or spring would be as far as most women ventured from the village. Minors had no rights and lived under the authority of the senior male (Pardee 2001:175).

The ordinary people did not live in “towns”. It seems they were mostly engaged in farming activities, and lived in villages consisting of clusters of households that were spread all over the country. All households consisted of extended patriarchal families. The people were very poor, and were completely dependant on the weather for their livelihood.

The sections a to d discussed above could give a vague picture of how the ordinary people were living at the time when David possibly could have composed Psalm 104.

festivals coinciding with the major harvests. Also Dever (2001b:127-137) explains that worship was the heart in which and through which the life of all pulsated. Also Dever (2001b:176), who further states that archaeological evidence shows that cults did exist in the early monarchy.

¹³⁴ Eissfeldt (1974:87) remarks that like other ancient peoples, Israel was one that loved singing, and its whole life was shot through with songs and singing.

¹³⁵ Tremper Longman III (1988:46,49) writes that it is beyond a shadow of a doubt that the psalms were used in the public and private worship of devout Israelites. The psalms were always relevant to Israel because they are not historically specific, and are immediately applicable to new situations of blessing and curse.

¹³⁶ Blenkinsopp (2001:xx) postulates that women prepared crafts and food, raised and nurtured children, worked in the fields in certain seasons, and lived under the protection of a senior male.

3.2.3 Literary and redactional contexts of Psalms 101-106

The literary context (*Sitz in der Literatur*) is examined to find out *where* and *how/why* Psalms 101-106 are arranged next to each other. What are the significant links between these adjacent psalms. For this analysis, identical words, sentences or ideas shared must be identified¹³⁷. But especially to explain *where* and *how/why* Psalm 104 fits into the *Psalter* and also into Book IV¹³⁸. The redactional context is examined to explain *why* the Psalms 101-106 are arranged as they are, and especially *why* Psalm 104 is placed where it is.

Although many researchers have said that the *Psalter* is more than the sum of its individual parts, Childs (1979:370) is credited for starting the movement. As a result of this view point, the psalms are now not read and studied as individual psalms¹³⁹, but are read and understood in relation to other psalms. Especially in relation to the psalms in their near vicinity¹⁴⁰.

There is movement in the *Psalter*¹⁴¹. The connections between the individual psalms are purposeful and not random. Connecting *words*¹⁴² and *themes* are evident between adjacent psalms¹⁴³.

¹³⁷ Gorman (2001:197) describes what is needed for the literary analysis of the psalms in group 101-106.

¹³⁸ Wilson G H (1992:134) explains that the central message of Book IV is praise. Wilson L (2010:765) argues that God's kingship is the theme of Book IV as a whole.

¹³⁹ *Contra* to this view point Gunkel (1998:3) said that the individual psalm stands alone, and must tell you everything. Cf. Petersen & Richards (1992:90), who agree with this, say that the surrounding psalms provide little specific information for the interpretation of a given psalm.

¹⁴⁰ Westermann (1989:2) states that we can only understand any particular psalm when we relate it to the whole of which it forms part. Each particular psalm can only be understood in context. The different groups and categories of psalms have, through a long process, grown together into a single whole, in which every part has its place and its significance. Howard D M (1999:178) writes that no psalm says all there is to say, and each depends upon and completes the other.

¹⁴¹ Futato (2007:80) explains that this movement is an indication that the Book of Psalms is not a random anthology. The psalms have been purposefully arranged. Cf. Goulder (1975:269).

¹⁴² Miller (2003:89) confirms this by saying that there is a concatenation of words across two or more psalms, in their beginnings and endings that link psalms. Alexander J A (1865:56) writes that the possible connections between consecutive psalms include key words, motifs and even grammatical constructions. Also Brown (2009:667).

¹⁴³ Delitzsch (1952a:21) saw links of thoughts and ideas between consecutive psalms. He wrote that because of this phenomenon such psalms were strung together. Gerstenberger (2001:412) states that scholars make use of topical affinities between neighbouring or clustering psalms; such as for example structural likeness and progress of thought to prove coherence.

As already stated, in this study, the focus is on Book IV¹⁴⁴ of the *Psalter*. This book can be divided in two or three sections¹⁴⁵. Brown (2010:112) notes that the seventeen psalms that constitute Book IV have been called the ‘answer’ to the failure of God’s covenant with David.

Whatever the reason(s) for placing the various psalms where they are in the *Psalter*, they are now surrounded by neighbours, and they can ‘talk’ to one another (Brown 2010:23).¹⁴⁶

3.2.3.1 Psalms 101 - 106

One of the most frequent *genres* in the *Psalter* is the hymn or the Song of Praise¹⁴⁷. This section can be divided into either three pairs, or into two triads¹⁴⁸.

3.2.3.2 Three pairs (Pss 101-102, 103-104, 105-106)

a Psalms 101-102

Sabourin (1969:6-7) states that Psalm 101 is a royal psalm, where the king vows to pattern his reign after God’s righteous rule, while Allen (1983:xx) points out that this psalm is seemingly placed at random, like a number of other royal psalms. Psalm 102 is a prayer for healing interspersed with declarative praise. Brown W P (2009:675) reminds that it is also described as a prayer of one afflicted, when faint and pleading

¹⁴⁴ Ravasi (1998:841) remarks that although the fourth book does not contain many psalms, its poetic and theological qualities are notable. However the heterogeneity of its contents obscures any clear plan of organization. Ravasi (1998:842) further notes that this group of psalms are meant to extol Yahweh’s two roles, as Lord of Creation and Lord of History.

¹⁴⁵ Refer to Book IV under Historical aspects

¹⁴⁶ This is the last group of Book IV. Brown (2009:675) describes Psalms 101-106 as a hodge-podge of forms and themes centred on creation (Ps 104) and history (Pss 104-106). Cf. Holladay (1993:79) and Labuschagne (2010:631) refer to them as a group of mixed/miscellaneous psalms.

¹⁴⁷ Bellinger (2012:110) writes that the Psalms of Praise greatly enhance our understanding of how to offer praise to God. They recount what God has done and how God has been present in the world.

¹⁴⁸ Hossfeld & Zenger (2011: 1-2) suggest that with the original compilation of the *Psalter*, the last part of Book IV was made out of *three pairs* of psalms, i.e. 101-102, 103-104 and 105-106. But at a later date, after the work of the redactors, the last part of Book IV could clearly be divided into *two triads*, i.e. 101-103 and 104-106. Cf Howard D M (1993:108-123).

before the Lord. There are only a few keyword correspondences between these two psalms.¹⁴⁹

The strongest link between these two psalms is the following. In Psalm 101:8 David refers to the *city of the Lord* (i.e. *Jerusalem*), while in Psalm 102:13 and 21 the afflicted man refers to *Zion* (i.e. *Jerusalem*)¹⁵⁰.

Gillingham (2010:115) explains that one of the reasons why certain psalms are placed next to each other in the *Psalter*, as for example Psalms 101 and 102, could be to make it clear that God is as much on the side of those who have no voice but simply trust in Him (Ps 102), as He is of those in position of power (Ps 101).

b Psalms 102-103

Although Psalms 102 and 103 differ in *genre*, Van der Lugt (2014:138) and Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:28) point out that they have strong thematic links¹⁵¹. Calvin (1963:124) points out that in Psalm 102:28 and Psalm 103:17-18 successive generations are expressly appointed, because the covenant extends even to future ages¹⁵².

¹⁴⁹ Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:17). For example Psalm 101:2 “I will be careful to lead a blameless life, when will you *come* to me?” And Psalm 102:1 “Hear my prayer O Lord, let my cry for help *come* to you.” But as these words occur in different contexts, the link is not well developed

¹⁵⁰ Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:17). Cf Van der Lugt (2014:111), who is of the same opinion. But Gunkel (1998:2) states that no internal relationship can be discovered between neighbouring psalms in the group Psalms 100-102.

¹⁵¹ Psalm 102:4: “My heart is blighted and withered like *grass*, I forget to eat my food.” Psalm 103:15-16: “As for man, his days are like *grass*, he flourishes like a flower of the field. The wind blows over it and it is gone.” Psalm 102:13: “You will arise and have compassion on *Zion*, for it is time to show favour to her.” Psalm 103:19: “The Lord has established *his throne in heaven*, and his kingdom rules over all.” Thus the two psalms augment each other in mirror fashion, and justify being placed in sequence.

¹⁵² Psalm 102:28: “The children of your servants will live in your presence; their descendants will be established before you”. And Psalm 103:17: “But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children.”

c Psalms 103-104.¹⁵³

Although these two psalms are both “Psalms of Praise”¹⁵⁴, and are next to each other in the *Psalter*, it seems that they were not originally a unit¹⁵⁵. These two psalms are connected by their common beginnings and endings¹⁵⁶, (Pss 103:2,22 and 104:1,35), to form an *inclusio* between them¹⁵⁷. In spite of the inclusion, the subject matter of these two psalms does not connect very well¹⁵⁸.

A second factor that binds these two psalms editorially together is Wilson’s argument (1985a:173, 180, 196) where he argues that the manuscripts testify to a tradition of combining of Psalm 103 (with its Davidic superscript), to Psalm 104 (that has no superscript); where the effect of this combination is to extend the Davidic authority to the second composition as well¹⁵⁹. A third factor that helps with the binding of these two psalms is the many concatenations of words that are found here¹⁶⁰

¹⁵³ Although Psalms 103 and 104 are both Psalms of Praise, which means that they are close to each other; Buitendijk (1969:166) is nevertheless of the opinion that the fact that Psalm 104 is pre-exilic, disposes of the prevailing view that it is the companion piece to the post-exilic Psalm 103.

¹⁵⁴ Routledge (2013:205) explains that because Psalms 103 and 104 are Hymns of Praise, they are calling the people to worship, and setting out why God deserves to be praised. Cf Hossfeld (2011b:75), who states that Psalms 103 and Psalm 104 are paired hymns that have been yoked together through expressions of praise.

¹⁵⁵ Kraus (1989:298) wonders if it is not perhaps possible that both psalms could have the same author, or how else is the uniformity of framing to be understood. Cf Clifford (2003:147) and Cohen (1945:337). While *contra* to this, Buitendijk (1969:166) suggests that the difference in theme and content suggests an independent literary hand for each of the two psalms.

¹⁵⁶ Anderson R D (1994:240). Cf Seybold (1990:125). Also Holladay (1993:79).

¹⁵⁷ Hossfeld & Steiner (2013:241). Cf. Brown (2009:676).

¹⁵⁸ Anderson R D (1994:763) notes that Psalms 103 and 104 are less obviously connected in subject matter. Cf Wilson L (2010:762), who also regards these two psalms as being less clearly paired. However *contra*, according to Buitendijk (1969:166), in content the two psalms have nothing whatever in common. Taken together these two psalms describe a God active in the lives of people, and also involved in the processes and works of nature.

¹⁵⁹ Wilson G H (1985a:173, 180,196) argues that the manuscripts testify to a tradition of combining of Psalm 103 (with its Davidic superscript), to Psalm 104 (that has no superscript); where the effect of this combination is to extend the Davidic authority to the second composition as well.

¹⁶⁰ Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:37). Cf Van der Lugt (2014:153). A few of the keyword connections. For example: in Psalm 103;14 the characterisation of humankind as *dust*; “For he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are *dust*”. And in Psalm 104:29 *dust* is also mentioned in connection with man; “When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to *dust* “. Another example is what is said about human beings. Psalm 103;15: “As for *man*, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field”. And Psalm 104;15: “wine that gladdens the heart of *man*, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart”. Another example is the word *grass*; In Psalm 103;15 where grass is used as a metaphor, “As for *man*, his days are like *grass*, he flourishes like a flower of the field”. And Psalm 104;14 where *grass* is nourishment “He makes *grass* grow for the cattle, and plants for *man* to cultivate. Also both psalms mention *sinner* or *sinner*. Psalm 103;10 “He does not treat us as our *sins* deserve, or repay us according to our iniquities”. And Psalm 104:35 “But may *sinner*s vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more”.

According to Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:47, 74) the linking of the two psalms in the canon is a signal that the two should be read together¹⁶¹.

d Psalms 104-105

Despite the fact that these two psalms were originally independent psalms, they were placed together in this position¹⁶² because of their similar beginning (Ps 105) and ending (Ps 104)¹⁶³, and also because of the many words they have in common¹⁶⁴.

In spite of the keywords that link these two psalms, there is a difference in content and theme. Psalm 104 is a creation psalm, celebrating the works of Yahweh, while Psalm 105 is one of a twin of historical psalms.

e Psalms 105 – 106¹⁶⁵

Psalms 105 and 106 are clearly two Historical Psalms¹⁶⁶. They provide a retrospect of Israel's history¹⁶⁷. Psalm 105 tells how God remembered his promise to Abraham by his mighty works, while Psalm 106 illustrates how Israel failed to remember the

¹⁶¹ Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:45-58) suggest that because of the frame "Praise Yahweh, O my soul" between Psalms 103 and 104, a composer's redaction binds them together. Dion (2009:69) says that just as Psalm 103 looks back at the Moses of Exodus 33-34, so also Psalm 104 is indebted to Akhenaton's hymn Aton, and this is the reason why these two psalms are placed next to each other in the *Psalter*.

¹⁶² Day (1996:59) reckons that the placing of Psalm 105 immediately after Psalm 104 is probably deliberate, since each in its own way extols at great length the divine activity in a particular sphere, Psalm 104 in creation and Psalm 105 in history. Cf. Allen (1983:40).

¹⁶³ The first example of concatenation between these two psalms is found here. Psalm 104: 35b: "Praise the Lord, O my soul. Praise the Lord". And Psalm 105:1a: "Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name."

¹⁶⁴ Van der Lugt (2014:169) explains that there is a remarkable concatenation between Psalms 104 and 105. A few of the keywords referring to Yahweh. Psalm 104:24: "How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you *made* them all". And Psalm 105:5: "Remember the wonders he has *done*, his miracles, and the judgements he pronounced." Another example, Psalm 104:30: "When you *send* your spirit, they are created". And Psalm 105:28: "He *sent* darkness and made the land dark. Cf. Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:74), who concur that the following are a few of the keywords that link Psalm 104 with Psalm 105: Psalm 104:33-34: "I will *sing* to the Lord all my life; I will *sing praise* to my God as long as I live. May my *meditation* be *pleasing* to him, as I *rejoice* in the Lord". Psalm 105:2-3: "*Sing* to him, *sing praise* to him; *tell* of all his wonderful acts. *Glory* in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord *rejoice*. Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:74) advocate that these keywords in the two psalms also have the same sequence. Also Brown & Mc Bride (2000:102).

¹⁶⁵ Mays (1986:337) explains that these two are a thematic pair. Despite this fact Hossfeld (2011b:75,76) and Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:83) are of the opinion that from their language, they come from different hands, and were linked by the redactor. Also *contra* Cohen (1945:351), who is of the opinion that they were composed by the same psalmist.

¹⁶⁶ Purkiser (1967:358) describes them as a pair of magnificent Historical Psalms, in which the lessons of the past are used to correct and encourage the people of God.

¹⁶⁷ Eissfeldt (1974:125). Cf. Miller (2000b:102), who refers to these two psalms as "national" hymns.

Lord's mighty works in its continuing sinning¹⁶⁸. The first calls for trust, the second for repentance.

This pair is formed because they both relate Israel's tradition from where they were slaves in Egypt, up to where they as a nation/collection of tribes enter Canaan. Psalm 105 derives its material from the period before and at the beginning of the history of Israel. Psalm 106 derives its material from the history of Israel in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in the land of promise until the exile¹⁶⁹. Although the periods in history that they cover are not exactly the same they do have corresponding keywords¹⁷⁰ and they have similar opening and closing lines¹⁷¹.

3.2.3.3 Two triads (Pss 101-103 and 104-106)

a Psalms 101-103

Psalm 102 is untitled, but it is placed between two Davidic psalms (Pss 101 and 103). These three psalms together are referred to as the Davidic *Psalter* (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:29)¹⁷².

It is possible to understand Psalms 101-103 as a Davidic triad. Also all three psalms refer to royalty¹⁷³. Wilson GH (1985a:173, 180) points out that Psalm 103 is a

¹⁶⁸ Anderson R D (1994:764). Cf Wilson G H (1985a:219). Also Allen (1983:53), who agrees that while both psalms review Israel's history, the one presents a reverse side of the coin.

¹⁶⁹ Moll (1960:11). Cf Gerstenberger (1988:38)

¹⁷⁰ Hossfeld & Steiner (2013:241) maintains that the links between these two psalms are much stronger than between any other two adjacent psalms in this third group of Book IV. Gärtner (2010:485) explains that in both psalms Yahweh's sovereignty over the *earth* (Ps 105:7, 16, 27; Ps 106:22), the *sea* (Ps 105:29; Ps 106:9), *nations* (Ps 105:13ff; Ps 106:41, 47), and his *people* (Ps 105:43 and Ps106:4) is confirmed. Also Zenger (2010:186). And Van der Lugt (2014:187). Apart from the connections already mentioned, between these two psalms, they also have other key word connections. A few of these are the following: the use of *remember* in Psalm 105:42 and Psalm 106:4; the *people of Yahweh* in Psalm 105:43 and Psalm 106:4; *Yahweh's chosen ones* in Psalm 105:43 and Psalm 106:5; *observe or maintain* in Psalm 105:45 and Psalm 106:3; and *praise the Lord* in Psalm 105:45 and Psalm 106:1; *his or your holy name* in Psalm 105:3 and Psalm 106:47; *inherit or inheritance* in Psalm 105:11 and Psalm 106:40.

¹⁷¹ Wilson GH (1985a:194; 1992:141) states that two juxtaposition psalms are bound together when they have the same or similar incipit (first line), for example Psalm 103-104 and also Psalm 105-106-107. Cf Anderson R D (1994:219-241), who observes that a pair of Hallelujah Psalms appear at the conclusion of Book IV in Psalm 105:45, where it closes this psalm, and in Psalm 106;1,48 where it opens and closes this psalm. Also Ravasi (1998:841). And Hossfeld & Zenger (2011;76, 83), who regard the Hallelujah in Psalm 105:45c as a redactional reworking.

¹⁷² According to Hossfeld & Steiner (2013:240-258) there are five so-called Davidic collections in the Psalter; Psalms101-103 is one of them.

Davidic psalm; and because of this, Psalm 104 is also covered by the Davidic authority. This same argument can be applied to Psalm 102 which is not a Davidic psalm, but Psalm 101 is a Davidic psalm. So the Davidic authority of Psalm 101 covers Psalm 102.

In the Qumran Psalms Scroll 11QPs^a, Psalms 101, 102 and 103 are placed consecutively next to each other in that order¹⁷⁴

b Psalms 104-106¹⁷⁵

These three psalms are referred to as the Hallelujah¹⁷⁶ triad¹⁷⁷. A second reason for regarding these three psalms as a triad¹⁷⁸, is because the Lord is in charge of creation (Ps 104), and he is also in charge of history (Pss 105 and 106)¹⁷⁹. According to Hossfeldt (2011b:58) another possible reason why Psalm 104 and Psalm 105 are placed next to each other, is because both of them allude expressly to Genesis 1.

¹⁷³ Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:28) explain that because Psalm 101 is a royal prayer, and Psalm 102 refers to the Zion theme as well as to the king in distress, while Psalm 103 gives praise to the king as well as thanksgiving for rescue, it is possible to understand Psalms 101-103 as a Davidic triad.

¹⁷⁴ Sanders J A (1967:9-10). Cf. Williams T F (2014:1). Also Mc Fall (2000:27).

¹⁷⁵ According to Gärtner (2010:485-486) this is the first Hallelujah triad in the *Psalter*. Cf Holladay (1993:79). Also Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:39) explain that the Hallelujah cry occurs for the first time in the *Psalter* in Psalm 104:35.

¹⁷⁶ Hossfeld (2011b:39, 45) suggests that the Hallelujah shout is a link, and is intended to construct a triad of Psalms 104-106. Zenger (2011:39-41) explains that the group of Psalms 104-106 is one of the groups in the *Psalter* which is framed by Hallelujahs. In this group the Hallelujah is found three times as a subscript, and in Psalm 106 Hallelujah is also present as a super script.

¹⁷⁷ Wilson G H (1985a:161) is of the opinion that the actual position of the Hallelujah Psalms (104-106) is not a matter of *genre*, but of **function**. They serve an **editorial purpose** to mark divisions within the last books of the *Psalter* (Books IV and V). Here psalms of the same genre are juxtaposed, not out of interest in genre, but to serve an **additional purpose**. Alter (2007:xix) is of the opinion that because the term Hallelujah (Praise God) appears only in the fourth and fifth books, this may be taken as a sign that they once were a single collection distinct from the other three books.

¹⁷⁸ Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:58) and Zenger (2011:41) observe that this group consists of one Creation Psalm and two Historical Psalms (i.e. from the beginnings of creation to the exile). The Hallelujah cry in Psalm 104:35d serves the purpose to tie Psalm 104 into the psalm triad Psalms 104-106. Cf Anderson R D (1994:219-241). Also Hossfeld (2011b:73,75), who describes the present position of the two Historical Psalms, which immediately follow the Creation Hymn of Psalm 104, may also be connected with the priestly arranging of creation-history in the Pentateuch.

¹⁷⁹ According to Barth (1966:20) all the psalms that praise God are distinguished from one another by the particular reason for which He is praised. Sometimes the greatness of the creator is the principal subject (e.g. Ps 104), and sometimes the sacred history of the nation (e.g. Pss 105 & 106). Cf Moll (1960:11). Also L Wilson (2010:757).

3.2.3.4 Psalm 104

How and where does Psalm 104 fit into the *Psalter*? Because of the movement in the *Psalter* from lament to praise, Psalm 104 (as a Psalm of Praise) fits into the latter part of the *Psalter*.

What is the function of the five-fold division of the *Psalter*? Wilson GH (1992:130) reasons that there is no convincing explanation for the purpose of the five-fold division of the *Psalter*. And apparently some even deny that the doxologies have any significance beyond the immediate context of the individual psalms in which they are found.

Why is Psalm 104 in Book IV? Psalm 104 is praising the creator Yahweh. It is possible that when Psalm 104 was composed, the arranging of the psalms in the first three books of the *Psalter* (Books I-III) had already been completed, and they were fixed in their positions. At that stage Books IV and V were still in a state of flux and possibly extra psalms could still be inserted (Wilson GH 1985a:214-215; 1986:92; 1992:132).

In Book IV¹⁸⁰ Psalm 104 is part of the group of Psalms 101-106¹⁸¹. The one function of Psalm 104 here is that it forms a bridge between David¹⁸² (Pss 101 and 103) and Moses (Pss 105-106)¹⁸³. The second function of Psalm 104 in this position¹⁸⁴ is that it forms part of the Hallelujah triad (Pss 104-106) that point to the end of Book IV¹⁸⁵.

¹⁸⁰ Wilson G H (1985a:123) explains that Book IV is divided into three groups, Psalms 90-94, 95-100 and 101-106. Each with a relative internal coherence.

¹⁸¹ Psalm 104 is part of this group because it connects with the three Davidic psalms (101-103) as well as with the two Historical Psalms (105-106). These seven psalms form a unit, because they all relate to Yahweh as king. Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:28) say that Psalms 101-103 are Davidic psalms (King David). In Psalm 104 Yahweh the creator, was always the people's king (even while David was their earthly king); and in Psalms 105-106 (during the tradition) Yahweh was their king and protector, even as he still is today. Delitzsch (1952a:26) writes that connecting psalms have the same or similar leading thought, especially at the beginning of the one and the end of the other.

¹⁸² Mays (1986:143-155) discusses the prominence of David as king, who was the agent of God's reign on earth. David was the earthly king of Israel. At the end of Book III David and the whole monarchic system had disappeared. Books IV and V show that Yahweh was always their king and that he is still their king.

¹⁸³ Wilson G H (1985a:34, 209, 213-219) notes that Psalms 105 and 106 are two Historical Psalms, relating Israel's tradition from where they were slaves in Egypt, up to where they as a nation/a collection of tribes enter Canaan.

What is the function or aim of group 101-106 in Book IV? Its function is to praise, to call and to give thanks to Yahweh. Wilson GH (1992:141) explains the following; Psalm 101 is a call to integrity; “I will study the way that is blameless. When shall I attain it?” Psalm 102 is a lament that acknowledges Yahweh’s continuing kingly power and calls for mercy on his distressed people. Psalm 103 is a thanksgiving psalm that celebrates Yahweh’s kingship. Psalm 104 gives praise for Yahweh’s sustaining power, while Howard V (1992:176) also makes clear that doxology is the aim of Psalm 104. Psalm 105 is a history of Yahweh’s gracious deeds on behalf of Israel, while Psalm 106 rehearses Israel’s consistent failure to respond to Yahweh’s gracious acts. Praise and the kingship of Yahweh is at the heart of Book IV.

How does Psalm 104 contribute to that aim? The aim of the group of Psalms 101-106, is to praise Yahweh. Psalm 104, while praising Yahweh, also tells of everything that he has created.

Every biblical passage is located within a larger context, and it contributes to the aims of that larger context. Why is Psalm 104 placed next to Psalm 103? Hossfeld (2011c: 45-96) states that the reason why Psalms 103 and 104 have been tied together by a priestly redaction in Psalm 103:1, 2, 22b and Psalm 104:1a,35c, is probably because Yahweh is depicted as a king, directly in Psalm 103 and indirectly in Psalm 104. He possesses the insignia of a king, i.e. a heavenly throne (Ps 103:9) or a heavenly palace with roof chambers (Ps 104:3). Buitenwieser (1969:166) and Wilson G H (1985a:219) both state that Psalms 103 and 104 both begin and end with “Praise the Lord, O my soul” (Ps 103:1,2,22 and Ps 104:1,35). Wilson G H (1985a:181,194) further explains that this is the clearest, single shared characteristic, which binds Psalms 103 and 104 together. Also Anderson R D (1994:219-241), who mentions that although these two psalms are connected by their beginnings and endings, they are less obviously connected in subject matter.

What influence does Psalm 103 have on Psalm 104? Wilson G H (1985a:173, 180) explains that Psalm 103 is a Davidic psalm. Because of its proximity before Psalm

¹⁸⁴ Wilson G H (1985a:126, 219) suggests that groups of Hallelujah Psalms are used to mark the conclusion of segments of the *Psalter*; at least in the last two books of the *Psalter* (Books IV and V).

¹⁸⁵ Wilson G H (1985a:219) argues that the group of Hallelujah Psalms (104-106) functions editorially to conclude Book IV. He is of the opinion that the selection of these three psalms was not fortuitous, but that they clearly resonate with the major themes which thread their ways through these psalms.

104, its Davidic authority also covers Psalm 104. He suggests that in some instances the absence of a superscript may function as an intentional editorial method to indicate a tradition of the combination of the ‘untitled’ psalm with its immediate predecessor. Wilson G H (1985b:412) again explains that the combination for Psalm 103 with its Davidic superscript, and Psalm 104 with no superscript, but with a Hallelujah postscript, has the effect of extending Davidic authority to Psalm 104 as well as to Psalm 103.

What is the subject of the three psalms (Pss 101-103) immediately preceding Psalm 104? These three psalms form a Davidic triad. Their subject matter is David.

Why is Psalm 104 placed next to the two Historical Psalms (Pss 105 and 106)? Wilson L (2010:763) and Zenger (2011:39) connect Psalm 104 to Psalms 105-106 by its concluding term Hallelujah, thus forming the Hallelujah triad that indicates the end of Book IV. Allen (1983:xix) suggests that the reason for placing Psalm 104 before the two Historical Psalms could be the hymnic character of Psalm 104. Allen describes Psalms 105-106 as the praising psalms. In other words, Psalm 104 (with its hymnic character) is placed before Psalms 105-106 (the hymnic psalms). Psalm 104 is pointing out that Yahweh is the only God. While the Israelites were passing through the Sinai desert and while they were in Canaan they were continually worshipping idols. This is addressed in Psalm 104.

What is the function of Psalm 104 between Psalms 101-103 and Psalms 105-106. Psalm 104 is keeping the two groups of psalms together. Psalm 104 is forming a bridge between Moses and David. This is to demonstrate that God is ruler over nature as well as over individuals (Ps 103) and nations (Pss 105 and 106). Wilson L (2010:765) and Zenger (2011:41) explain that the picture emerging from this cluster of psalms is one of God as lord of creation and lord of history, from the beginnings of creation to the exile. Psalm 104 is proclaiming that Yahweh is Israel’s King. Both David (Pss 101 and 103) and Moses (Pss 105-106) were obedient to Yahweh; David while he was king and Moses while he was leading the Israelites through the desert.

Psalms 101 and 103¹⁸⁶ show that Yahweh was the Israelite king (even while the earthly kings were still in place), while Psalms 105-106 show what Yahweh has already done for his people. Therefore Yahweh can be trusted. According to Wilson G H (1985a:220-228) these two psalms make it clear that the people have trusted Yahweh in the past, and they should trust him in the present and the future.

Why was Psalm 104 written? Van Hoozer (2005:181) explains that by controlling nature, God inspires awe, wonder, and praise at his wisdom and goodness, and we rejoice. This psalm praises Yahweh for everything that he has made in nature. The biotic as well as the abiotic components. The earth and everything in and on it; all the plants and the animals. Together with the creation there is also the manner of how all these plants and animals are cared for. Because of all these wonderful acts of Yahweh, humankind rejoices.

3.3 Synchronic analysis

In this section the form, the structure and the movement¹⁸⁷ of Psalm 104 are exposed.

3.3.1 Form (*Genre*)

The *genre* of Psalm 104 is that it is a poem. It is a Song of Praise. The poem has an introduction (verses 1 – 4), a body (verses 5-30) and a conclusion (verses 31-35)¹⁸⁸.

3.3.2 Translations

New International Version	New International Reader's Version	Revised Standard Version
¹ Praise the LORD, my soul.	¹ I will praise the LORD.	1 Bless the LORD, O my

¹⁸⁶ Psalms 101 and 103 are Davidic psalms. Alexander & Alexander (2005:327) explain that one of the reasons why psalms are placed next to each other is because of their common heading. The common subject matter is however also taken into account.

¹⁸⁷ One example of movement in Psalm 104 is that the story in the poem moves from heaven to earth. A second example is that at first the earth is covered with water, but later on in the story the water is confined to the sea and dry land appears.

¹⁸⁸ Gerstenberger (2001:226) calls Psalm 104 a personal and communal hymn, because the congregation is involved all over the text.

<p>LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.</p> <p>²The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent</p> <p>³ and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.</p> <p>⁴He makes winds his messengers,^[a] flames of fire his servants.</p> <p>⁵He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.</p> <p>⁶You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.</p> <p>⁷But at your rebuke the waters fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight; ⁸they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys,</p>	<p>LORD my God, you are very great. You are dressed in glory and majesty.</p> <p>²The LORD wraps himself in light as if it were a robe. He spreads out the heavens like a tent.</p> <p>³ He builds his palace high in the heavens. He makes the clouds serve as his chariot. He rides on the wings of the wind.</p> <p>⁴He makes the winds serve as his messengers. He makes flashes of lightning serve him.</p> <p>⁵He placed the earth on its foundations. It can never be moved.</p> <p>⁶You, LORD, covered it with the oceans like a blanket. The waters covered the mountains.</p> <p>⁷But you commanded the waters, and they ran away. At the sound of your thunder they rushed off.</p> <p>⁸They flowed down the mountains. They went into the valleys.</p>	<p>soul! O LORD my God, thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, ² who coverest thyself with light as with a garment, who hast stretched out the heavens like a tent, ³ who hast laid the beams of thy chambers on the waters, who makest the clouds thy chariot, who ridest on the wings of the wind, ⁴ who makest the winds thy messengers, fire and flame thy ministers.</p> <p>⁵Thou didst set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be shaken.</p> <p>⁶Thou didst cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.</p> <p>⁷At thy rebuke they fled; at the sound of thy thunder they took to flight.</p> <p>⁸The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place which thou didst appoint for them.</p>
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<p>to the place you assigned for them.</p> <p>⁹ You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth.</p> <p>¹⁰ He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains.</p> <p>¹¹ They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.</p> <p>¹² The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches.</p> <p>¹³ He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.</p> <p>¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate— bringing forth food from the earth:</p> <p>¹⁵ wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts.</p>	<p>They went to the place you appointed for them.</p> <p>⁹ You drew a line they can't cross. They will never cover the earth again.</p> <p>¹⁰ The LORD makes springs pour water into the valleys. It flows between the mountains.</p> <p>¹¹ The springs give water to all the wild animals. The wild donkeys satisfy their thirst.</p> <p>¹² The birds in the sky build nests by the waters. They sing among the branches.</p> <p>¹³ The LORD waters the mountains from his palace high in the clouds. The earth is filled with the things he has made.</p> <p>¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle and plants for people to take care of. That's how they get food from the earth.</p> <p>¹⁵ There is wine to make people glad. There is olive oil to make their skin glow. And there is bread to make them strong.</p>	<p>⁹ Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.</p> <p>¹⁰ Thou makest springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills,</p> <p>¹¹ they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst.</p> <p>¹² By them the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.</p> <p>¹³ From thy lofty abode thou waterest the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy work.</p> <p>¹⁴ Thou dost cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate,^[a] that he may bring forth food from the earth, ¹⁵ and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart.</p>
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<p>¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.</p> <p>¹⁷ There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers.</p> <p>¹⁸ The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.</p> <p>¹⁹ He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.</p> <p>²⁰ You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl.</p> <p>²¹ The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God.</p> <p>²² The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens.</p> <p>²³ Then people go out to their work, to their labor until evening.</p> <p>²⁴ How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you</p>	<p>¹⁶ The cedar trees of Lebanon belong to the LORD. He planted them and gave them plenty of water.</p> <p>¹⁷ There the birds make their nests. The stork has its home in the juniper trees.</p> <p>¹⁸ The high mountains belong to the wild goats. The cliffs are a safe place for the rock badgers.</p> <p>¹⁹ The Lord made the moon to mark off the seasons. The sun knows when to go down.</p> <p>²⁰ You, LORD, bring darkness, and it becomes night. Then all the animals of the forest prowl around.</p> <p>²¹ The lions roar while they hunt. All their food comes from God.</p> <p>²² The sun rises, and they slip away. They return to their dens and lie down.</p> <p>²³ Then people get up and go to work. They keep working until evening.</p> <p>²⁴ LORD, you have made so many things! How wise you were</p>	<p>¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted.</p> <p>¹⁷ In them the birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees.</p> <p>¹⁸ The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the badgers.</p> <p>¹⁹ Thou hast made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.</p> <p>²⁰ Thou makest darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep forth.</p> <p>²¹ The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God.</p> <p>²² When the sun rises, they get them away and lie down in their dens.</p> <p>²³ Man goes forth to his work and to his labor until the evening.</p> <p>²⁴ O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou</p>
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<p>made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.</p> <p>²⁵ There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number— living things both large and small.</p> <p>²⁶ There the ships go to and fro, and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.</p> <p>²⁷ All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.</p> <p>²⁸ When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.</p> <p>²⁹ When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.</p> <p>³⁰ When you send your Spirit, they are created,</p>	<p>when you made all of them!</p> <p>The earth is full of your creatures.</p> <p>²⁵ Look at the ocean, so big and wide! It is filled with more creatures than people can count. It is filled with living things, from the largest to the smallest.</p> <p>²⁶ Ships sail back and forth on it. Leviathan, the sea monster you made, plays in it.</p> <p>²⁷ All creatures depend on you to give them their food when they need it.</p> <p>²⁸ When you give it to them, they eat it. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.</p> <p>²⁹ When you turn your face away from them, they are terrified. When you take away their breath, they die and turn back into dust.</p> <p>³⁰ When you send your Spirit, you create them.</p>	<p>made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures.</p> <p>²⁵ Yonder is the sea, great and wide, which teems with things innumerable, living things both small and great.</p> <p>²⁶ There go the ships, and Leviathan which thou didst form to sport in it.</p> <p>²⁷ These all look to thee, to give them their food in due season.</p> <p>²⁸ When thou givest to them, they gather it up; when thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good things.</p> <p>²⁹ When thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed; when thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.</p> <p>³⁰ When thou sendest forth thy Spirit,^[b] they are created;</p>
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<p>and you renew the face of the ground. ³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works— ³² he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke. ³³ I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. ³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD. ³⁵ But may sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more. Praise the LORD, my soul. Praise the LORD.^[b]</p>	<p>You give new life to the ground. ³¹ May the glory of the LORD continue forever. May the LORD be happy with what he has made. ³² When he looks at the earth, it trembles. When he touches the mountains, they pour out smoke. ³³ I will sing to the LORD all my life. I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. ³⁴ May these thoughts of mine please him. I find my joy in the LORD. ³⁵ But may sinners be gone from the earth. May evil people disappear. I will praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.</p>	<p>and thou renewest the face of the ground. ³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure for ever, may the LORD rejoice in his works, ³² who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke! ³³ I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. ³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. ³⁵ Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more! Bless the LORD, O my soul! Praise the LORD!</p>
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3.3.3 Structure

Although there are many different ways in which Psalm 104 can be divided, in this study the structure is divided into eight stanzas. Stanza I (stichs 1abc-2a) and stanza II (stichs 2b, 3abc and 4ab) include the first four verses, which also form the introduction.

In the introduction Yahweh is praised in verses 1ab. In verses 1c-2a reference is made to Yahweh's clothing, while in verses 2b-3abc Yahweh constructs a place to live as well as a means of transport. In verse 4 Yahweh makes his servants and messengers.

In stanza III (vv 5-10) Yahweh is arranging the water on the earth; it flows over the mountains and the hills and into the valleys. In stanza IV (vv 11-18) Yahweh is giving food, water and habitation to his creatures. In stanza V (vv 19-24) Yahweh makes day and night, thereby making provision for the different creatures to sleep and eat at different times. In stanza VI (vv 25-26) Yahweh creates the sea and everything in and on it. In stanza VII (vv 27-30) Yahweh provides all the creatures with food, breath and his Spirit. In stanza VIII (vv 31-35) Yahweh is praised for being present and for what he has made.

In the research history Psalm 104 has been divided differently by various scholars¹⁸⁹.

Stanza I and stanza II in this study agrees with only that of Futato (2009:330-331). Stanza I consists of stichs 1abc and 2a; while stanza II consists of stichs 2b, 3abc and 4ab.

Stanza III (vv 5-10) does not agree with any of the seven scholars, to which the divisions of the psalm have been compared to. Fokkelman (2001:117-140), Smal (1956:161-165) and Delitzsch (1952a:28-39) have verses 5-9 as their stanza II, while Futato (2009:330-331) has verses 5-9 as his stanza III.

Stanza IV (vv 11-18) does not agree with any of the seven scholars, to which the divisions of the psalm have been compared to. Both Smal (1956:161-165) and Delitzsch (1952a:28-39) have verses 10-18 as their stanza III.

Stanza V (vv 19-24) does not agree with any of the seven scholars, to which the divisions of the psalm have been compared to. Smal (1956:161-165) and Delitzsch

¹⁸⁹ The seven authors consulted are Allen (1983:31-32), Day (1996:41), Delitzsch (1952a:28-39), Fokkelman (2001:117-140), Futato (2009:330-331), Gerstenberger (2001:221-227) and Smal (1956:161-165).

(1952a:28-39) both have verses 19-23 as their stanza IV; while Fokkelman (2001:117-140) and Day (1996:41) have verses 19-23 as their stanza V.

Stanza VI (vv 25-26) does not agree with any of the seven scholars, to which the divisions of the psalm have been compared to. Smal (1956:161-165) has verses 24-26 as his stanza V; while Day (1996:41) has verses 24 -26 as his stanza VI.

Stanza VII (vv 27-30) does agree with the divisions of Smal (1956:161-165) and Day (1996:41) for these verses. Smal (1956:161-165) has verses 27-30 as his stanza VI; while Day (1996:41) has verses 27-30 as his stanza VII.

Stanza VIII (vv 31-35) does agree with the divisions of Allen (1983:31-32), Smal (1956:161-165), Futato (2009:330-331) and Day (1996:41) for these verses. Allen (1983:31-32) and Futato (2009:330-331) have these verses for their stanza V. Smal (1956:161-165) has these verses for his stanza VII, while Day (1996:41) has these verses for his stanza VIII.

This study demarcates Psalm 104 into the following stanzas 1abc-2a; 2b-4; 5-10; 11-18; 19-24; 25-26; 27-30; 31-35. 8

A number of scholars divide Psalm 104 into the following stanzas

Delitzsch:(1952a:28-39) 1-4; 5-9; 10-18; 19-23; 24-35;	5
Smal:(1956:161-165) 1-4; 5-9; 10-18; 19-23; 24-6; 27-30; 31-35.	7
Allen:(1983:31-32) 1-4; 5-13; 14-23; 24-30; 31-35.	5
Day:(1996:41) 1-4; 5-9; 10-13; 14-18; 19-23; 24-26; 27-30; 31-35.	8
Fokkelman:(2001:117-140) 1-4; 5-9; 10-13; 14-18; 19-23; 24-28; 29-35.	7
Gerstenberger:(2001:221-227) v1; 2-4; 5-23; 24-30; 31-32; 33-34; 35ab; 35c.	8
Futato:(2009:330-331) 1-2a; 2b-4; 5-9; 10-30; 31-35.	5

3.3.3.1 Division of Psalm 104 into 8 stanzas¹⁹⁰

Psalm 104 can be divided into 8 stanzas by using the following criteria: The first criterion is *content*¹⁹¹. The state of the *pronouns* (singular/plural: 1st, 2nd or 3rd person) is important, as well as the tenses of the *verbs*. According to these grammatical criteria the stanzas can be demarcated below.

3.3.3.1.1 Stanzas I (1abc – 2a) and II (2b – 4)

The *content* of stanzas I and II differ. Stanza I describes how Yahweh is clothed, while stanza II shows how Yahweh is making things for himself. In stich 2a Yahweh wraps himself in light as with a *garment*, while in stich 2b he stretches out the heavens like a *tent*. These two different activities thus call for a division between stichs 2a and 2b.

There is a change of subject between stichs 2a and 2b. In stich 2a Yahweh's dress is the subject of speech, while in stich 2b Yahweh's palace is referred to (Hossfeld & Zenger 2011:45).

In stichs 1a and 1b, the *pronouns* are all in the first person singular. Such pronouns are found in stanza VIII in verses 33, 34 and 35. Such first person singular pronouns are not found in any of the other stanzas.

The *pronouns* in stichs 2a and 2b are identical in the NIV, the NIV readers and RSV. In the NIV the pronouns in 2a and 2b are both 3rd person singular. In the NIV readers the pronouns in 2a and 2b are both 2nd person plural. In the RSV the pronouns in 2a and 2b are both 2nd person singular. These *pronouns* therefore do not indicate that there should be a division between stanzas I and II.

According to the RSV the *verb* (coverest) in stich 2a (stanza I) is in the present tense, while the verb (stretched) in stich 2b (stanza II) is in the past tense. This could indicate

¹⁹⁰ Watson (1995:161) defines a stanza as a major subdivision of a poem.

¹⁹¹ Watson (1995:163-4) writes that it is generally agreed that a stanza division tends to be based on content.

that a division between stich 2a (stanza I) and stich 2b (stanza II) is possible. The *verbs* (wraps and wrap) in stich 2a (stanza I) and the *verbs* (stretches and spread) in stich 2b (stanza II) in the NIV and in the NIV readers are all present tense. Thus these translations do not indicate a division between stich 2a (stanza I) and stich 2b (stanza II).

3.3.3.1.2 Stanzas II (2b – 4) and III (5 – 10)

The *content* in stanzas II and III differ¹⁹². While Yahweh is making a garment and a tent for *himself*, in stanza II, Yahweh made the earth and then arranged the water on it, in stanza III. Again two different actions. Yahweh is constructing a garment and a tent for himself on the one hand, and Yahweh is making the earth and arranging the water on the earth, on the other hand) which cause a break between stanzas II and III.

The *pronouns* in stichs 4b (II) and 5a (III) are identical in the NIV, the NIVR and the RSV. In the NIV the pronouns in stichs 4b and 5a are 3rd person singular. In the NIVR the pronouns in stichs 4b and 5a are 2nd person plural. In the RSV the pronouns in stichs 4b and 5a are both 2nd person singular. These pronouns therefore do not indicate that there should be a division between stanzas II and III.

The *pronouns* in stanza III (vv 5-10) vary from the 2nd person singular (you, your), to 3rd person singular (he, it), to 3rd person plural (they). So, the distribution of the pronouns, do not help to distinguish between stanzas II and III.

According to the NIVR the *verb* (make) formulated in stich 4b (stanza II) is in the present tense, while the *verb* (placed) in stich 5a (stanza III) is in the past tense. This indicates a possible division, to form stanzas II and III. According to the NIV the *verb* (makes) in stich 4b and the verb (set) in stich 5a both appear in the present tense. So also in the RSV the *verb* (makes) in stich 4b and the verb (set) in stich 5a are both in the present tense. The verbs in these two translations give no reason for a division between stanzas II and III.

¹⁹² Gerstenberger (2001:222) remarks that verses 5 – 6 (stanza III) strike a new topic after verses 2a – 4b (stanza II), which is the creation of the earth as the basis of future life.

3.3.3.1.3 Stanzas III (5 – 10) and IV (11 – 18)

The *content* in stanza III (vv 5-10) Yahweh is arranging the water on the earth¹⁹³; over the mountains and hills and in the valleys. In stanza IV Yahweh is giving food, water and habitation to his creatures. So, in verse 10 the water is still being *distributed*, while in verse 11 the animals are *drinking* the water.

Between verses 5 and 6 there is a shift from speech about Yahweh, to addressing Yahweh directly. Although this change could help to make a division between stanza III and stanza IV at this point, this is not used as in both verses 5 and 6 Yahweh is still rearranging the water (content).

According to the NIV and NIV readers the *pronouns* in stich 10b (stanza III) are the 3rd person singular, while the *pronouns* in stich 11a (stanza IV) are the 3rd person plural. This changing from singular to plural contributes to the division between stanzas III and IV. According to the RSV the pronouns in stichs 10b and 11a are both the 3rd person plural. There is no change in the state of the pronouns, thus no indication of a division between stanzas III and IV.

The *pronouns* in this stanza III (vv 5-10) vary from the 2nd person singular (you, your), to the 3rd person singular (he,it), to the 3rd person plural (they). So, the distribution of the pronouns, do not help to distinguish between stanzas III and IV.

According to the NIV, the NIVR and the RSV, the *verb* (flow) in stich10b (stanza III) and the verb (give) in stich 11a (stanza IV) are all in the present tense. Thus according to the verbs in stich 10b and stich 11a no division is suggested at this point.

¹⁹³ Gerstenberger (2001:223) observes that apart from verse 5, each stich in verses 6 - 10 contains at least one reference to Yahweh's most vigorous moves against chaos water. For example "you covered it with the deep as with a garment" in stich 6a; "the waters stood above the mountains in stich 6b; "the waters fled" in stich 7a; they took to flight" in stich 7b; "they flowed" in stich 8a; "they went down" in stich 8b; "to the place you assigned for them" in stich 8c; "a boundary they cannot cross" in stich 9a; "never again will they cover the earth" in stich 9b; "springs pour water" in stich 10a; and "water flows" in stich 10b.

3.3.3.1.4 Stanzas IV (11 – 18) and V (19 – 24)

Regarding the *content* in stanza IV, Yahweh is giving his creatures (humans, animals and plants) food, water and habitation, while in stanza V Yahweh makes day and night. He also makes provision for the different creatures to sleep and eat at different times (day / night). In stanza IV Yahweh is *providing* the water, food and habitation, while in stanza V Yahweh is *showing* them *when* to eat and sleep. The difference in content between IV and V is a strong indication of a division between stanzas IV and V.

According to the NIVR the *pronouns* used in stich 18b (stanza IV) are the 3rd person plural, while the pronouns used in stich 19a (stanza V) are 2nd person plural. Because the pronouns in both these stichs are plural, this translation does not indicate a break between stanzas IV and V. The NIV and the RSV on the other hand, both have the following kinds of pronouns. In stich 18b (stanza IV) the pronouns are the 3rd person plural, and stich 19a (stanza V) the pronouns are singular (3rd person in NIV and 2nd person in RSV). Because these *pronouns* change from plural (stanza IV) to singular (stanza VI) a division between these two stanzas is possible.

According to the NIV and the RSV the *verb* (refuge) in stich 18b (stanza IV) is in the present tense; while the *verb* (made) in stich 19a (stanza V) is in the past tense. This is a strong indication for a division at this point. On the other hand, in the NIVR the verb (safe) in stich 18b and the verb (serves) stich 19b appear both in the present tense, thus not pointing to a division.

3.3.3.1.5 Stanzas V (19 – 24) and VI (25 – 26)

Regarding content in stanza V, Yahweh makes day and night, thereby making provision for the different creatures to sleep and eat at different times. In stanza VI Yahweh creates the sea and everything in and on it. Yahweh executes different activities in stanzas V and VI, which strongly indicates that a division can be made here between verses 24 and 25.

According to the NIVR, the *pronouns* in stich 24c (stanza V) are all in the 2nd person plural, while the pronouns in stich 25a (stanza VI) are all in the 3rd person singular. This is an indication of a division between stanzas V and VI. In the NIV and the RSV translations there is no indication of a division between stanzas V and VI. In the NIV the pronouns in stich 24c (stanza V) and in stich 25a (stanza VI) are both 2nd person plural. In the RSV the pronouns in stich 24c (stanza V) and in stich 25a (stanza VI) are both singular (2nd person in stich 24c and 3rd person in stich 25a).

According to the NIV, the *verb* (full) in stich 24c (stanza V), and the *verbs* (vast and spacious) in stich 25a (stanza VI) are all in the present tense. While in the NIVR, the *verb* (full) in stich 24c (stanza V), and the *verbs* (big and wide) in stich 25a (stanza VI) are all in the present tense. In the RSV, the *verb* (full) in stich 24c (stanza V), and the *verbs* (great and wide) in stich 25a (stanza VI) are all in the present tense, which means that the *verbs* do not indicate a division at this point between stanzas V and VI.

3.3.3.1.6 Stanzas VI (25 – 26) and VII (27 – 30)

Regarding the content in stanza VI Yahweh *creates* the sea and all the living things in and on the sea. The sea contains many different kinds of creatures of whom Leviathan is the biggest. The sea is a means of transport. In stanza VII Yahweh *provides* all the creatures with food, breath and his spirit. It is explained here that Yahweh created all the creatures with his spirit. The subject matter in these two stanzas is different.

According to the NIV the *pronouns* in stichs 26b (stanza VI) and 27a (stanza VII) are given in the 2nd person plural. In the NIVR the pronouns in stichs 26b (stanza VI) and 27a (stanza VII) are plural, being 2nd person in stanza VI and 3rd person in stanza VII. In the RSV the pronouns in stichs 26b (stanza VI) and 27a (stanza VII) are both 2nd person plural. Since the tenses of the pronouns between the two stichs (26b and 27a) in all three translations remain the same, the pronouns here give no indication of a division.

In the NIV the *verb* (formed) in stich 26b (stanza VI), and the *verb* (look) in stich 27a (stanza VII) are both in the present tense. In the NIVR the *verb* (made) in stich 26b

(stanza VI), and the *verb* (depend) in stich 27a (stanza VII) are both in the present tense. In the RSV the *verb* (form) in stich 26b (stanza VI), and the *verb* (look) in stich 27a (stanza VII) are both in the present tense. Because the *verbs* in stichs 26b (stanza VI) and 27a (stanza VII) in all three translations are all in the present tense, this shows that the *verbs* at this point do not indicate a division between stanza VI and stanza VII.

Stanza VII is a separate stanza, because verse 27 introduces the topic of food, and verses 28-30 continue with giving and receiving. Verses 28-30 are held together with the connective “when.”

3.3.3.1.7 Stanzas VII (27-30) and VIII (31 – 35)

In the *content* of stanza VII Yahweh’s deeds makes all the creatures satisfied, while his absence terrifies them. The poet does not explain how the different animals came into being. However, in these verses he explains what Yahweh *gives* to the animals to keep them alive, namely water to drink and places to live in. Yahweh *provides* the creatures (people and animals) with food, which he hands to them. He *gives* them breath, without which they will die. And Yahweh created the creatures with his Spirit. Verses 29-30 are specifically about creating life¹⁹⁴.

In stanza VIII Yahweh is *praised* for being present and for what he has made. The main thought of this stanza is praise, praise for Yahweh. The fact that the *content* of stanzas VII and VIII differ from one another, is one of the reasons why there is a division between verses 27-30 (stanza VII) and verses 31-35 (stanza VIII).

The first person singular *pronoun* is only found in stanza I (stichs 1ab), and in stanza VIII (stichs 33a – 35d). This forms a framework of inclusion.

According to the NIV the *pronoun* in stich 30c (stanza VII) is in the 2nd person plural, while the *pronoun* in stich 31a (stanza VIII) is the 3rd person singular. Actually all the stichs of verses 29-30 have 2nd person plural pronouns, while all the stichs of verses

¹⁹⁴ Miller (2000a:269-278) notes that first death (v 29) and then life and renewal (v 30).

31-33 have 3rd person singular pronouns. There is thus a strong indication of a division between stanza VII and stanza VIII.

According to the NIV readers the *pronoun* in stich 30c (stanza VII) is 2nd person plural, and the pronoun in verses 31-32 (stanza VIII) are given in 3rd person singular. Because there is a change in the state of the pronouns between stich 30c and verses 31-32, there is also here a strong indication of a division between stanzas VII and VIII. According to the RSV the *pronoun* in stich 30c and stich 31a are both singular (but 2nd person in stich 30c, and 3rd person in stich 31a). This version of the Bible gives no indication of a division between stanzas VII and VIII, because the status of their pronouns has remained the same.

According to the NIV and the RSV the *verb* (renew) in stich 30c (stanza VII) and the verb (endure) in stich 31a (stanza VIII) are both in the present tense, which means that, according to these two translations no division is possible at this point. However, according to the NIV readers, the *verb* (give) in stich 30c (stanza VII) is in the present tense, while the *verb* (continue) in stich 31a (stanza VIII) is in the future tense. This difference in the verb tense here indicates a division between stanza VII and stanza VIII.

Repetition might also be regarded as a text marker. Repetition of sentences forms a marker; here they make stanza VII a closed unit:

Stich 28a “when you give”... stich 28b “when you open”...

Stich 29a “when you hide”... stich 29b “when you take”...

Stich 30a “when you send”... stich 30b “and you renew”...

Three factors (verbs, pronouns and content) were used to indicate the dividing lines between the stanzas and to demarcate stanzas.

3.3.3.2 Content analysis¹⁹⁵

This psalm is about praising Yahweh for what he has created. However, this creation is not simply a past event, but continues in Yahweh's preservation of the creating and sustaining of the world and its inhabitants.

Both Spieckermann (1989:32) and Köckert (2000:275) have shown that Psalm 104 was composed in stages.

3.3.3.2.1 Stanza I (1-2a) Praise and clothes for Yahweh.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Reader's Version (NIVR)	Revised Standard Version (RSV)
¹ Praise the LORD, my soul. LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.	¹ I will praise the LORD. LORD my God, you are very great. You are dressed in glory and majesty.	1 Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, ² who coverest thyself with light as with a garment,
² The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment;	² The LORD wraps himself in light as if it were a robe.	

In stichs 1abc–2a Yahweh is praised and he clothes himself with light.

Spieckermann (1989:32) and Köckert (2000:275) both agree that stichs 1b - 4b were part of the original poem. Thus, practically all of Stanza I (stichs 1abc – 2a) and Stanza II (stichs 2b – 4b) form part of the original poem¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Futato (2009:330) shows that after the psalm opens with praise for Yahweh in Stanza I (vv 1-2a), then stanzas (II vv 2b-4) and (III vv 5-10) follow, that praise the Lord for the stability of the universe he has made (vv 2b-10). Stanzas IV – VII show Yahweh's abundant supply in the world (IV vv 11-18; V vv 19-24; VI vv 25-26; VII vv 27-30). The psalm concludes with praise and prayers for the Creator's glory (VIII vv 31-35).

Stich 1b: “Lord my God¹⁹⁷, you are very great”¹⁹⁸;

Stich 1c: “You are clothed with splendour and majesty”¹⁹⁹;

Stich 2a: “He wraps himself in light²⁰⁰ as with a garment”²⁰¹.

This psalm opens in stichs 1a²⁰² and 1b²⁰³ with praise for Yahweh. Stich 1a: “Praise the Lord, my soul”. Stich 1b “Lord my God, you are very great”; The praise that is evoked from the worshipper, however, is not praise for the creation, but praise for the Creator, Yahweh.

In stichs 1bc Yahweh is addressed directly in the second person (you)²⁰⁴. Stich 1b “Lord my God, you are very great”; Stich 1c “you are clothed with splendour and majesty”. This form of address for Yahweh is not common, as he is more commonly addressed indirectly in the third person singular (he, him, himself). Yahweh is addressed because here Yahweh is being praised. In contrast to the rest of the poem where Yahweh’s actions are being related.

¹⁹⁶ But contra Dahood (1970:33), who writes that stichs 1abc stand apart from the body of the psalm, and as such has been interpreted as a liturgical addition to the original form of the poem. Cf Goulder (1975:269).

¹⁹⁷ Kroll (1987:303) writes that this statement is a remarkable blending of faith and fear. The psalmist speaks the unspeakable name of Yahweh with holy reverence, and yet personalizes Yahweh by calling him, “my God”.

¹⁹⁸ Allen (1983:33) indicates that here the poet exclaims in wonder at the greatness of the God he worships. Cf Westermann (1989:249) who explains that when someone says to God: “Lord my God, you are very great,” he means a greatness which man cannot comprehend, which he can only sense in action.

¹⁹⁹ Futato (2009:331) advocates that the portrait of God being robed with splendour and majesty in v1c, is a royal image. Westermann (1989:249), says that throughout the entire ancient world, words like majesty and splendour are properly terms for deity and the divine.

²⁰⁰ Miller (2000b:89) remarks that light refers both to the beginning of creation and to the wondrous and mysterious nature of Yahweh. The one wrapping himself in light is also the creator of the light. Terrien (2003:713) says that the purpose of the light is to produce a blinding effect rendering Yahweh invisible. Also 1 Timothy 6:16 where Paul writes of Yahweh: “who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can be seen.” Hendry (1980:161) says that light is the sphere of form, while in darkness all things are formless. Therefore, the creation of light at the beginning is an intimation that the world to be created will be a world of form and order.

²⁰¹ Goldingay (2008:183-4) describes the garment as follows: the sky’s brightness and light suggest brightness and light that Yahweh puts on like an outer garments. A cloak which reveals Yahweh’s majesty and conceals the divine nature. This light therefore pre-exists the sun’s creation.

²⁰² According to Brown (2010:52) the poet appeals to himself (with a command to the “soul”), to praise the Lord. Using the word *my*, points to the fact that the praise is uttered by an *individual*.

²⁰³ Whereas the poet was speaking to himself in stich 1a, he is here (stichs 1bc) speaking directly to Yahweh in stichs 1bc. Cf Ryrie (2004:117-9), who explains that the significance of this direct address is that it shows that for the psalmist Yahweh’s presence was personal. This personalness meant that Yahweh could be addressed as “You.” The words “I” and “My God” describe an intimate person-to-person relationship.

²⁰⁴ Anderson A A (1972b:718) writes that the poet addresses Yahweh in the second person (you), acknowledging his majesty. Cf Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:45), who explain further that this is a shift in speech from speaking directly to Yahweh (stichs 1 bc) (you), to speaking about Yahweh (stichs 2ab) (he, his).

Several figures of speech in stanza I contribute to its understanding (1-2a).

This stanza has one *synthetic parallelism*, one *synonymous parallelism* and one *emblematic parallelism*. Parallelisms help to make an idea or argument clear and easy to remember (Mickelsen 1963:324-5).

Stichs 1b and 1c form the *synthetic parallelism*. Because the idea expressed in the first stich is expanded by that of the second stich, and completes the idea. Stich 1b “Lord my God, you are very great”, stich 1c “You are clothed with splendour and majesty”. This parallelism can aid in the efficient connection of ideas.

Stichs 1c and 2a form a *synonymous parallelism*, according to Seybold (1990:70), because the second stich (2a) repeats the content of the first stich (1c), but in different words. Stich 1c “You are clothed with splendour and majesty”; stich 2a “The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment”. The function of this parallelism is to highlight the wonder of Yahweh, while it also connects similar ideas.

Stichs 2a and 2b form an *emblematic parallelism*. Where one of the lines illustrates the other line by a metaphor or a simile (like/as) (Sugden 1928:154). Stich 2a “The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment”; Light thus first appears not as a gift for creation (as in Gen 1) but as Yahweh’s own clothing (Goldingay 2008:184), and stich 2b “he stretches out the heavens like a tent”, Yahweh brings light into the heavens, which cover the earth like tent curtains. This image does not imply that Yahweh is constructing a tent to live in (Goldingay 2008:184). Because of the simile (or metaphor) that is introduced into one of the stichs in this form of parallelism, it brings out the full force of the meaning of the image that occurs in the other stich (Alter 1985:21).

An *inclusio* consists of creating a frame by placing similar material at the beginning and end of a section. Stichs 1a and 35c form an *inclusio* to alert the reader to the

important theme of Psalm 104, which is to praise Yahweh²⁰⁵. Stich 1a “Praise the Lord, my soul”, and stich 35c “Praise the Lord, my soul. Praise the Lord”. According to Allen (1983:32) there is also evidence of an *inclusio* in Psalms 104:1b and 33b. This *inclusio* again creates a frame in which Yahweh is praised. Stich 1b “Lord My God, you are very great”, and Stich 33b: “I will sing praise to my God as long as I live”; which could just be an intensification of *inclusio* 1a and 35c. Both these *inclusios* give a framework for praise to the psalm.

A *metaphor* is a comparison without the mention of *like* or *as* (Tremper Longman 1988:115). A *metaphor* makes a direct comparison between two things that are not typically thought of in the same way in order to illustrate a clear meaning (Loader 1987:49). Barnes (1950:68) says that stichs 1c and 2a are *metaphorical statements*, because human characteristics are ascribed to Yahweh while he is not human. In stich 1c the *metaphor* is “you are clothed”, and in stich 2a the *metaphor* is “to wrap as with a garment.” Stich 1c “you are clothed with splendour and majesty”, and stich 2a “The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment”.

Simile. Stich 2a “The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment”. Stich 2a is a *simile* because of the presence of the word *as*, in the sentence ... “as with a garment.” Here the word “as” means that as a garment is wrapped around a person, just so in a similar manner the light is wrapped around Yahweh. The function of a simile is that it deepens one’s understanding of the stich (Mickelsen 1963:182).

Chiasm. Stichs 1a and 1b form a *chiasm* with the personal “my God” expression. Stich 1a “Praise the Lord, my soul”. Stich 1b “Lord my God, you are very great”. Where “Praise the Lord” in stich 1a connects to “you are very great” in stich 1b; and where “Lord my God” in stich 1b connects to “my soul” in stich 1a. Showing that the God of the creation is also the personal God of the psalmist. The function of the *chiasm* is to give structure and poetic form to the text, making the text more memorable.

²⁰⁵ Fokkelman (2001:46) relates that the hymns enlist rhetorical devices in an attempt to encourage praise. Futato (2009:29) says that this expression occurs 23 times in the Book of Psalms, and then only at the beginning and ending of a psalm.

3.3.3.2.2 Stanza II (2b - 4b) A tent, chariot and servants for Yahweh.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Version Reader's (NIVR)	Revised Standard Version (RSV)
<p>he stretches out the heavens like a tent</p> <p>³ and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.</p> <p>He makes the clouds his chariot</p> <p>and rides on the wings of the wind.</p> <p>⁴ He makes winds his messengers,^[a]</p> <p>flames of fire his servants.</p>	<p>He spreads out the heavens like a tent.</p> <p>³ He builds his palace high in the heavens.</p> <p>He makes the clouds serve as his chariot.</p> <p>He rides on the wings of the wind.</p> <p>⁴ He makes the winds serve as his messengers.</p> <p>He makes flashes of lightning serve him.</p>	<p>who hast stretched out the heavens like a tent,</p> <p>³ who hast laid the beams of thy chambers on the waters,</p> <p>who makest the clouds thy chariot,</p> <p>who ridest on the wings of the wind,</p> <p>⁴ who makest the winds thy messengers,</p> <p>fire and flame thy ministers.</p>

This stanza speaks of the sky²⁰⁶, i.e. the celestial realm above, explaining Yahweh's actions outside earth, in the heavens. Miller (2003:89) indicates that stanza II is made up out of 5/6 *participial clauses*, explaining Yahweh's actions in heaven. 2a "he *wraps* himself in light as with a garment"; 2b "he *stretches* out the heavens like a tent"; 3a "and *lays* the beams of his upper chambers on their waters"; 3b "he *makes* the clouds his chariot, and *rides* on the wings of the wind"; 4a "he *makes* the winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants." Yahweh is the ruler of the heavens (2b – 4b).²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Terrien (2003:713) states that the sky is not only the "habitat" made by Yahweh for himself, but it supports the beams for the chambers that contain the heavenly waters. While Westermann (1989:249), writes that "the waters" are the immense sea, which for Yahweh is the place on which he dwells.

²⁰⁷ Seybold (1990:78) explains that Psalm 104 begins with the motif of the setting up of the heavens (specifically in stichs 2b-3a) as the upper part of a pile-dwelling in the primeval waters.

In this stanza (2b-4b) a description is also given of how Yahweh uses the elements of the heavens (which he created) (the water, the wind²⁰⁸ and the clouds²⁰⁹), to make things for himself. He makes a tent (stich 2b)²¹⁰ and upper chambers (stich 3a)²¹¹ (a palace), a chariot (stich 3b) for riding (stich 3c), and staff (stich 4ab)²¹² for his own use. Futato (2009:331) explains 3bc very clearly as follows: “from his palace, God rode forth as the divine warrior, on his chariot made up of the clouds”.

After Yahweh had created the upper layer of creation (the heavens, stichs 2b – 4b), he then created its lower level (the earth, verses 5-10) (Futato 2009:331)²¹³. This agrees with the picture that was held in ancient times of the earth. The upper layer being a cupola or dome, that enclosed the water on which the earth was suspended.

Stichs 2b – 4ab are part of stichs 1a – 4b. According to Spieckermann (1989:32, 46, 48) this last group was part of the original poem; therefore, stichs 2b-4ab were part of the original poem.

Buttenwieser (1969:52) draws attention to stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters”. There is a common ancient notion of a heavenly water reservoir, or, as it is called, the heavenly ocean, from which the rain was believed to pour down on the earth. Thus the author of Psalm 104, gives this notion a new poetic

²⁰⁸ According to Barker (1986:73) the wind, together with the waters, the clouds and the flaming fire, collectively portray a thunderstorm.

²⁰⁹ Nielsen (2010:203) is of the opinion that Yahweh has the image of a person as “he makes the clouds his chariot” verse 3b, or “rides on the wings of the wind” verse 3c to transport himself (personification). Alter (2007:363) reminds the reader that one of Yahweh’s images is “rider on the clouds.” This image is borrowed from Canaanite mythology.

²¹⁰ Allen (1983:26) says that this phrase “to stretch out the heavens” (stich 2b) refers to the cosmic tent prepared by Yahweh as his special place of abode, from which he was to come in theophany, to create the world. Cf Isaiah 40:22: “He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.” Contra to these opinions, Goldingay (2008:183-4) tells that Yahweh’s tent (stich 2b) is not equal to Yahweh’s palace. He explains that the image simply describes the origin of the sky’s expanse; it does not imply that Yahweh is constructing a tent to live in.

²¹¹ Brown (2009:661-680), who indicates that Yahweh created the heavens for his abode (stichs 2b-3a), then he created the rest of creation as home for all of life. Kidner (1975:369) remarks that the translation of “upper chambers” in stich 3a is correct for it contains the idea of height, as with the roof-chamber on an eastern house. Also 2 Kings 4:10: “Lets make a small room on the roof...”

²¹² Allen (1983:33) suggests that Yahweh was attended by an impressive retinue (of messengers and servants). *Contra* Perowne (1882:237), who argues that the view, that Yahweh’s messengers (or angels) are actually secret agents who assume the forms of wind and lightning, in order to accomplish his will, has no support in the Old Testament.

²¹³ The universe is pictured as two-layered in Psalm 148; where the upper layer is described in verse 1-6, and the lower layer in verses 7-14.

turn of his own in stich 3a when he writes that he “lays²¹⁴ the beams of his upper chambers²¹⁵ on their waters”²¹⁶. This is part of the explanation of stanza II (2b-4b) showing the majesty and power of Yahweh.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza II (2b-4b).

In this stanza there is one *emblematic parallelism*; there are two *synthetic parallelisms* and two *synonymous parallelisms*. Parallelisms are used because they enhance the literary quality of the work.

Stichs 2b and 3a form an *emblematic parallelism*. Stich 2b “he stretches out the heavens like a tent”, and stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters”.

Synthetic Example one. Stichs 2b and 3a²¹⁷, Stich 2b “he stretches out the heavens like a tent”, and stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters”. Showing that Yahweh is in charge of all the elements of nature. Here he is building his palace by using these elements from nature. Example two: stichs 3b and 3c²¹⁸ Stich 3b “he makes the clouds his chariot”, and stich 3c “and rides on the wings of the wind”. Yahweh uses the clouds and the wind on which to move about. This parallelism even uses can aid in the efficient connection of ideas.

Synonymous parallelism. Example one is formed by stichs 3b and 3c (Seybold 1990:70). Stich 3b “He makes the clouds his chariot”, and stich 3c “and rides on the wings of the wind”. Yahwe uses the clouds and the wind to move about. Example two is formed by stichs 4a and 4b (Kugel 1981:158; Seybold 1990:70) Stich 4a “he makes

²¹⁴ Dahood (1970:104) observes that “beams’ can also mean “plank or boarding” which helps focus the picture drawn by the psalmist. According to Barnes (1950:83) the word ‘beams’ means an upper chamber or a loft.

²¹⁵ Barnes (1950:83) remarks this as the abode of Yahweh that rises above the world. The allusion here is to the waters above the firmament; and the meaning is that Yahweh has constructed the place of his own abode in or above the waters. Dahood (1970:34) argues that the traditional rendering of stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters” produces a blurred image that exegetes have not succeeded in clarifying.

²¹⁶ Ringgren (1963:96) notes that according to the Israelitic view, the earth was a flat disc, floating on the ocean. Cf Job 38:4: The Lord is speaking to Job “where were you when I laid the earth’s foundations?”

²¹⁷ See Kugel (1981:158), Kidner (1975:368-9) and Seybold (1990:70).

²¹⁸ Kugel (1981:158) and Kidner (1975:368-9).

winds his messengers”, and stich 4b “flames of fire his servants”. Yahweh is completely in charge of everything, he even makes the elements of nature his servants. This parallelism creates an emphasis on repeated ideas, and can also connect similar ideas.

Metaphor. A metaphor makes a direct comparison between two things that are not typically thought of in the same way in order to illustrate a clear meaning (Loader 1987:49). In stich 2b “he stretches out the heavens like a tent”, “like a tent” is a *metaphor of fabrics* (Kidner 1975:368-9, Alter 2007:xxviii). The fabric which makes the tent is the heavens. This *metaphor* gives colour and strength to the language used. This phrase refers to the cosmic tent prepared by Yahweh, from which he was to come to create the earth (Allen 1983:26).

Stich 3a is a *metaphor* of Yahweh’s palace (Kidner 1975:368-9). Stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters”. The upper chambers are a *metaphor* for Yahweh’s palace. Showing that Yahweh can use anything in nature as he pleases.

Stich 3b referring to the chariot, is the *heavenly warrior metaphor* (Klingbeil 2010:124-130). Stich 3b “he makes the clouds his chariot”. Chariots were used by warriors, and the clouds are up in heaven, therefore the naming of the chariot as the heavenly warrior. The *metaphor* is “cloud his chariot”. Stich 3c “and rides on the wings of the wind” is a *metaphor* according to Klingbeil (2010:124) and Jones (2010:42). The wind is given wings on which Yahweh rides. The *metaphor* here is a symbolical manner of speaking that gives colour and strength to the language used. Klingbeil (2010:124) says that stichs 4ab are also *heavenly warrior metaphors*. Stich 4a “he makes winds his messengers”, with “winds his messengers” being the *metaphor*; stich 4b “flames of fire his servants”, with the whole stich being the *metaphor*. The winds and the flames of fire (lightning) are both found in the heavens, and at times they can both have catastrophic influences (hence the “warrior”). These six stichs show Yahweh’s greatness in nature. The elements of nature have been given harnessed to be of use to Yahweh.

A *chiasm* is formed when the two stichs form a cross over pattern. The “A” and the “B” parts of two stich cross over each other, to form an ABB`A` arrangement. Futato

(2009:330) says that stichs 3b and 3c together form a *chiasm*; Stich 3b “He makes the clouds²¹⁹ his chariot”, Stich 3c “and rides on the wings of the wind”²²⁰. The *chiasm* is formed as follows: The word “clouds” in stich 3b connects with the words “wings of the winds” in stich 3c. While the word “chariot” in stich 3b connects with the word “rides” in stich 3c. A *chiasm* is used because it binds similar statements to form a unit. The function of a *chiasm* is to give structure and poetic form to the text, making the text more memorable.

Personification means attributing human characteristics to something that is not human, because it can make a written description more vivid. Stichs 3a, 3b and 3c provide examples of *personifications* in this stanza. In stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters” is a human activity to indicate some building taking place. Stich 3b “He makes the clouds his chariot” where “his chariot” is the *personification*, as it indicates that Yahweh rides in this chariot. Stich 3c “and rides on the wings of the wind” is a *personification* because “to ride” is a human activity.

Allen (1983:32) warns that the translation of verse 4²²¹ “He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants”, is problematic²²². Von Herder (1971:62) says that the employment of angels in the psalms is *personification*. Thus stichs 4a and 4b are examples of *personification*. Although not one of the three translations that were used in this study utilizes the word “angels” in this verse, Craigie (1983b:77) says that “fire and flame” are *personifications* of the ministers of the Lord. These personifications are used so that mankind can understand something about the greatness of Yahweh.

²¹⁹ Keil & Delitzsch (1867:140) refer to Isaiah 19:1: “See, the Lord rides on a swift cloud” in order to explain that Yahweh makes the reservoir of the upper waters, the clouds, into His chariot, upon which he rides along in order to make His power felt below upon the earth. Cf Dahood (1970:35), who states that Yahweh is not sitting on a cloud (his chariot), but that he drives his chariot across the heavens. Also Futato (2007:89). The imagery used by Israelite poets, is that the “rain clouds” (stich 3b) were the Lord’s chariot, which he rode (3c) to bring the fructifying rains.

²²⁰ Anderson A A (1972b:719) explains that whatever the exact meaning of stich 3c is (“and rides on the wings of the wind”), the underlying purpose is to stress that all nature exists to serve Yahweh. Keil & Delitzsch (1867:140) who say that “the wings of the wind” take the place of the “cloud-chariot.”

²²¹ Routley (1975:102) argues that stichs 4ab is more mysterious than meaningful. However according to him the true meaning of this verse is to be found in the RSV of the Bible “who makest the winds thy messengers, fire and flame thy ministers”. The NIV compares well with this.

²²² Miller (1986:21) suggests further that it is especially important that in this verse both “winds” and “fire” appear as Yahweh’s messengers. He explains that this combination is not uncommon in the ANE mythology, especially in the cosmic conflicts. Gillingham (2008:22) shows that Hebrews 1:7 draws from Psalm 104:4 in an argument about Yahweh’s superiority over the angels, “In speaking of the angels he says, ‘He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire’”.

Metonymy. This is a figure of speech that replaces the name of a thing with the name of something else with which it is closely associated (Mickelsen 1963:185-6). In stich 3c, “rides on the wings of the wind” meaning Yahweh reigns over the wind, he has control of the winds. In Ugarit it is used of Baal, ‘rider of the clouds’. The function of *metonymy* is to make the text more picturesque (Caird 1980:136).

A *merism* is when a ‘part’ is mentioned but means the ‘whole’, thus ‘part’ of a ‘whole’ e.g. foundation = whole earth. The merism is used so that the poet can demonstrate his command of the language by being economical with words (Watson 1995:33). Futato (2009:330) notes that stich 4a “he makes winds his messengers, is in contrast to stich 3c where “he rides on the wings of the wind”. These two stichs together form a *merism*, which is a figure of speech that uses two poles or extremes to communicate a totality. In stichs 3c and 4a the “wind” has different functions. In stich 3c Yahweh rides on the wind, but in stich 4a he makes the winds his messengers²²³.

3.3.3.2.3 Stanza III (5 – 10) Stability of the earth.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Version Reader’s (NIVR)	Revised Standard Version (RSV)
⁵ He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.	⁵ He placed the earth on its foundations. It can never be moved.	⁵ Thou didst set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be shaken.
⁶ You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.	⁶ You, LORD, covered it with the oceans like a blanket. The waters covered the mountains.	⁶ Thou didst cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.
⁷ But at your rebuke the waters fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;	⁷ But you commanded the waters, and they ran away. At the sound of your thunder they rushed off.	⁷ At thy rebuke they fled; at the sound of thy thunder they took to flight. ⁸ The mountains rose, the

²²³ In Isaiah 17:13 the wind is a symbol of Yahweh’s wrath and judgement (Routledge 2013:112). Weiser (1961:667) remarks that travelling on cloud and wind, Yahweh uses the clouds as his chariot, and the wind as his winged horse.

<p>⁸ they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys, to the place you assigned for them.</p> <p>⁹ You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth.</p> <p>¹⁰ He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains.</p>	<p>⁸ They flowed down the mountains. They went into the valleys. They went to the place you appointed for them.</p> <p>⁹ You drew a line they can't cross. They will never cover the earth again.</p> <p>¹⁰ The LORD makes springs pour water into the valleys. It flows between the mountains.</p>	<p>valleys sank down to the place which thou didst appoint for them.</p> <p>⁹ Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.</p> <p>¹⁰ Thou makest springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills,</p>
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Yahweh is the undisputed master of all the elements of his creation. He gives the earth solid foundations and the water secure boundaries. The waters²²⁴ at one time covered the earth, but are now established in their place²²⁵. Stanzas II and III praise Yahweh for the stability of the universe he has made (Futato 2009:330).

Spieckermann (1989:32, 46, 48) and Köckert (2000:275) suggest that verses 5a – 9b were later added to the poem as an entity.

Barker (1986:74-8) indicates that verse 5 establishes the setting for the new scene. Now Yahweh starts with his creations²²⁶ of the earth²²⁷. In verses 6 the earth

²²⁴ In stanza III the waters are explicitly mentioned only four times, but they are alluded to without mentioning the word, seven times.

²²⁵ Davidson (1998:340) explains about the chaos waters; rebuked, they fled to become mountain springs and rivers in the valleys, recognizing the boundaries within which they must flow. Grogan (2008:174) suggests that “rebuke” here simply makes vivid the portrayal of a creator in absolute control of the elements. Also Keil & Delitzsch (1867:141) show that in this stanza the poet speaks of the restraining of the lower waters and the establishing of the land standing out of the water.

²²⁶ Futato (2009:23) tells that in verse 5 there is reference to the world being firmly established and not able to be shaken, a clear reference to God’s work at creation. Eaton (2003:362) indicates that in verse 5 tribute to the creator continues with reference to the firm foundation of the earth upon its bases, the bottoms of the great mountains.

²²⁷ Buttenwieser (1969:167) maintains that the explanation of the creating of the world found in verse 5 “He set the earth on its foundations, it can never be moved” finds its explanation in the idea which men

undergoes a deluge of water. In verse 9 the waters are established in their place, and in verse 10 springs and ravines are made. In this stanza there is clear progression in the condition of the earth²²⁸, in the process of creation: from a barren earth to a very usable workable earth²²⁹.

The stability of the earth is due to its solid foundation, although these foundations emerge from the primal waters of the abyss, which presumably rest on nothing. Terrien (2003:714) explains that verse 5 describes how Yahweh created²³⁰ the earth and the water²³¹. Once the earth was not covered by water anymore, the ground that was now free from the water could support life. In this stanza, stichs 5a and 10a refer to Yahweh indirectly in the third person singular (he), the poet is speaking about Yahweh as if he were not present. When in stichs 6a, 7ab, 8c and 9a the poet speaks to Yahweh in the second person singular (you, your)²³², he is addressing Yahweh directly.

After Yahweh had created the world, standing on its own foundations²³³ (v 5), he covered²³⁴ the whole world²³⁵, including its foundations, with water²³⁶, even to the tops of the mountains.

in antiquity had of the earth, that it was a disk surrounded by the sea and resting on pillars. Futato (2009:331) explains that in the Old Testament the universe is pictured as two-layered. The upper layer (stanza II, stichs 2b-4ab), and the lower layer (stanza III, stichs 5a – 10a).

²²⁸ The word “earth” occurs altogether seven times in this poem, in stichs 5a, 9b, 13b (land), 14c, 24c, 32a and 35a. Therefore, according to Limburg (1994:342), the thematic word in this poem is the word “earth.”

²²⁹ Howard V (1992:177) remarks that after God has established the earth by controlling and limiting the watery chaos (vv 5-10), he then establishes a sphere in which life is possible (vv 11-18). He further says that it is a matter of providing the right amount of water for every plant and every living creature.

²³⁰ Miller (2000b:90) observes that most of the acts of creation in the psalm begin with participial expressions, as seen in the following: stich 5a he *set*, stich 5b *moved*; stich 6a You *covered*, stich 6b waters *stood*; stich 7a your *rebuke*, and waters *fled*, stich 7b your *thunder* and took to *flight*; stich 8a they *flowed*, stich 8b they *went down*, stich 8c you *assigned*; stich 9a you *set*, and cannot *cross*. Stich 9b *cover* the earth; stich 10a He *makes*, and *pours* water, stich 10b it *flows*.

²³¹ Miller (2000b:91) shows that the creation of earth thus occurs in two stages, both of which are the Lord’s doing: the covering of the earth with the deep (stich 6a), and the movement of these waters to places where they may function in a constructive way (vv 7a – 10b), providing sustenance and homes.

²³² According to Anderson A A (1972a:32-3) Yahweh is usually spoken of indirectly in the third person singular (he, his), the use of the direct speech in the second person singular (you) being rare.

²³³ Futato (2007:128) indicates that first Yahweh placed the land on a solid foundation, so that it would not totter.

²³⁴ Kroll (1987:303) used *metonymy* to describe the covering of the earth with water. “Yahweh wrapped the foundations of the earth in aquatic clothing and concealed the highest mountains in a watery womb.” Schafran (2013:7) exclaims that Yahweh shows his sovereignty over the earth by covering the earth with water and by subduing the chaotic waters (v 7).

Anderson GW (1966:152) remarks that the references to the deep (stich 6a), the flood (stich 6b), the waters and others, are commonly found in the *Psalter*. The waters denote suffering and distress.

Verse 6 tells how the waters covered the tops of mountains²³⁷ but at Yahweh's command²³⁸ the water²³⁹ fled²⁴⁰. Yahweh's rebuke (stich 7a) that is, thunder, threw the waters into a panic (stich 7b). Like panic stricken soldiers, the waters retreated. Yahweh declared that the waters on the earth should gather to make space for the land.

In stichs 8abc the water is fleeing²⁴¹ from the mountain. Whether up or down is not known²⁴². In the NIV "they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys, to the place you assigned for them." In the NIVR "They flowed down the mountains. They went into the valleys. They went to the place you appointed for them." In the RSV "The mountains rose, the valley sank down to the place which thou didst appoint for them." The translations of the NIV and the NIVR are referring to the water, while in the RSV the mountains and the valleys are the subject. Verse 8 is

²³⁵ Perowne (1882:238) remarks that the original chaos is described, not according to the heathen notion, as a confused mass, earth and water mingled together, but the earth as already formed, yet completely enveloped in the water. Allen (1983:26) says that in verses 6-9 is presented a version of the ANE myth of the divine war against chaos (Chaos Kampf). There is no description of a battle; the waters simply flee at his coming (v 7).

²³⁶ Kraus (1989:300) says that in the beginning the primeval flood, covered all lands like a garment. Even above the high mountains the waters of the primeval sea stood. Cf. Jonah 2:5 "The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me."

²³⁷ Delitzsch (1952b:130) argues that the deep (stich 6a), with which God covers the land, is that primordial mass of water in which it lay first of all as it were in embryo, before it came into being. According to Ringgren (1963:95) the deep is more or less equivalent to "the waters", i.e. the masses of water that were believed in the beginning to have covered the earth.

²³⁸ Weiser (1961:667) tells that Yahweh has driven away the primeval flood, which once covered the mountains, by the voice of his thunder. Day (2000:99) further notes that this rebuke of Yahweh is not a singular event, but ongoing within creation. Also Barnes (1950:83) advocates that it was as if Yahweh had been displeased that the waters prevented the appearing or the rising of the dry land.

²³⁹ Broyles (1989:209) says that Yahweh not only subdued the chaotic waters (vv 6-9), he transformed them into life-giving waters (vv 10-16). Perowne (1882:238) relates that this vast, swelling, tumultuous sea hears the "rebuke" of Yahweh, and sinks to its appointed place; the earth appears, emerges from her watery covering, and shows her surface diversified with mountain and valley.

²⁴⁰ Barnes (1950:83) explains that the waters fled as if they were frightened. Cf. Job 26:11: "The pillars of the heavens quake, aghast at his rebuke."

²⁴¹ Allen (1983:27) says that this is to be understood in terms of disorganized movement helter-skelter, back and forth, as they leave the mountains. Clifford (1981:148-9) indicates that in verse 8, like panic-stricken soldiers, the waters retreat pell-mell up mountains and down valleys until they arrive at the seashore, their new boundary. Also Kraus (1989:300) suggests that the destructive waters are forced back to a defined and ordered sphere in stich 8a "the mountains, which are now the sources where streams arise to flow down in brooks and rivers."

²⁴² What seems to trouble commentators is the water ascending mountains in stich 8a.

possibly a problematic²⁴³ verse because there seems to be two completely different translations.

Naturalistic explanations of whether the water or the mountains are the subject, have been given by Sutcliffe and others²⁴⁴. Did the mountains or the water²⁴⁵ rise? The RSV says that the mountains rose. The writer of this dissertation postulates that because the water went down into the valleys, therefore the water on the mountains became less and this gave the *impression* of the mountains rising.

Keil & Delitzsch (1867:139) argue that it is only with violence that stich 8a is accommodated within the text²⁴⁶; and because of this, it is possible that a later poet-hand was persuaded to enlarge upon it²⁴⁷. Although the water is distributed over the earth, yet certain areas are not covered with water (v 9)²⁴⁸. The water went “to the place that you assigned for them”.

Verse 9 reads “You set a boundary²⁴⁹ they cannot cross; never again will they cover²⁵⁰ the earth.” The chaotic waters flowed over the mountains and into the valleys. The

²⁴³ Clifford (1981:88-9) argues that the interpretation of verse 8 has however not been resolved. Attempts at making sense of verse 8 are wide-ranging.

²⁴⁴ According to Sutcliffe (1952:177-9) explanations usually fall into one of two categories; those regarding the mountains as subject, or those that take the mountains as object and the waters as subject. Sutcliffe (1952:177-9) explains further that the perfect interpretation for verse 8 is the following: apart from the sea, the water in the springs and rivers on the plains, as well as the rain water, there were also springs in the mountains. And it is this water which could then have gushed out of the springs high on the mountains, and then flowed downwards. Allen (1983:27) refers to Sutcliffe’s suggestions as “wooden”, meaning it is not flexible.

²⁴⁵ Kraus (1989:300) remarks that in verse 8 we probably have the conception that the destructive masses of water are directed to a precisely assigned pathway. They (the waters) rise up to the fountainheads of the mountains and then (as brooks and streams) come down to the valleys. There they now have their place.

²⁴⁶ Briggs & Briggs (1925:329-339) argue that verse 8 (stichs abc) should be eliminated as it is “an incongruous insertion” into the text. Cf Delitzsch (1952b:128), who also says that it is only with violence that verse 8 was accommodated in the text.

²⁴⁷ Spieckermann (1989:32,46 and 48) and Köckert (2000:275) have argued that Psalm 104 was in any case enlarged a few times before its final form.

²⁴⁸ Goldingay (1987:223) suggests that in Psalm 104 there is also the dark side of creation: the need for the waters to be restricted. Howard V (1992:177) further explains that after God has established the earth by controlling and limiting the watery chaos (vv 5 – 10), he then establishes a sphere in which life is possible (vv 11 – 18). Also Gerstenberger (2001:223) explains it is about the organisation of the land so that it may sustain life.

²⁴⁹ Kraus (1989:300) notes in verse 9: “For the chaotic waters a boundary has been set, that can no longer be crossed”. On the establishment of a boundary by which the primeval chaos is dammed up. Cf Sabourin (1969:79). It almost seems that the vast domain of the waters was neutralized rather than conquered when limits were assigned to them. See also Jeremiah 5:22b who reads: “I made the sand a boundary for the sea, an everlasting barrier it cannot cross.”

boundaries set by Yahweh constitute the conditions for ordered life as is described in verses 9-14.

Stich 10a reads “He makes springs pour water²⁵¹ into the ravines”. Stich 10b reads “it flows between the mountains”²⁵². This is a description of how a water system was brought about which would supply water for the maintenance of life.

The psalmist now turns from the destructive role of the once threatening waters to their beneficial quality and constructive role²⁵³. Now that the waters are gathered together into the seas²⁵⁴, Yahweh has taken care that the earth shall not be dry and barren²⁵⁵. He has made provision for watering it²⁵⁶.

Figures of speech also appear in stanza III (5-10).

Parallelism is a literary device that has parts of the writing grammatically similar. This creates an emphasis on repeated ideas and can also connect ideas in poetry (Mickelsen 1963:324-5). In this stanza there are three *synthetic parallelisms*, three *synonymous parallelisms*, two *antithetical parallelisms* and one *emblematic parallelism*. Writing the thoughts in pairs makes the poetry more picturesque.

²⁵⁰ Kroll (1987:303) indicates that the law’s of Yahweh’s nature prohibit the waters of the oceans from leaving the ocean bed and once again covering the earth. Never again will they cover the earth. Earth, freed of encompassing water, can support life. The world is created. Anderson B W (1983:157) says on verse 9 that a limit you fixed, which they are not to transgress, never again to cover the earth. Also Dahood (1970:37) states that Yahweh does not eradicate the chaotic waters.

²⁵¹ Kidner (1975:370) explains on verse 10, that the psalm surveys the hospitable earth that was the end-product of this separation of seas and dry land. No longer submerged, nor on the other hand turned into a desert, it was to become a place of friendly streams, where Yahweh’s creatures are perfectly at home, needing no human provision.

²⁵² Cf. Eidevall (2010:17), who states that without water, life is endangered. Hence, fountain and river metaphors are often used to describe Yahweh’s life-supporting agency.

²⁵³ Kraus (1989:300) remarks that the waters of the chaos were subdued and placed in the service of Yahweh by serving its creatures, of which verses 10-16 give an impressive description. By means of fountains Yahweh sends the once dangerous waters down into the valleys. The deadly water chaos becomes a fountain of life that refreshes the animals of the field and the birds of the sky.

²⁵⁴ Goldingay (2008:187) suggests in verses 10-12 that in founding a place for the fleeing waters, Yahweh was not simply stopping them from being dangerous but putting them safely into a reservoir, available as a resource. So from the waters under the earth Yahweh sends out springs in wadis that go between the mountains on either side.

²⁵⁵ Futato (2009:331) argues, if all the water were completely confined to the seas, life on earth would be impossible.

²⁵⁶ Anderson BW (1983:158) explains in verses 10-13 that the chaotic waters, having been tamed, were converted to beneficial use. The waters gush up from underground springs and pour down in rain from the sky.

Synthetic parallelisms. Example one: Stich 5a “he set the earth on its foundations”, stich 5b “It can never be moved”. Meaning that the earth has a solid foundation, (Seybold 1990:70). Example two: Stich 8a “they flowed over the mountains”, stich 8b “they went down into the valleys”. The water that was on the mountain flowed over the mountain and down its sides. Yahweh is busy bringing the chaos waters under control. Example three: Stich 9a “you set a boundary they cannot cross”, stich 9b “never again will they cover the earth”. Once the waters had flowed down the mountains and into the low laying areas, Yahweh stopped the free flowing of the water and he confined their movement. Yahweh is still busy bringing the chaos waters under control. This parallelism can aid in the efficient connection of ideas.

Synonymous parallelisms. Example one: Stich 6a “You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment”, and stich 6b “the waters stood above the mountains”. The water is flowing onto the mountain. The water is busy moving chaotically, according to Allen (1983:26). Barker (1986:75) however says that the view that the two stichs 6a and 6b form a *synonymous parallelism* is speculative and problematic. Probably because of the presence of the word “as”, the stichs 6a and 6b fit better into the mould of an *emblematic parallelism*. Example two: Stich 7a “But at your rebuke the waters fled”. Stich 7b “at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.” Yahweh is still busy bringing the chaos waters under control, as explained by Seybold (1990:70) and Perowne (1882:238). Example three: Stich 10a “He makes springs pour water into the ravines”, stich 10b “it flows between the mountains”. The waters rush over the mountains and down into the low laying places. Yahweh is still busy bringing the chaos waters under control (Allen 1983:26). This parallelism creates an emphasis on repeated ideas, it connects similar ideas.

Antithetical parallelisms are formed because the second stich says exactly the opposite to the first stich of the same pair. Example one: In stich 6b “the water stood above the mountains”, and in stich 7a “But at your rebuke the waters fled” i.e. the waters flowed from the mountains (Kroll 1987:303). The chaos waters are calming down in the second example. In stich 8a “they flowed over the mountains”, and in stich 8b “they went down into the valleys” (Watson 1995:373). Although the water is *flowing* in both stichs 8a and 8b, the water is flowing *across* the mountain in stich 8a, but *down* the mountain in stich 8b. So for this reason stichs 8a and 8b can be

classified as both a *synonymous parallelism* as well as an *antithetical parallelism*. The function of the antithetical parallelism is that it brings balance, which helps with the idea of bringing order.

Stichs 6a and 6b form an *emblematic parallelism*. In this case stich 6a “You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment”; and stich 6b “the waters stood above the mountains”. Because of the simile that is introduced into one of the stichs in this form of parallelism, it brings out the full force of the meaning of the image that occurs in the other stich (Alter 1985:21).

Stichs 8a and 8b have *word pairs*²⁵⁷. Stich 8a “they flowed over the mountains;” stich 8b “They went down into the valleys”. The function of the word pairs is that they bring rhythm and balance to the narrative.

Metonymy is a figure of speech that replaces the name of a thing with the name of something else with which it is closely associated. The function of *metonymy* is to make the text more interesting. The first example. Stichs 5ab reflect a *metonymy*. In stich 5a “He set the earth on its foundations²⁵⁸”; and in stich 5b “it can never be moved”, meaning that the earth is standing firm. But the earth and the mountains were still covered with the water. The second example of *metonymy* is stichs 6b and 9a because both these movements of the water point to the fact that Yahweh was then still busy controlling the chaos waters. In stich 6b “the waters stood above the mountains”: which means that the water went very high because they flowed higher than the high mountains. While in stich 9a “You set a boundary²⁵⁹ they cannot cross”. Meaning the water can go so far and no further. The movement of the water is

²⁵⁷ Watson (1995:374) shows the word pairs in verse 8. Went up/went down, and mountains/valleys.

²⁵⁸ Goldingay (2008:185) explains stichs 5ab. The earth needed to be set on a secure foundation because it, too, stands over expanses of water, the waters that stream through the earth as springs and rivers and surround the land mass; the earth is thus a kind of floating island. To make it secure, Yahweh sank down pillars into the solid ground that lies beneath that. Broyles (1999:209) notes in verse 5 that in the ancient world, the mountains symbolized the pillars of the earth that stabilised it over the chaotic waters.

²⁵⁹ Job 38:8 where Yahweh is speaking to Job: “Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb,...” and Job 38:10-11: “when I fixed limits for it, and set its doors and bars in place, when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther’ ”.

restricted²⁶⁰. In stichs 6b and 9a Yahweh is busy bringing the chaos waters under control.

Metaphor. The first example of a metaphor in this stanza is found in stich 5a “He sets the earth on its foundations” (Goldingay (2008:179-89). The metaphor is that the “earth has a foundation”. The second example of a metaphor in this stanza is in both stichs 6a and 6b. Stich 6a “You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment”; stich 6b “the waters stood above the mountains.” In stich 6a the metaphor is that the “earth has a garment”, stich 6b the metaphor is that the waters stood”. The third example of a metaphor is found in stichs 7a and 7b. Stich 7a “But at your rebuke the waters fled”, and stich 7b “at the sound of your thunder they took to flight”. In stich 7a the metaphor is that “the waters fled”. In stich 7b the metaphor is “your thunder”, referring to Yahweh’s voice as thunder. Stich 7b is actually the *thundering in the heavens metaphor* (Klingbeil 2010:130; Eichrodt 1967:18). According to this metaphor there was thunder, while the waters were rushing across the mountains.

Inclusio. The purpose of this *inclusio* may be structural to alert the reader to the topic of the earth being formed²⁶¹. According to Miller (2000b:91) stichs 5a and 9b form an inclusion around verses 5b-9a because of the references to “earth” in both stichs²⁶². Stich 5a “He set the earth on its foundations”, stich 9b “never again will they cover the earth”. In other words there is an *inclusio* within the stanza. This *inclusio* could point to a division here between stanzas III and IV. However as the content of the stanzas was used as a first criterion for separating the stanzas, verse 10 is also included in stanza III, since it still has to do with the moving about of the water. An *inclusio* gives a framework for praise to the psalm.

Personification. The first example is found in stichs 6a and 6b. Stich 6a “You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment” and stich 6b “the waters stood

²⁶⁰ Van Hoozer (2005:640) indicates that in verse 9: “You set a boundary they cannot pass; never again will they cover the earth.” the waves of the sea may play within that limit, but when they flood dry land, death and destruction result. Cf Proverbs 8:29: “when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep its command...”

²⁶¹ Spieckermann (1989:32, 46, 48) and Köckert (2000:275) suggest that stichs 5a – 9b were later added to the poem as an entity. Could this be the reason why there is this *inclusio* here?

²⁶² According to Limburg (1994:342) the word “set” which is also found in stichs 5a and 9a, could also form an *inclusio*. Also the word “never”, which is found in stichs 5b and 9b, could form an *inclusio*.

above the mountains” (Alter 2007:363). A primordial engulfing of the land by the sea is here envisaged. The water portrayed as a garment is the *personification* in stich 6a. The waters standing are the *personification* in stich 6b. Yahweh is portrayed as the agent controlling the waters. The second example is in stichs 7a and 7b. These stichs are identified with *personification* of the water as *defeated warriors in flight* (Clifford 1981:88). On the other hand Miller (2000b:94, 95) identifies the sea or deep (or primeval ocean) as *half-personified* because these waters are conceived as a semi-personal being, which flees at the rebuke of God (v 7ab). Stich 7a “But at your rebuke the waters fled”, stich 7b “at the sound of your thunder they took to flight”. The *personification* in stich 7a is the fact that “the water flees at Yahweh’s rebuke”. In stich 7b the *personification* is that “the waters took to flight”.

Merism the whole is indicated by mentioning two components or two extremes. In this way several synonyms are given for the same thing. The function of the merism is to make the text more poetical. The first example of a merism in this stanza is in stich 7a “But at your rebuke²⁶³ the waters fled”, and stich 7b “at the sound of your thunder they took to flight”. The two words used here are *rebuke* and *thunder* that refer to Yahweh speaking to the water. The second example is in stich 8a “they flowed over the *mountains*”, and stich 8b “they went down into the *valleys*”. The mountains and valleys are a *merism* showing the wide range of the flight of the water.

3.3.3.2.4 Stanza IV (11 – 18) Yahweh’s abundant supply of water.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Reader’s Version NIVR)	Revised Standard Version
¹¹ They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. ¹² The birds of the sky nest by the waters;	¹¹ The springs give water to all the wild animals. The wild donkeys satisfy their thirst. ¹² The birds in the sky build nests by the waters. They sing among the	¹¹ they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst. ¹² By them the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the

²⁶³ Futato (2009:330) says that “your rebuke” is the language of the cosmic battle for Yahweh’s creative activity.

<p>they sing among the branches.</p> <p>¹³ He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;</p> <p>the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.</p> <p>¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate—</p> <p>bringing forth food from the earth:</p> <p>¹⁵ wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts.</p> <p>¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.</p> <p>¹⁷ There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers.</p> <p>¹⁸ The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.</p>	<p>branches.</p> <p>¹³ The LORD waters the mountains from his palace high in the clouds.</p> <p>The earth is filled with the things he has made.</p> <p>¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle and plants for people to take care of.</p> <p>That's how they get food from the earth.</p> <p>¹⁵ There is wine to make people glad.</p> <p>There is olive oil to make their skin glow.</p> <p>And there is bread to make them strong.</p> <p>¹⁶ The cedar trees of Lebanon belong to the LORD.</p> <p>He planted them and gave them plenty of water.</p> <p>¹⁷ There the birds make their nests.</p> <p>The stork has its home in the juniper trees.</p> <p>¹⁸ The high mountains The sun knows when to go down.</p>	<p>branches.</p> <p>¹³ From thy lofty abode thou waterest the mountains;</p> <p>the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy work.</p> <p>¹⁴ Thou dost cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate,^[a] that he may bring forth food from the earth,</p> <p>¹⁵ and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart.</p> <p>¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted.</p> <p>¹⁷ In them the birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees.</p> <p>¹⁸ The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the badgers.</p>
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Yahweh's constant provision of water for the earth. The smaller, gentler waters are discussed. In verses 11-12 Yahweh creates an abundance of life around the smaller stretches of water; and in verses 13-18 he satisfies all living things with food, water and habitats.

According to Spieckermann (1989:32,46 and 48) and Köckert (2000:275), verses 14-15 were part of the first part of the original poem.

Keil & Delitzsch (1871:139) argue that stichs 18a and 18b "The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax", were forced into the text without having any connection in the text, and contrary to any plan, meaning that whoever added Stichs 18ab to the poem did not think about it before hand. However *contra* to Keil & Delitzsch, both Spieckermann (1989:32, 46, 48) and Köckert (2000:275) explain that verse 18 (as part of vv 16-19), were later added to the psalm as a distinct unit, as part of a second addition to Psalm 104.

For Gerstenberger (2001:223) the backbone of this stanza (vv 11 – 18) is the *participles*: they tell what Yahweh has done, and what he is doing continually to sustain life. See stich 11a (give), stich 11b (quench), stich 12a (nest), stich 12b (sing), stich 13a (waters), stich 13b (satisfied), stich 14a (grow), stich 14b (cultivate), stich 14c (bringing forth), stich 15a (gladdens), stich 15b (make), stich 15c (sustaining), stich 16a (watered), stich 17a (make), stich 17b (has), stich 18a (belong) and stich 18b (refuge).

This stanza begins (v 11) and ends (v 18) where the water is under control²⁶⁴. Water is necessary for life, but it came as a threat to everything that Yahweh had already made (or had to make). Water is also available in the ravines between the mountains. Everywhere where water is found, it is providing for the lives²⁶⁵ of everything created²⁶⁶.

²⁶⁴ Futato (2009:332) indicated that Yahweh provided life-giving waters in the form of ground water and rain water. Howard V (1992:180) says that in verses 11 – 18 water has been transformed from threat into nourishment for life.

²⁶⁵ For Futato (2009:332) these beneficial sources of water provide life for wild animals (vv 11, 12, 18), domesticated animals (v 14), agricultural plants (vv 14, 15), wild plants (vv 17, 18) and people (v 14). Cf Perowne (1882:239) on verses 10-11: The loving care, the tender sympathy with which Yahweh, clothing the earth with beauty, provides at the same time for the wants of all his creatures. Even the

In verse 12 the waters have diverse functions: they provide conducive habitats for the trees to grow in, wherein the birds can build their nests²⁶⁷. Here the birds can raise their families in their safe²⁶⁸ nests and they can sing²⁶⁹ among the branches²⁷⁰ of the trees. The birds quench their thirst and they could even find their food here.

In verse 13 Yahweh “waters the mountains”²⁷¹, not by the fountains and the streams, but by the rain²⁷², coming “from his upper chambers”²⁷³. “The land is satisfied”²⁷⁴,

wild ass which shuns the approach of man, and the birds of heaven, which have no keeper, are not left unprovided for.

²⁶⁶ Anderson A A (1972b:721) remarks on verse 11: “The wild asses are here representative of all the wild animals”. Cf Alter (2007:364) on verse 1: “The wild asses slake their thirst. As in the voice from the whirlwind in Job, the wild ass, resistant to all domestication, is an image of unfettered freedom”.

²⁶⁷ Kroll (1987:303) writes: “By the springs shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation. The streams water the trees in which the birds build their nests”.

²⁶⁸ Perowne (1882:241) observes on verses 12 and 17: “The trees are a home and a shelter for the birds: the larger birds as the stork, and the smaller tribes of singing birds”.

²⁶⁹ Terrien (2003:714) notes that the thirst of all living creatures on earth needs to be quenched. Birds also drink; then they sing to the delight of human ears. Goldingay (2008:187) writes on verse 12: “where there are streams there are trees, and where there are trees there are birds. The birds have homes and sing, not for human beings, nor even in praise to Yahweh, but just because that is what they do”.

²⁷⁰ Sabourin (1969:173) writes on verse 12 that the birds of the air come and dwell in its branches. Cf Luke 13:19: “Then Jesus said...’It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches.’”

²⁷¹ Kraus (1989:301) says that verse 13 reminds of verse 18. The high mountains are “watered” from the lofty home of Yahweh. The mountains are the habitat of the mountain goat, and with their rocks they provide protection for the badger. For Kroll (1987:303) Yahweh’s coordination of nature is illustrated here. “He waters the mountain from his very own abode.” Even those mountains, which cannot be moistened by the streams receive their moisture from Yahweh’s own heaven. The rain falls upon the peak of the mountains and the earth is satisfied.

²⁷² Clifford (1981:44) writes that in the Ugaritic epic Kirta, the storm god’s rain is declared to be good for the earth. Futato (2009:332) agrees that if all water were completely confined to the sea, life on earth would be impossible. So Yahweh provided life-giving waters in the form of ground water (and rain water). See Gen 7:11-12 “... the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth...”

²⁷³ Buttenwieser (1969:52) explains stich 3a and stich 13a: “There is a common ancient notion of a heavenly water reservoir, or, as it is called, the heavenly ocean, from which the rain was believed to pour down on the earth. Thus, the author of Psalm 104, giving the notion a new poetic turn of his own, says in stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters”, and in stich 13a “He waters the mountains from his upper chambers”. Anderson A A (1972b:721) states: “He waters the mountains” by sending rain through the windows of the heavens. See also Malachi 3:10 “...I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven...” while Craigie (1983b:78) explains that the Ugaritic poet describes an opening in Baal’s palace through which he would water the earth.

²⁷⁴ Terrien (2003:714) elaborates that a soil stultified by long summer droughts is “satisfied” by outbursts of rain, and the hills become green again. The thirst of all living creatures on earth needs to be quenched. This is stressed as a miracle of Yahweh; hence the psalmist suddenly turns to the style of prayer in the second person: stich 13b “From the fruit of thy work, the earth is satisfied”.

which means that not only the soil and plants, but also the animals²⁷⁵ and human beings are satisfied because of the rain. The rain being “the fruit of God’s work”²⁷⁶.

The basic theme in verse 14 is Yahweh’s provision of food²⁷⁷. Yahweh provides grass²⁷⁸ for the cattle. But man himself must play a role in acquiring his food. The human being must plant²⁷⁹ his food, which Yahweh then will let grow²⁸⁰. “Yahweh brings forth food from the earth”²⁸¹.

As shown in stich 14c, the human being must put effort into producing²⁸² his food. The three most important products of the soil in the ANE²⁸³ were grain, grapes²⁸⁴ and the olive tree. From the grain bread²⁸⁵ is made; from the grapes wine²⁸⁶ is produced; and from the olives the oil²⁸⁷ is pressed.

²⁷⁵ Seybold (1990:78) notes that, while the mountains are holding waters in their places (v 6), water supplies are created, in the forms of springs (v 10) and streams and showers of rain from the upper waters (v 13), enabling plants and animals to survive.

²⁷⁶ In verse 13 Yahweh irrigates the mountains from his upper chambers, This contrasts with instances where Yahweh withholds the gift of rain. Cf Jeremiah 14:4: “The ground is cracked because there is no rain in the land.” Also Gen 8:2: “Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky”.

²⁷⁷ Sabourin (1969:83) comments on verses 10-18: “It is Yahweh himself, the psalmists say, who through nature provides for men and beasts alike; he supplies the seeds, prepares the soil, brings the harvest, causes the flock to multiply, assures shelter and food to the birds, the beasts and man”. Barnes (1950:86) remarks on verse 14: Out of the earth there is caused to grow every variety of food necessary for the various orders of beings that are placed upon it. The idea here is not merely that of abundance; it is also that of variety: The one earth has been made to produce the endless varieties of food required for the creatures that have been placed on it.

²⁷⁸ Barnes (1950:86) tells that the word grass here refers to all the vegetable productions needed for cattle. Cf Deuteronomy 11:15: “I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.” Also Job 38:27: “to satisfy a desolate wasteland and make it sprout with grass”.

²⁷⁹ Barnes (1950:86) indicates on verse 14: The word ‘plants’ here would include every green plant or vegetable that man was to cultivate for his use.

²⁸⁰ Isaiah 30:23 explains that stich 14b: “he will send you rain for the seed you sow in the ground, and the food that comes from the land will be rich and plentiful.” Von Herder (1971:72) agrees that in stich 14c: Yahweh has caused seed to grow for them, but they must sow it and produce the bread themselves.

²⁸¹ Anderson BW (1983:158) writes that vegetation flourishes, which makes life possible for birds, beasts and human beings.

²⁸² All three products, the grapes, the olive tree and the grain have to be cultivated, harvested and prepared, before the final wine, oil and bread is arrived at. Cf Kidner (1975:370) on verse 15 when he says that wine, oil (from the olive) and bread are all partly products of human skill.

²⁸³ Clifford (1981:149) elaborates on verse 15: The trio wine, bread and oil is also found in Ecclesiastes 9:7-8. “Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, ...and always anoint your head with oil”. In the Ugaritic epic Kirta, drought is described as the absence of the trio bread, wine and oil.

²⁸⁴ Terrien (2003:715) states that grapes become wine. Here the poet goes beyond the need to satisfy hunger. He praises Yahweh for the wine that rejoices the heart of mortals.

²⁸⁵ Schafran (2013:3) writes that the bread in stich 15c may denote food in general or the bread made from grain. Futato (2009:330) agrees that the word bread in stich 15c refers to food in general.

According to verse 16 the trees of the lord²⁸⁸ are well watered²⁸⁹, the cedars²⁹⁰ of Lebanon that he planted.

The trees of Yahweh (v 16) are still in focus. In verse 17, the earlier theme of the birds (v 12) reappears, and the birds nest²⁹¹ in the trees of Yahweh. A specification occurs here, namely that the stork²⁹² has the Cypress tree²⁹³ as habitation. This contributes to the idea that all created beings have their particular place in the universe.

Yahweh made high inaccessible mountains²⁹⁴ for the wild goats²⁹⁵. He created vast expanse of rock covered earth for the rock badgers²⁹⁶. This verse (v 18) shows, as many of the other verses in this psalm, that Yahweh cares²⁹⁷ for his creation²⁹⁸.

²⁸⁶ Schafran (2013:3) explains that, while animals drink water, human beings are more inclined to drink wine. Barnes (1950:86) agrees that wine gladdens the human heart, to make his face shine more than oil. Also Judges 9:13: "But the vine answered, 'should I give up my wine, which cheers both gods and men'".

²⁸⁷ Keil & Delitzsch (1867:142) remarks that olives become oil. Here the poet goes beyond the need to satisfy hunger. Anderson A A (1972b:722) says oil was used for various purposes. It could be applied for the protection of one's skin cf Psalm 92:10 "...fine oils have been poured upon me," or for healing purposes cf Isaiah 1:6 "...only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil,' it could also be used as fuel for lamps (Mt 25:3-8) and for cooking (Nu 11:8).

²⁸⁸ Perowne (1882:241) states that the trees of Yahweh are the trees of the forests and the mountains. Not planted by human hand, but by Yahweh himself. The psalm is interested in Yahweh's trees for the enjoyment of their provision. For example birds that live and sing in them, and other animals that seek refuge in them. Cheyne (1888:120) writes "The trees of the Lord" are those which grow wild.

²⁸⁹ Kraus (1989:301) notes the trees "drink their fill of the rainwater."

²⁹⁰ Keil & Delitzsch (1867:142) exclaim that the trees of Yahweh are those, which before all others, proclaim the greatness of their creator, of which the Cedars and then the Junipers (Cypresses) are mentioned. Anderson A A (1972b:722) shows that in biblical times the mountains of Lebanon were the main source of Cedars for building projects, hence the "Cedars of Lebanon." See also 1 Kings 4:33 where it is said that Solomon "described plant life, from the Cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls."

²⁹¹ Barnes (1950:86) says furnishing a home for the birds where they may breed their young. The word 'bird' here is used to denote birds of any kind. Grogan (2008:175) notes that the provision of homes for the creatures is celebrated in verses 17-18. Yahweh also provides refuges to the wild goats and the hyraxes.

²⁹² Barnes (1950:86) explains stich 17b: "the stork has its home in the Junipers," the stork here is used to represent the larger class of birds. Goldingay (2008:188) says that the Juniper (NIV) is another tree that flourishes in the forests of Lebanon, another tall, impressive, spreading, fragrant conifer. See also Jeremiah 8:7: "Even the stork in the sky knows her appointed seasons".

²⁹³ Eaton (2003:363) indicates that in verse 17 there is again provision made for birds, though it is in the fir trees that the huge nests, the "houses" of the stork are prominent. Anderson A A (1972b:722) elaborates on verse 17: The fir tree is thought to be a species of Juniper or Cypress growing in Lebanon.

²⁹⁴ Perowne (1882:241) relates that the high mountains and precipices are mentioned, because they, like the trees, are a shelter for some of the wild animals. Barnes (1950:86) says the idea in stich 18a is, that nature is full of life. Even the most inaccessible places, the rocks, the high mountains, have their inhabitants, where man cannot climb or dwell,

Several figures of speech appear in stanza IV (11-18).

In this stanza there are nine *synonymous parallelisms*, and three *synthetic parallelisms*. The parallelisms bring rhythm to the story of how Yahweh looks after the animals that he created. An emphasis is placed on the ideas that are repeated.

Synonymous parallelisms. The first example of synonymous parallelism in this stanza is stich 11a “They give water to all the beasts of the field”, and stich 11b “the wild donkeys quench their thirst”, says Allen (1983:26). The beasts and the wild donkeys, include all the animals of the world.

Stichs 14abc form three examples of *synonymous parallelism* as follows (Allen 1983:26). Stich 14a “He makes grass grow for the cattle” together with stich 14b “and plants for people to cultivate”, which means that Yahweh has provided food for all the animals, including mankind. Stich 14b “and plants for people to cultivate” together with stich 14c “bringing forth food from the earth”. Although Yahweh has provided food for mankind, mankind has to put effort into growing and gathering the food. And stich 14a “He makes grass grow for the cattle” together with stich 14c “bringing forth food from the earth” (Allen 1983:26). The animals do not have to grow their own food, they simply eat what Yahweh has provided.

Stich 14c together with stichs 15abc form two *synonymous parallelisms* as follows (Goldingay 2008:179). Stich 14c “bringing forth food from the earth” together with

²⁹⁵ Anderson A A (1972b:722) remarks on stich 18a that Yahweh has made the high mountains the homes for the wild goats, possibly the Nubian Ibex. This animal may rarely be seen by man, but it is not beyond Yahweh’s providential care.

²⁹⁶ Perowne (1882:241) states that the word conies he has left as it is in the English version although that is incorrect, The creature meant is the Hyrax syriacus. Cf Proverbs 30:26: “conies are creatures of little power, yet they make their home in the crags”. Also Eaton (2003:363) says that the rock hyraxes, regarding the size of a rabbit, and with round backs and no visible tail, can tread surely on steep rocky surfaces; they tend to sit in groups in the sun, while one is posted to keep guard as a sentry.

²⁹⁷ Goldingay (2008:188-9) suggests that the high mountains and the cliffs are a home (stich 18a), a secure refuge for the wild goats and the hyrax. The word “refuge” from stich 18b also applies in the first stich 18a. Everyone needs a home.

²⁹⁸ Harrelson (1975:20) comments that, as Yahweh made fir trees for the storks to nest in (v 17), he also made a refuge for the wild goats and the rock badgers (v 18). Storks, wild goats and badgers do not serve mankind. Yahweh is interested in the badgers, the wild goats and the storks for their own sake. Kroll (1987:303) explains on verses 10-11 by saying that God sends the springs into the valley...they give drink to every beast of the field. Yahweh has designed the mountain streams that flow where the animals graze; in his mercy he cares for all of his creatures, even those animals in creation which are mostly out of sight due to their dwelling in remote places.

stich 15b “oil to make their faces shine”. Mankind has to labour to provide food for himself, and oil is one of the products that he uses. Then stich 15a “wine that gladdens human hearts” together with stich 15c “and bread that sustains their hearts”. The wine and the bread are two of the products that mankind produces as food for himself.

Within each of verses 16, 17 and 18, a *synonymous parallelism* is formed (Allen 1983:26). Stich 16a “The trees of the Lord are well watered” together with stich 16b “the cedars of Lebanon that he planted”. Yahweh himself planted these trees, and he also sees to it that they have sufficient water and nutrients. Stich 17a “There the birds make their nests” together with stich 17b “the stork has its home in the junipers”. The stork and ‘the birds’ include all the birds of the world. Yahweh sees to it that all the birds of the world have nests. Stich 18a “The high mountains belong to the wild goats” together with stich 18b “the crags are a refuge for the hyrax”. Even those animals that are not often seen, also have habitats in which they live and feel safe. These places of refuge are provided by Yahweh. One of the functions of parallelisms is to bind together components of stanzas or of the poem (Watson 2000:262).

Synthetic parallelisms. Example 1. Stich 12a “the birds of the sky nest by the waters”, and stich 12b “they sing among the branches” (Allen 1983:26). The first stich tells where the birds are and the second stich explains what they are doing.

Example 2. Stich 13a “he waters the mountains from his upper chambers”, and stich 13b “the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work” (Perowne 1882:240). In the first stich it is raining on the mountains, and the second stich states that the land (mountains) is satisfied because of the rain. Perowne (1882:26) explains that “water from his upper chambers” is rain; and that the “fruit of his work” is also rain.

Example 3. Stich 14a “He makes grass grow for the cattle”, and stich 14b “and plants for people to cultivate” (Limburg 1994:342). In the first stich Yahweh provides the food without any effort on the part of the animals, in the second stich Yahweh makes the food grow after mankind has put effort into producing it. Limburg (1994:342) notes that, when the poet finally speaks of humans in stich 14b, there is no mention of the ‘crown of creation’, but rather of an equal among equals, as the *synthetic parallelism* indicates. In *synthetic parallelism* the meaning of the first line continues into the second line, but the balance of thought is lost. This is why this parallelism is not regarded by all scholars to be a true parallelism (Mickelsen 1963:326).

Metonymy. Each of the verses (11-18) in this stanza (IV) is an example of *metonymy*, where it is explained how Yahweh provides in many different ways for his creation.

In Stichs 11ab “They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst” meaning that even all the wild animals receive water. In stichs 12ab “The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches” is giving a description of the trees standing by the waters, where the birds sing. Meaning the birds are happy where they live. In stichs 13ab “He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work”, meaning it is raining and the earth is wet. In stichs 14abc “ He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate - bringing forth food from the earth”, meaning that Yahweh provides food for animals and people. In stichs 15abc “wine that gladdens the human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts.” Telling about the different kinds of food that Yahweh provides for man. In stichs 16ab “The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted” Explaining that all plants receive water. Verses 17 and 18 show how Yahweh provides homes for the birds in the trees, while some animals even live in the mountains. Stichs 17ab “There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers” and stichs 18ab “The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax”.

Chiasm. The “A” and the “B” parts of two stich cross over each other, to form an ABB`A` arrangement (Gray 1972:xiv). Stichs 11ab form a *chiasm* (Allen 1983:26). Stich 11a “They give water to all the beasts of the field”; stich 11b “the wild donkeys quench their thirst”. The word “water” in stich 11a connects with the word “thirst” in stich 11b. While the words ‘beasts of the field’ in stich 11a connect with the words “wild donkeys” in stich 11b. The function of the *chiasm* is to give structure and poetic form to the text, and to break the monotony of persistent direct parallelism (Watson 1994:369).

Personification. In stich 13b “the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work” the land is referred to as if it were a person. *Personifications* elevate the impact of the language (Le Roux 1986:129).

Metaphor. The function of the metaphor is that it preserves the mystery of Yahweh's nature and being, while communicating to us Yahweh's love for us (Tremper Longman III 1988:121). Yahweh loves all of his creation and provides them with what they need. In stich 12a there is a *metaphor*. "The birds of the sky nest by the waters" (Goldingay 2008:179-189). The *metaphor* being "nest by the waters", which means that the birds make their nests near to the waters. Both stichs 13a and 13b have *metaphors* in them. Stich 13a "He waters the mountains from his upper chambers", stich 13b "the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work" (Goldingay 2008:179-189). The metaphor in stich 13a is "his upper chambers" from where the rain pores down onto the mountains, which refers to Yahweh's palace. The metaphor in stich 13b "the fruit of his work" which refers to the rain. Stichs 14ac both have *metaphors* in them. Stich 14a "He makes grass grow for the cattle," stich 14c "bringing forth food from the earth" (Goldingay 2008:179-189). The metaphor in stich 14a is "grass to grow for the cattle". Grass does not grow *for* cattle, the grass just grows. The *metaphor* in stich 14c is "to bring forth food from the earth". By the grace of Yahweh food is produced, but the earth by it self does not do so. In all three stichs 15abc there are *metaphors*. Stich 15a "wine that gladdens human hearts", stich 15b "oil to make their faces shine". Stich 15c "and bread that sustains their hearts" (Goldingay 2008:179-189). In stich 15a wine does not gladden the heart, but it does gladden the person. In stich 15b oil can make the whole body shine. (oil is wholesome food for the body and can also make the body shine). In stich 15c as in stich 15a the bread does not sustain the heart but the human body. Stichs 16ab both have *metaphors* in them. Stich 16a "The trees of the Lord are well watered", stich 16b "the cedars of Lebanon that he planted" (Goldingay 2008:179-189). Stichs 16ab are *metaphors* with regard to trees, which seem to have matched the conventions of the traditional *genres* of wisdom (Eidevall 2010:19). The *metaphor* in stich 16a is "well watered", meaning that enough water is given. The *metaphor* in stich 16b is "that he planted". Yahweh made the trees to be there, but he did not necessarily plant them as mankind would plant. Stichs 17ab both have *metaphors*. Stich 17a "There the birds make their nests;" stich 17b "the stork has its home in the Junipers" (Goldingay 2008:179-189). The *metaphor* in stich 17a is "make their nests", and the metaphor in stich 17b is "has its home", because their nests are their homes. Yahweh as refuge is a *metaphor* (Futato 2009:25); Verses 16-18 provide descriptions of refuge for many animals. The *refuge metaphor* is a picture of divine protection, This *metaphor* is a dominant *metaphor* in the book of Psalms.

Stich 18a “The high mountains belong to the wild goats”, stich 18b “the crags are a refuge for the hyrax”, both signifying stability and durability, the *rock* can be a *metaphor* not only for a life in security²⁹⁹, but also for Yahweh as the saviour of the individual³⁰⁰ as indicated by Eidevall (2010:17) in verse 18.

3.3.3.2.5 Stanza V (19 – 24) Night and day with their activities.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Reader’s Version (NIVR)	Revised Standard Version (RSV)
<p>¹⁹ He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.</p> <p>²⁰ You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl.</p> <p>²¹ The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God.</p> <p>²² The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens.</p> <p>²³ Then people go out to their work, to their labor until evening.</p> <p>²⁴ How many are your works, LORD!</p>	<p>19 The Lord made the moon to mark off the seasons. The sun knows when to go down.</p> <p>²⁰ You, LORD, bring darkness, and it becomes night. Then all the animals of the forest prowl around.</p> <p>²¹ The lions roar while they hunt. All their food comes from God.</p> <p>²² The sun rises, and they slip away. They return to their dens and lie down.</p> <p>²³ Then people get up and go to work. They keep working until evening.</p> <p>²⁴ LORD, you have made so many things!</p>	<p>¹⁹ Thou hast made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.</p> <p>²⁰ Thou makest darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep forth.</p> <p>²¹ The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God.</p> <p>²² When the sun rises, they get them away and lie down in their dens.</p> <p>²³ Man goes forth to his work and to his labor until the evening.</p> <p>²⁴ O LORD, how manifold are thy works!</p>

²⁹⁹ Ps 27:5: “For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

³⁰⁰ Ps 62:7: “My salvation and my honour depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge.”

<p>In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.</p>	<p>How wise you were when you made all of them! The earth is full of your creatures.</p>	<p>In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures.</p>
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Yahweh makes the night and the day by putting the sun in its place. When the sun is present there is light and when the sun is absent it is dark. Yahweh also puts the moon in its place where it circles the earth creating the different seasons. There is an orderly cycle of life on earth governed by the sun and the moon, and they affect the activities of man and animals. Man sleeps during the night and works during the day; while some animals search for their food during the night (i.e. they work), and then go to sleep during the day.

According to Spieckermann (1989:32-48) verses 20-24a were added later onto the then existing poem as a distinct unit. Köckert (2000:275) disagrees and is of the opinion that verses 20-24a were part of the first part of the poem. There is no way of determining which of these two scholars is more correct.

Although both Spieckermann and Köckert regard verses 20-24a as a unit, the writer of this dissertation would actually also include verse 19 into this unit, as its subject matter is also day and night and the activities during day and night; and exclude verse 24 as this verse does not have anything to do with day and night.

I can find no reason why Spieckermann says that verses 20-24a were added at a *later* stage onto the then existing poem.

According to Köckert (2000:275) stich 24a was part of the first part of the poem, and stich 24b was part of the second part of the poem. This then means that the two stichs 24a and 24b were not composed at the same time. The writer of this dissertation can find no reason why Köckert could have come to this conclusion. These two stichs do not read as part of the narrative at this point. However what they say is very relevant to the poem and could be added at practically any point in this poem.

Yahweh made the moon³⁰¹ and he also made the sun (v19)³⁰², each one with a specific purpose³⁰³: the moon to indicate the seasons³⁰⁴, and the sun to show when a day begins and ends³⁰⁵ i.e. the moon and the sun indicate rhythms³⁰⁶ (v19). Miller (2000b:92) shows that the sun and moon and the light and darkness are created for a purpose: to provide time for animals to hunt (darkness and night) and for people to do their labours (day).

In verse 20 Yahweh is addressed: “You bring darkness³⁰⁷, it becomes night³⁰⁸, and all the beasts of the forest prowl³⁰⁹.” Yahweh has a purpose³¹⁰ for everything; and provides a rhythm of night and day.

³⁰¹ Perowne (1882:241) states that the moon in verse 19 is mentioned first and then the sun. In the Hebrew mind the night preceded the day. After the night scene (v 20) there is the day scene (vv 22-23). Anderson A A (1972b:722-3) notes that the moon is mentioned before the sun because, in the lunar calendar, it is of greater importance than the sun. Eaton (2003:363) says that the Lord’s care is seen in the wonders of night. The moon divides the year into months.

³⁰² Kraus (1989:301) suggests on verse 19-24: “Yahweh is praised as the Lord of night and day. The fact that the sun knows its setting indirectly indicates to the fact that it too is in the service of determining time”. Eaton (2003:363) elaborates on verse 19: “The Lord’s care is further seen in the wonders of morning. He made the sun, so regular to set and leave the world in darkness”. Grogan (2008:175) says that it is Yahweh who brings the darkness (v 20), after the sun has gone down (v 19).

³⁰³ Genesis 1:14: “And God said, ‘let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years’”.

³⁰⁴ Kroll (1987:304) remarks about verse 19: “The psalmist viewed the moon as all-important in setting the seasons. The moon reminds the worshippers to celebrate seasonal feasts”.

³⁰⁵ Terrien (2003:715) writes on verses 19-23: “the sun reminds the worshippers to respect the nocturnal and diurnal alteration of sleep and work, while recognizing an opposite schedule for wild animals”.

³⁰⁶ Goldingay (2008:189) clarifies on verse 19: “the role of the sun and the moon is to distinguish day and night, and on a broader front make it possible to date months and years. The moon enables people to mark the passing of months and thus observe the rhythm of their lives in their relationship with Yahweh; the sun does the same for the rhythm of the day and the night”.

³⁰⁷ Anderson A A (1972b:723) says on stich verse 20a “you bring darkness...” In Hebrew thought it was not simply the absence of light, but it had its own independent existence. Both light and darkness have their separate dwellings. Cf. Job 38:19: The Lord is speaking to Job: “What is the way to the obode of light? And where does darkness reside?”

³⁰⁸ Kroll (1987:304) explains that at night when man rests the predatory animals arise from their daylight rest to prowl the jungles. Weiser (1961:669) states on verses 20-23 that Yahweh’s wisdom is proved by the fact that he has reserved the night for the wild beasts of the forest, “but the day for man for his work “(v 23); thus neither of them interferes with the life of the other (vv 20-23). Also Alter (2007:365) states: You bring down darkness and it turns to night. Darkness is part of the diurnal cycle controlled by Yahweh.

³⁰⁹ Futato (2009:332) remarks on verse 20 that night is the time ordained for the wild animals to prowl for food. Cf Weiser (1961:669) on verses 20-23: that the psalmist seems to sense even in the nightly prowling of the beasts of prey, the loving care and wisdom of Yahweh’s provision.

³¹⁰ Allen (1983:33) remarks that animals prowling at night form a counterpart to man at work by day, all sharing in a divinely programmed cycle of activity. The poet shows certain animals in verses 20-23 (e.g. the lions) hunting for their food during the night and sleeping during the day. Man should work for his food during the day and then sleep at night.

Delitzsch (1952b:134) explains that in this verse (v20) Yahweh is addressed as ‘you’ i.e. direct address, second person singular. The more common way of addressing Yahweh is with the third person singular, he. Here is a deviation. This is done because Psalm 104 is a psalm of praise, praising Yahweh directly.

The lions roar³¹¹ for their prey and seek³¹² their food³¹³ from Yahweh (v 21). The roar means that the lions are asking Yahweh for their prey, or they are praying³¹⁴ to Yahweh for their prey. This is a recurring pattern. The lions are only active during the night, when they hunt³¹⁵ (v 22). As soon as the day breaks³¹⁶, they go back to their dens³¹⁷ to rest or sleep.

All the plants and the animals, wild and domesticated, so far in this poem have been on the receiving end from Yahweh³¹⁸. From Him they get water, food and shelter. Now the human being is providing a service³¹⁹ by doing his work³²⁰. Mankind has to plant crops and then harvest them, he also has to look after his sheep and goats.

³¹¹ Kroll (1987:304) comments on verse 21: “The lions roar after their prey, stalking the night forest, seeking Yahweh’s provision for their own sustenance”. Cf Joel 1:20: “Even the wild animals pant for you;”

³¹² Kroll (1987:304) explains that man goes forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening, Then man must rest from his labours and when he does the predatory animals arise from their daylight rest to prowl the jungles at night. Cf Dahood (1970:43) on verse 21: “Once night falls the wild beasts leave their lairs in search of prey”.

³¹³ Keil & Delitzsch (1867:144) remark on verse 21: “the roar of the lions and their going forth in quest of prey is an asking of Yahweh which he himself can provide”. Barnes (1950:89) says that Yahweh bestows their food on them, and they act as if they sought the supply of their wants at his hand. Also Job 38:39: “Do you hunt the prey for the lioness and satisfy the hunger of the lions.”

³¹⁴ Eaton (2003:363) remarks that in the darkness the roar of lions is their prayer to Yahweh for their due portion. Weiser (1961:669) comments on verses 20-23 that the psalmist interprets the roaring of the lions as their prayer to Yahweh for food. Also Buttenwieser (1969:157-8) indicates that the author looks on nature with human eyes, he hears the roaring of the lions for prey, a cry to Yahweh for food.

³¹⁵ Davidson (1998:340) shows on verses 19-22 that there is a recurring pattern of night and day (v 19), moon and sun, the forests alive at night with prowling animals (v 20) retiring at sunrise to sleep (v 22) in their dens.

³¹⁶ Kroll (1987:304) explains that the jungle comes to rest when the lions and beasts_of the forest lay them down in their dens (v 22).

³¹⁷ Barnes (1950:89) formulates a new scene. The animals that had gone forth at night are seen to return again to their hiding places. Though scattered in the night, when light returns, they all bend their steps to the places where they are accustomed to repose in the daytime. Cf Ecclesiastes 1:5: “The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises.”

³¹⁸ Eaton (2003:363) infers that Yahweh makes provision for all (v 23). Cf Seybold (1990:78): “the heavenly bodies (v 19) ensure that all living things find food, the beasts by night (vv 20-21), humanity by day (v 23)”.

³¹⁹ Walker-Jones (2001:84-97) illuminates that a service is something people do rather than receive (v 23).

³²⁰ Brueggemann (1984:32) comments that the function of man is “that he is a worker in Yahweh’s creation”. That is his lot in life. It is not a curse or a special burden. Such work belongs to the proper life of humankind in the proper functions of creation (v 23).

This work is a gift from Yahweh. Man works all day³²¹ long, until the evening³²². Yahweh gives wine, oil and bread; and he also gives rest and work. But the main interest of this poem is in the birds, the wild donkeys, the wild goats, the rock badgers and the beasts of the forest. Yahweh did create mankind, but he also created all the other animals. Mankind is no more important than any of Yahweh's other creations. There are many different kinds of animals of which just a few are mentioned in this poem.

Verse 24 provides a summary of the whole poem³²³. During a syntactical analysis (a stigometrical analysis) done in or of this dissertation on Psalm 104, verse 24 was shown to be the centre of the poem. The three stichs of verse 24 form a prayer³²⁴. It is an exclamation of praise³²⁵ praising the wisdom³²⁶ of Yahweh for all the variety³²⁷ of things that he has created³²⁸.

Purkiser (1967:357) remarks that one of the striking features of this psalm is its emphasis on the continuing activity of Yahweh in nature. Most of the *verbs* in verses 10-23 are in the present tense, indicating that Yahweh's activity in nature is an

³²¹ Keil & Delitzsch (1867:144) write that the day which dawns with sunrise is the time for man, when they may perform their work in daylight (v 23).

³²² Kroll (1987:304) notes that mankind goes forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening (v 23). Then man must rest from his labours and when he does the predatory animals arise from their daylight rest to prowl the jungles at night.

³²³ Kidner (1975:371) indicates that verse 24 is a pause for reflection. The main argument of Psalm 104 is expressed in stich 24a, stressing the marvellous nature of Yahweh's work of creation. Stichs 24bc continue exultant praise in a way that brings to conclusion and summarize the creative work of Yahweh.

³²⁴ Kroll (1987:304) exclaims that with such a marvellous illustration before his eyes, the psalmist can but cry, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: The earth is full of thy riches (v 24). Cf Allen (1983:33): "The psalmist marvels at the order he can discern in the natural world, and at Yahweh's sustaining provision of food for man and beasts (v 24)".

³²⁵ Miller (2003:98) remarks that the praise of verse 24 is like the exclamation a viewer makes before a magnificent painting. There is also a sense of playfulness, joy, and pleasure in this world Yahweh made. The word "joy", "celebrate", "take pleasure in," is one of the most common words of the psalm. This is not an austere portrait of the "works" of Yahweh. There is delight in the world Yahweh made and in contemplating it.

³²⁶ Berlin (2005:71) explains verse 24b by saying that a specific reference to wisdom is the statement that Yahweh made all of creation with wisdom. That is, wisdom is the means, the divine tool as it were, through which the universe was created. .

³²⁷ Allen (1983:34) says the poet cannot resist exclaiming in wonder at the earth's prolific evidence of Yahweh's activity and planning skill behind it. He is the sole creator, and also the sole sustainer (v 24).

³²⁸ Keil & Delitzsch (1867:145) agree that the poet expresses his wonder at the great number of Yahweh's works, each one at the same time having its adjustment in accordance with its design, and all, mutually serving one another, co-operating one with another...full of creatures, which bear in themselves the traces of the name of the creator (v 24).

ongoing activity. Having created the world and everything in and on it, Yahweh is still even today providing for his creation.

Gerstenberger (2001:224) remarks that in this verse 24 Yahweh is addressed directly by “you” and “your”, that is a second person singular address. Yahweh is also addressed as “you” in stich 20a. It is as if the poet has turned to Yahweh and is addressing him directly ‘face to face’, while thanking him for everything that he has created.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza V (19 - 24).

Parallelisms are often used to make the poem more aesthetically pleasing. Parallelism also gives a tight, interwoven structure to the poem (Waugh 1980:65) In this stanza two *synonymous parallelisms* and four *synthetic parallelisms* have been identified.

Synonymous parallelisms. The first example of a synonymous parallelism in this stanza is formed by stichs 19ab. Stich 19a ”He made the moon to mark the seasons”, stich 19b ”and the sun knows when to go down”. Yahweh created the luminaries which in their turn are responsible for the seasons as well as for day and night (Goldingay 2008:189). The second example of synonymous parallelism in this stanza is formed by stichs 24ac. Stich 24a “How many are your works, Lord”, and stich 24c “the earth is full of your creatures” (Hossfeld 2011b:43). Expressing awe at the many things that Yahweh has created. This parallelism creates an emphasis on repeated ideas, it connects similar ideas.

Synthetic parallelism. The following five examples of synthetic parallelism (in verses 20-23, and in stich 24b together with verse 27) together say that while some animals seek their food at night, man sleeps at night and works during the day when the animals again sleep. Example 1 Stichs 20ab “You bring darkness, it becomes night”, and stich 20c “and all the beasts of the forest prowl”. These three stichs are saying that during the night some of the animals are looking for their food. Example 2 Stich 21a “The lions roar for their prey”, and stich 21b “and seek their food from God”. The lion’s kill is an answer to prayer in this portrayal of God’s created order, according to Miller (2000b:98). Example 3 Stichs 22ab “The sun rises, and they steal

away”, together with stich 22c “they return and lie down in their dens”. When it becomes light in the morning, some animals return to their lairs to sleep. Example 4 Stich 23a “Then people go out to their work”, and stich 23b “to their labour until evening” Goldingay (2008:189). Example 5 The middle stich 24b of verse 24 “In wisdom you made them all”, points to stichs 27ab “All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time”, is a form of *synthetic parallelism* according to Hossfeld (2011b:43). All animals have their own kind of food, and Yahweh provides for each one. This parallelism can aid in the efficient connection of ideas.

Metonymy. The function of metonymy is to make the text more interesting and to contribute to the terseness of the poetry (Futato 2009:9). Stich 19a “He made the moon to mark the seasons.” The moon has a function, which is to show where the seasons begin and end. Stich 21a “the lions roar for their prey.” Which means they are hungry and are looking for prey to catch. Or they are asking Yahweh for prey to catch (their food). Stich 22a “The sun rises and they steal away.” As morning approaches the lions move softly and stealthily away from where they were hunting and go to their dens to sleep. Stich 23b “to their labour until evening”. Mankind does not work when it is dark, but while it is light he will continue working until it becomes dark.

Personification. The function of *personification* is that it elevates the impact of the language (Burden 1986:44). Stich 19b is an example of *personification* “and the sun knows when to go down” because to “know” is a human characteristic. This stich means that the sun has definite times for setting and for rising. “The roar of the lions” (stich 21a) and “seeking their food from God (stich 21b) is an asking of God which He himself has implanted in their nature. “Asking” is a human characteristic, thus stichs 21ab are *personifications* (Delitzsch 1952b:134). The roaring of the lions can be described as a prayer to Yahweh to provide the prey.

The *inclusio* (or the envelope figure) mark off the divisions of a poem, or provide it and its components with a structural pattern (Watson 1995:34). Between stich 14b (stanza IV) to stich 23ab (stanza V) a strong *inclusio* is formed to alert the reader to the fact that man has to work for his food, while none of the animals have to work for their food (Fokkelman 2000:266). Stich 14b “and plants for people to cultivate”,

connects to stichs 23ab “Then people go out to their work, to their labour until evening”.

Merism. The poet makes use of a *merism* in order to demonstrate his command of the language by being economical with words (Watson 1995:33). In stich19a “he made the *moon* to mark the seasons”, and in stich 19b “and the *sun* knows when to go down”. The fact that the poet speaks of a morning and an evening, and how these times are caused and used, are reminiscent of the *merism* moon/sun of verse 19 (Fokkelman 2000:266). Stich 20a “You bring *darkness*, it becomes *night*” is a good example of what a merism is, where certain components of a matter are mentioned but the whole is implied. Stich 22a “The *sun rises* and they steal away;” pointing to activity during the day. Again only mentioning certain components and not the whole, which is then implied. This function of the *merism* is to make the language more picturesque.

3.3.3.2.6 Stanza VI (25 - 26) Yahweh creates the sea and all that is in it and on it.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Reader’s Version (NIVR)	Revised Standard Version (RSV)
<p>²⁵ There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number— living things both large and small.</p>	<p>²⁵ Look at the ocean, so big and wide! It is filled with more creatures than people can count. It is filled with living things, from the largest to the smallest.</p>	<p>²⁵ Yonder is the sea, great and wide, which teems with things innumerable, living things both small and great.</p>
<p>²⁶ There the ships go to and fro, and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.</p>	<p>²⁶ Ships sail back and forth on it. Leviathan, the sea monster you made, plays in it.</p>	<p>²⁶ There go the ships, and Leviathan which thou didst form to sport in it.</p>

This stanza describes³²⁹ that Yahweh not only creates the sea³³⁰, but also makes all the many large and small creatures³³¹, in and on the sea³³². The central point here is that Yahweh takes care of the sea, the living things in and on the sea, the ships and the primeval monster.

Apart from the living things in and on the sea (v 25), there are also ships³³³ on the sea, as well as the mythological figure of Leviathan in the sea. Although it could have been a huge whale³³⁴. Leviathan (mythological monster from Ugarit mythology chaos monster), which was created by Yahweh, plays in the sea³³⁵ in this poem. He plays for

³²⁹ Perowne (1882:242-243) notes that the author remembers there is one vast field of creative wonders of which as yet he has said nothing. The way in which the sea is mentioned indicates a writer not living on the coast. It is visible, perhaps, but at a distance (v 25).

³³⁰ Davidson (1998:341) explains that the sea always had a mysterious and somewhat repelling fascination for the Hebrews. Allen (1983:34) says that the poet weaves into his praise even the sea, traditional object of dread to the Israelite landlubber. Also Anderson B W (1983:158) says that the poet reflects upon the remnant of watery chaos, the sea.

³³¹ Futato (2009:332) explains that Yahweh's wisdom is not seen only on the dry land, but also on the sea, (stich 25a). So there is a passing reference to the vastness of the ocean with its teeming life (stichs 25bc). Davidson (1998:341) tells that innumerable strange creatures, large and small, swam in its depths. Also Weiser (1961:669) says that the infinitely great and the infinitely little....all of them are Yahweh's handiwork and belong to him.

³³² There are two different opinions about which sea was meant here. First Gressmann (1926:1-22) says it seems that the poet or author of Psalm 104 did not mean the Mediterranean Sea, but that he meant the Nile which is often called "a sea" in the Old Testament. Also on the other hand there is Barnes (1950:90) who explains that "there is the sea, vast and spacious," who explains that the reference here is undoubtedly to the Mediterranean Sea, which was not improbably in sight when the psalm was composed. "Vast and spacious" means that the sea seems to stretch in all directions.

³³³ Seybold (1990:180) tells that even the remainder of the primeval waters, the oceans, bring forth life, supporting both large and small marine creatures, also ships (stich 25a). Goldingay (2008:191-2) infers that the appearance of the ships here might also link with the interweaving of the needs of humanity (sailors on board ships) and of the rest of creation (v 26). Sailors certainly have to look to Yahweh for food and for the continuance of life (vv 27-29).

³³⁴ Kroll (1987:305) indicates that Leviathan in this case is probably a whale, "which you formed to frolic there" (v 26). The huge monster has made the waters of the world his playground.

³³⁵ Buitendijk (1969:169) says that "the Leviathan which you formed to frolic there" shows that this, and not to play with him, is the meaning of this stich (stich 26b). Futato (2009:332) agrees that this picture of Leviathan, as a frolicking creature that delights its creator; is the correct interpretation of this stich.

his own amusement; or Yahweh plays³³⁶ with him in Ugaritic mythology. Yahweh holds the “chaos monster” in his hand, Yahweh controls chaos³³⁷.

Spieckermann (1989:32, 46, 48) and Köckert (2000:275) say that these verses 24-26 were added later onto the poem as a unit, as part of the second addition to the poem. Verse 24 could fit into practically any part of the poem, and it would seem logical to have it there. Verses 25-26 at first seem out of place, as if they do not belong to the poem at all. As an after thought the sea is probably all that the poet had not included in his original poem. Even so these last two verses seem out of place in this poem.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza VI (25-26).

In this stanza Yahweh is only referred to in the second person singular (you). i.e. speaking directly to Yahweh (Gerstenberger 2001:224). This is because this stanza only has two verses, and they both praise Yahweh for creating the sea and everything in and on it.

³³⁶ Kraus (1989:303) explains that Leviathan appears here as a domestic animal with which Yahweh “plays.” Alter (2007:363) notes that Leviathan, the sea monster, appears in this poem as nothing more than a tame aquatic pet among the other manifold creatures of the sea. If Job 41:5 is taken into account, where Yahweh speaks to Job and asks of him “can you make a pet of him like a bird”, meaning Leviathan; then the correct interpretation of stich 26b is probably that Yahweh plays with Leviathan. The point here however is that Leviathan is present. Whether he frolics by himself or whether Yahweh plays with him, is probably not so important. But, if Yahweh is playing with the Leviathan he is demonstrating his power over the old gods and religions; and he is also showing his creative powers, that he is the creator.

³³⁷ According to Ryrie (2004:26) the image of Leviathan in the Psalms reflects the language of old Canaanite myths, with their references to mythical dragons or monsters of the deep. Routledge (2013:128) suggests that some passages in the Old Testament refer to Leviathan as a chaos monster defeated by Baal (Ps 74:14; Isa 27:1). The sea monsters symbolize Israel’s historical enemies. *Contra* to this view, there are scholars, for example Curtis (1978:247), who says that here Leviathan is not seen as the monster, which must be crushed, but merely one of Yahweh’s creatures. The significance of this reference to Leviathan is that we must see it in the context of Yahweh’s dominion over the forces of nature and chaos.

A *hendiadys* is a figure of speech where one single but complex idea is expressed by using two separate words or sentences (Watson 1995:321). Stich 25b “teeming with creatures beyond number” is a nice case of *hendiadys* (Buttenwieser 1969:169). ‘Teeming’ and ‘beyond number’ form the *hendiadys*. By repeating the same idea, this idea is accentuated. The function of *hendiadys* is that it is a figure of speech which is used for emphasis.

A parallelism creates a balance between the two poles of the statement being made. By means of repetition the parallelism provides emphasis and so improve retention (Burden 1986:53). Another function of parallelism is to show that each consecutive idea is of equal importance. In this stanza there are two *synthetic parallelisms*, and one *synonymous parallelism*.

Synthetic parallelism. The first example of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza is formed by stichs 25ab. Stich 25a “There is the sea, vast and spacious”, and stich 25b “teeming with creatures beyond number”. This parallelism describes the sea as very large and filled with innumerable creatures. The second example of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza is formed by stichs 25bc. Stich 25b “teeming with creatures beyond number”, and stich 25c “living things both large and small”. This parallelism explains that the innumerable creatures in the sea are of different sizes. This parallelism aids in the efficient connection of ideas.

In this stanza there is only one *synonymous parallelism*. Here the parallelism helps to make the idea clearer, that there is life on top of the water and also within the water. Stich 26a “There the ships go to and fro”, and stich 26b “and the Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there”. As both stichs have to do with movement on the sea, it could be a *synonymous parallelism* where the second stich repeats the first stich. However according to Dahood (1970:45) the “ships” in stich 26a appears to be an ill-matched partner to the second stich 26b with Leviathan in it. These two stichs are ill-matched partners and they form an *unusual parallelism* that has encouraged critics to try their hand at emendation (Dahood 1970:45).

Chiasm. The function of the *chiasm* is to give structure and poetic form to the two stichs, making them more memorable. Stich 25b “teeming with creatures beyond

number” and stich 26a “There the ships go to and fro”, connect to form the *chiasm* (Van der Lugt 2014:143). Where ‘creatures’ in stich 25b connect to ‘to and fro’ in stich 26a; while ‘beyond number’ in stich 25b connect to ‘the ships’ in stich 26a. The function of the *chiasm* is to give structure and poetic form to the text, and to break the monotony of persistent direct parallelism (Watson 1994:369).

The *metaphor* is a symbolical manner of speaking that gives colour and strength to the language used (Loader 1987:49). A *metaphor* contributes to the terseness of the Hebrew poetry. Stich 25a ”There is the sea, vast and spacious”. ‘The sea’ is a *metaphor* for Yahweh, who is known to be confident, serene, and at ease (Brueggemann 1984:32). *Metaphors* help to communicate the fact that Yahweh is so great and powerful and mighty that he cannot be exhaustively described (Tremper Longman 1988:121). Stich 25b “teeming with creatures beyond number” (Brueggemann 1984:32). ‘Beyond number’ is the *metaphor* in this stich, meaning too many creatures to count.

Metonymy. The function of *metonymy* is to make the text more picturesque (Caird 1980:136). Stich 25b “teeming with creatures beyond number”, is an example of *metonymy* because ‘teeming’ suggests ‘beyond number’.

In a *merism* it is not the individual elements themselves that matter, but what they amount to together (Watson 1995:321). Stich 25c “living things both large and small” is a merism because the ‘large and small’ mean ‘all things’. Merisms are used because they enhance the rhetorical effect of the message (Berlin 1996:313).

Personification. This figure of speech is useful because it contributes to the terseness of Hebrew poetry (Futato 2009:9). An example of *personification* is found in stich 26b “and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there”. The Leviathan is actually an Ugaritic mythological figure, which in stich 26b is depicted as a large marine creature leaping and turning in the waves (Eaton 2003:363). Yahweh was able to control the fearsome sea-monster and make it part of his benevolent kingdom (cf Job 41:1-34).

3.3.3.2.7 Stanza VII (27 – 30) Yahweh cares for all the creatures that he created³³⁸.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Reader's Version (NIVR)	Revised Standard Version (RSV)
<p>²⁷ All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.</p> <p>²⁸ When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.</p> <p>²⁹ When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.</p> <p>³⁰ When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.</p>	<p>²⁷ All creatures depend on you to give them their food when they need it.</p> <p>²⁸ When you give it to them, they eat it. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.</p> <p>²⁹ When you turn your face away from them, they are terrified. When you take away their breath, they die and turn back into dust.</p> <p>³⁰ When you send your Spirit, you create them. You give new life to the ground.</p>	<p>²⁷ These all look to thee, to give them their food in due season.</p> <p>²⁸ When thou givest to them, they gather it up; when thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good things.</p> <p>²⁹ When thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed; when thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.</p> <p>³⁰ When thou sendest forth thy Spirit,^[b] they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground.</p>

This stanza³³⁹ emphasizes that all Yahweh's creatures are entirely dependent on him. See also Psalm 145:15-16 for another creation hymn.³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Eaton (2003:363) writes that wonder extends not only to the creation, but also to the continuing care and sustenance of these myriads. There is not one that does not look to Yahweh for food from his hand.

³³⁹ Anderson BW (1983:158-9) states that the climax of Psalm 104 is stanza VII (vv 27-30). This poem stresses the equality of human beings and animals, who together depend upon the creator. Allen (1983:34) explains that Yahweh is their father-figure and they are members of his extended family.

All creatures³⁴¹, both human beings and animals, are completely dependent³⁴² upon Yahweh who gives them their food³⁴³, when they are in need of it (v 27).

Yahweh looks³⁴⁴ after his creation (v 28). He gives them food (i.e. the “good things”) that they must “gather up³⁴⁵.” When Yahweh is “giving”³⁴⁶, he is “opening his hand³⁴⁷,” and because he has given the food, his creatures are not hungry any more, they are “satisfied”³⁴⁸.

If Yahweh turns away³⁴⁹ his face, the symbol of his presence, then the creatures³⁵⁰ are terrified (Kraus 1989:303). It is as if Yahweh has turned his back on them, and does not look after them³⁵¹ anymore. If Yahweh removes his breath³⁵² from them, then all

³⁴⁰ “The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time (v 27). You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing”(v 28).

³⁴¹ Keil & Delitzsch (1867:145) explain: “All creatures look to you” from the creature of the sea, to all the living things of the earth.

³⁴² Von Rad (1979:361) writes that the intention of Psalm 104 is to show that the whole world, in every moment of its existence, requires to be sustained by Yahweh. Everything “waits” on him (v 27).

³⁴³ Kraus (1989:303) remarks that the beginning of verse 27 is at first unprepared and sudden. But the context reveals what is meant by “all”, it refers to all previously mentioned living beings, the gracious watering of which was already described. Now we come to the provision of food. All of creation is expectantly turned toward Yahweh. On him, the creator, it is dependent. He takes care of all living beings “at the right time.”

³⁴⁴ Kroll (1987:305) explains that the whole of creation must recognize that as it did not come into existence by itself, it cannot maintain existence by itself. Anderson BW (1983:160) notes that emphasis is on the continuing care of Yahweh. Creation is not just an event that occurred in the beginning but is Yahweh’s continuing activity of sustaining creatures and holding everything in being.

³⁴⁵ Grogan (2008:175) states: “to ‘Gather’ continues the emphasis on the fact that work is needed to make use of what Yahweh has given.”

³⁴⁶ Goldingay (2008:192) says when Yahweh gives they are in a position to harvest (stich 28a). Yahweh gives with an open hand, with generosity, and the recipients receive not merely a sufficient portion but eat their fill and of good things (v 28b).

³⁴⁷ Futato (2009:332) states that what the psalmist provides is a total dependence of all of life on the creator’s personal provision (v 27). Yahweh is pictured as extending his hand (v 28) to personally feed each of his creatures.

³⁴⁸ Allen (1983:34) remarks that the rather patriarchal description of divine sustenance in verses 28-30, namely, Yahweh’s creation at the mercy of his outstretched hand (v 28) or averted face (v 29), is balanced by divine care for all of creation (v 30).

³⁴⁹ Von Rad (1979:361) relates that, if Yahweh were to turn away from the world even for just one moment, then its splendour would immediately collapse. All of life would break down. Goldingay (1987:223) states that Psalm 104 is aware of the dark side to the created world: the suffering and the death that follow Yahweh’s mysterious turning away of his face (v 29).

³⁵⁰ Allen (1983:34) writes that the rather patriarchal description of divine sustenance in verse 29, namely, Yahweh’s creation at the mercy of his averted face (stich 29a) or taking back his breath (stich 29c), is balanced by divine care for all of creation (v 30).

³⁵¹ Davidson (1998:341) states that all creatures only exist because life has come to them as a gift from the Lord, a gift which may be withdrawn at any time. Yahweh is the one who decides on the matter of life and death.

life breaks down and they return to dust³⁵³. Without the care of Yahweh, his creation cannot exist.

“When you send your spirit³⁵⁴, they are created³⁵⁵, and you renew the face of the ground³⁵⁶” (v30). Everything that is alive is completely dependent on Yahweh for all their needs.

Spieckermann (1989:32-48) and Köckert (2000:275) say that verses 27-29 were added onto the psalm as a unit. These verses were part of the first part of the poem. But, verses 30 and 32 were both added to the poem at a later stage (Spieckermann 1989:32-48; Köckert 2000:275).

³⁵² Von Rad (1979:149) agrees that life is possessed by man only in virtue of that breath of Yahweh; and this latter is in no sense inherently associated with his body, and any withholding of this ephemeral gift would throw man back to a state of dead matter. Eichrodt (1967:47) says that man only comes to life in the first place, because Yahweh breathes into him His own breath of life. Also Preuss (1991:161) tells that the “spirit of Yahweh” is mentioned as Yahweh’s ongoing gift, as the breath of life, without which nothing living may continue to live. Whenever Yahweh takes back to himself this spirit, then the person has to die, that is, his or her “breath” expires.

³⁵³ Kraus (1989:303) remarks that, if Yahweh turns away and hides his face, the symbol of his presence, all of life breaks down. If Yahweh removes the breath from them, they return to dust. Cf Job 34:14-15: “If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all mankind would perish and man would return to the dust.” Also Anderson A A (1972b:724) says that, when the body is no longer animated by the breath of life, it reverts to the dust from which it was taken in the first place. See Ecclesiastes 12:7: “and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.” In this respect man is like the animals. Hence, the preacher asks despairingly (Ecc 3:18-21) whether after death there is any difference between the two.

³⁵⁴ Yahweh is spirit, and because he is spirit, he is everywhere present as a whole (v 30). See Genesis 1:2: “Now the earth was formless ...and the spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” Ryrie (2004:120) explains: “Human beings have life because the spirit or breath of Yahweh is breathed into them.”

³⁵⁵ Brueggemann (1984:32) remarks that the world is well-ordered and reliable, but on its own, it has no possibility of survival or well-being. All of that is a daily gift. Allen (1983:34) notes that each new generation is evidence of a renewal of Yahweh’s creative activity, replenishing human and animal stock. See Job 33:4: “The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”

³⁵⁶ Westermann (1989:251) explains that this astonishing section ends with the words; “and you renew the face of the ground.” Here we can grasp what the Bible is really meaning when it speaks of the creator, Whoever is not convinced that the creator is the One who daily renews the earth through the universal rhythm of life and death has no true comprehension of Him. Anderson A A (1972b:724) says that “they are created;” this alludes to the continual process of re-creation, which cannot be understood apart from Yahweh. Throughout the successive generations, life and death alike are in the hands of Yahweh. See Ezek 37:10: “So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them, they came to life and stood up on their feet – a vast army”.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza VII (27-30).

Parallelism is a specific type of repetition, where two lines are placed next to each other to promote cohesion and balance (Burden 1986:53). Parallelisms are used for binding together components of the stanza or of the poem (Watson 1995:34). Parallelisms help make an idea or argument clear and easy to remember. Parallelisms also have the function of creating an emphasis on ideas. In this stanza ten *synthetic parallelisms* have been identified. There are also six *synonymous parallelisms* and one *alternating parallelism*.

Synthetic parallelism. The first example of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza is formed by stich 27a “All creatures look to you”, and stich 27b “to give them their food at the proper time”. All creatures are dependent on Yahweh at all times to supply them with enough of the right kind of food.

In verse 28 there are five *synthetic parallelisms* (Goldingay 2008:192). The first of the five is formed by stichs 28ab. Stich 28a “When you give it to them”, and stich 28b “they gather it up”. The animals in the field cannot produce their own food. They can only feed when Yahweh has given them the food, which they then gather up in order to nourish themselves. The second of the five *synthetic parallelisms* is formed by stichs 28bc. In stich 28b “they gather it up”, and in stich 28c “when you open your hand”, meaning that as Yahweh gives the food to the animals they gather it up and eat. As the previous example of *synthetic parallelism* states, the animals in the field can only feed on what Yahweh has provided for them.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* that is found in verse 28 is formed by stichs 28cd. Stich 28c “when you open your hand”, and stich 28d “they are satisfied with good things”. When Yahweh gives the animals the food (the food that Yahweh gives is good) and they eat it, they are not hungry any more (they are satisfied). The fourth example of *synthetic parallelism* that is formed by verse 28 is done so by stichs 28bd. In stich 28b “they gather it up”, and in stich 28d “they are satisfied with good things”. Mankind is the only animal that has to plant and tend the food (the plants) that Yahweh has provided, and once mankind has eaten the food that he has ‘gathered up’ he is not hungry any more. The fifth and last example of *synthetic parallelism* that is found in verse 28, is formed by stichs 28ad. Combining stich 28a “when you give it to them”, with stich 28d “they are satisfied with good things” there is much the

same explanation as with the other four examples of *synthetic parallelisms*. Once Yahweh has given food to his creatures, and they eat it, they are not hungry anymore. All six of the above *synthetic parallelisms* have to do with balance, Yahweh provides and man is satisfied. These parallelisms aid in the efficient connection of ideas.

In verse 29 there are four *synthetic parallelisms* (Goldingay 2008:193). The first example from this group is formed by stichs 29ab. Stich 29a “When you hide your face”, and stich 29b “they are terrified”. When mankind cannot find Yahweh they feel lost and are frightened. The second example of *synthetic parallelism* that is formed in verse 29 is stichs 29bc. In stich 29b “they are terrified”, is coupled with stich 29c “when you take away their breath”. When mankind and probably all other creatures as well, feel that they are going to die, they are frightened. The third example of *synthetic parallelism* in this verse 29 is formed by stichs 29bd. In stich 29b “they are terrified”, and in stich 29d “they die and return to dust”. Even though the creatures of Yahweh are afraid of dying, they in any case do die and then return to dust. The fourth example of *synthetic parallelism* that is found in verse 29 is formed by stichs 29ad. Here stich 29a “when you hide your face”, is coupled with stich 29d “they die and return to dust”. When “Yahweh hides his face” is just another way of saying that for that creature his time on earth is done. In other words that creature then dies. All ten examples of *synthetic parallelisms* that are found in verses 27-29 have to do with balance. Man is only alive, while Yahweh is present.

Synonymous parallelism. The function of the parallelism here is to bind together two stichs with the same or similar ideas (Oesterley and Robinson 1958:140) which then accentuates the idea formed by the two stichs together. In verse 28, stich 28a “when you give it to them”, and stich 28c “when you open your hand” Goldingay (2008:192) are saying exactly the same thing. Yahweh is giving food to his creatures. In verse 29 there are two *synonymous parallelisms* (Goldingay 2008:193). The first *synonymous parallelism* that is formed in verse 29 is by stichs 29ac. Here stich 29a “when you hide your face”, is coupled with stich 29c “when you take away their breath”. Both these stichs are saying exactly the same thing, which is, that when Yahweh is absent the creatures will die. The second example of *synonymous parallelism* in verse 29 is formed by stichs 29cd. Here stich 29c “when you take away their breath”, is coupled with stich 29d “they die and return to the dust”. These two stichs are saying exactly the same thing, which means, that “they” are going to die.

In verse 30 there are three *synonymous parallelisms*. (Goldingay 2008:193). The first example of *synonymous parallelism* that is found in verse 30 is between stichs ab. Here stich 30a “when you send your spirit”, is coupled with stich 30b “they are created”. Stichs 30ac are identical. Yahweh creates by sending his spirit onto the earth. The second example of *synonymous parallelism* that is found in verse 30 is formed by stichs 30ac. Stich 30a “When you send your spirit”, is coupled with stich 30c “and you renew the face of the ground”. By creating new creatures the world remains new all the time. The third example of *synonymous parallelism* that is found in verse 30 is formed by stichs 30bc. Stich 30b “they are created”, is coupled with stich 30c “and you renew the face of the ground”. It is Yahweh that causes the earth to be made new all the time.

The six *synonymous parallelisms* that are found in verses 28-30 have to do with balance. When Yahweh forms new creatures it is as if the world has been made new. Man is alive, because Yahweh is present.

Alternating parallelism consists of four lines, where stichs 1 and 3 correspond or balance each other, while stichs 2 and 4 correspond or balance each other (Gray 1972:63). In verse 28 and 29 respectively (as shown below) Yahweh’s activity is described in stich A and stich A`, and then the effect that that has on his creatures is described in stich B and stich B`. This forms an ABA`B` pattern (Willis 1987:56). The effect of the *alternating parallelism* here is to call attention to the consequence of Yahweh’s action on his creatures. Yahweh’s turning away includes the withholding of provision, and this is a terrifying phenomenon.

Verse 28 A “When you give it to them”,
B “they gather it up”;
A` “when you open your hand”,
B` “they are satisfied with good things”.

Verse 29 A “When you hide your face”,
B “they are terrified”;
A` “when you take away their breath”,
B` “they die and return to dust”.

Repetition includes, inter alia, where a series of two or more consecutive lines begin with the same word or phrase (Watson 1995:275). This is a literary device that repeats the same words or phrases a few times to make an idea clearer and more memorable (Fokkelman 2000:267). Repetition is used to convey a sense of urgency, while it also reduces the need for the poet to invent new material (Watson 1995:277-278).

The four stichs of verse 28 form two *repetitions*. Stich 28a and stich 28c connect with each other, while stich 28b and stich 28d connect with each other. In this example the same words are repeated. First *when* and then *they*.

stich 28a “*when* you give it to them”, stich 28c “*when* you open your hand”,
Stich 28b “*they* gather it up”, stich 28d “*they* are satisfied with good things”.

The four stichs of verse 29 form two *repetitions*. Stich 29a and stich 29c connect with each other, while stich 29b and stich 29d connect with each other. In this example the same words are repeated. First *when* and then *they*.

Stich 29a “*When* you hide your face”, Stich 29c “*when* you take away their breath”,
stich 29b “*they* are terrified”, stich 29d “*they* die and return to the dust”.

The third example of *repetition* shows that this technique even stretches across two verses. Stichs 29a and stich 30a.

Stich 29a “*When* you hide your face”,
Stich 30a “*when* you send your spirit” (Fokkelman 2000:267).

The fourth example of *repetition* again shows that this technique can stretch across two adjacent verses. Stichs 29b and 29d form a *repetition* with stich 30c.

stich 29b “*they* are terrified”,
stich 29d “*they* die and return to the dust”,
stich 30c “*they* are created”.

Confusion and death in verse 29 versus creative and renewing inspiration in verse 30 indicate that it is Yahweh who decides what will happen. (Fokkelman 2000:267).

Metonymy. The function of *metonymy* is to make the text more interesting. For example, when wisdom is represented as a master-builder, working in the service of Yahweh, this is a metonymic and picturesque way of talking about what Yahweh in

his wisdom does (Caird 1980:136). In this stanza it is stressed that all of life is dependant on the presence of Yahweh. In this stanza there are eight examples of *metonymy*. The first example of *metonymy* is in stich 27b “to give them their food at the proper time” meaning to give them their food when they need it or when they are hungry or when it is time for it. The creatures are constantly dependent on thee, that you may give them food from day to day (Barnes 1950:90). The second example is in stich 28c “when you open your hand”, meaning when you give food to the creatures. The point of the passage here is, that they (the wild animals) receive their food directly from Yahweh. They are completely dependent on Yahweh for their food. They do not have to labour for their food, it is made ready for them, they only have to eat it (Barnes 1950:91).

The third example of *metonymy* is in stich 28d “they are satisfied with good things”, meaning they are satisfied with their food, which is exactly the right food for every kind of animal (Barnes 1950:91). A fourth example is in stich 29a “When you hide your face”, meaning that Yahweh has turned his attention away from the animals. He is not attending to their needs any more (Barnes 1950:91). The fifth example of *metonymy* is in stich 29b “they are terrified.” Meaning that they are overwhelmed with terror and amazement. Because Yahweh has turned from them, all their support is gone; all their resources fail, and they must die (Barnes 1950:91). The sixth example of *metonymy* is in stich 29d “they die and return to the dust.” Life ends when thou dost leave them, and they return again to the earth. So it is also with man (Barnes 1950:91). The seventh example of *metonymy* is in stich 30b “they are created” meaning that they become alive here on earth. New members are created when the older ones have died. They derive their being from him as really as those which were first formed by his hand, and the work of creation is constantly going on (Barnes 1950:91). The last example of *metonymy* in the stanza is in stich 30c “and you renew the face of the ground”, meaning that the population increases. Though one generation passes off, yet a new one is made in its place, the face of the earth constantly puts on the aspect of freshness and newness (Barnes 1950:91).

Metaphor. The poet uses *metaphor* to transfer something familiar to what is less well known (Watson 1995:270). Stich 28c “when you open your hand” (Klingbeil 2010:130), meaning when Yahweh is giving food and whatever else is needed to his creatures. The two stichs 28cd “when you open your hand, they are satisfied with

good things”, together are described as *metaphorical overlappings* (Klingbeil 2010:130). This means that these two stichs together make a complete story. Because Yahweh is giving to his creatures everything that they need, they are satisfied³⁵⁷.

Stich 29a “when you hide your face” is described as the best *metaphor* for the Lord’s presence (Terrien 2003:699). This means that, while Yahweh’s face is present, he himself is also there.

Stich 29c “when you take away their breath”, stich 29d “they die and return to the dust” (Terrien 2003:699). It means that when Yahweh has taken away the breath of his creatures they cannot live anymore, so they will die.

Stich 30c “and you renew the face of the ground”, meaning that Yahweh makes everything new.

Personification. Stich 28c “when you open your hand”. Yahweh does not have a “hand” as he is not a human being. But he is referred to as if he was a human being. Yahweh is described as such in order that mankind may understand something about Yahweh (Le Roux 1986:129). This action of Yahweh is referring to when Yahweh is giving to his creatures what they need.

Stich 29a “When you hide your face”: Yahweh does not have a “face”, but his presence is referred to as a face. Yahweh is referred to as a human being. Stich 30c “and you renew the face of the ground” The ground does not have a “face”, but the surface of the ground is referred to as a face, so the ground is referred to as a human being.

Chiasm. The function of a *chiasm* is to break the monotony of persistent direct parallelism (Watson 1994:369). Stichs 29ac and 30ac together form a *chiastic* structure (Watson 1995:187-8; Fokkelmann 2000:267 and Van der Lugt 2014:143). Stich 29a “When you hide your face”, and stich 29c “when you take away their breath” forms a cross over pattern with stich 30a “When you send your Spirit”, and stich 30c “and you renew the face of the ground”. The cross over pattern works as follows: Stich 29a “when you hide your face”, connects to stich 30c “and you renew the face of the ground”. And stich 29c “when you take away their breath”, connects to stich 30a “when you send your Spirit”.

³⁵⁷ Klingbeil (2010:130) quotes Psalm 144:7 “Reach down your hand from on high; deliver me and rescue me”.

3.3.3.2.8 Stanza VIII (31 –35) Glory of Yahweh for all life proclaimed.

New International Version (NIV)	New International Reader's Version (NIVR)	Revised Standard Version (RSV)
<p>³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works—</p> <p>³² he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke.</p> <p>³³ I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.</p> <p>³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD.</p> <p>³⁵ But may sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more. Praise the LORD, my soul. Praise the LORD.^[b]</p>	<p>³¹ May the glory of the LORD continue forever. May the LORD be happy with what he has made.</p> <p>³² When he looks at the earth, it trembles. When he touches the mountains, they pour out smoke.</p> <p>³³ I will sing to the LORD all my life. I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.</p> <p>³⁴ May these thoughts of mine please him. I find my joy in the LORD.</p> <p>³⁵ But may sinners be gone from the earth. May evil people disappear. I will praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.</p>	<p>³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure for ever, may the LORD rejoice in his works,</p> <p>³² who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke!</p> <p>³³ I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being.</p> <p>³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD.</p> <p>³⁵ Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more! Bless the LORD, O my soul! Praise the LORD!</p>

Yahweh is praised again (31-34)³⁵⁸, while the wicked are wished away (35ab).³⁵⁹ Yahweh is praised in stichs 35cd³⁶⁰ as God.

³⁵⁸ Harrelson (1975:21) concludes that this final section (vv 31-34) is both a declaration and a prayer. God does rejoice in all that he has made, but may he keep doing so!

The psalm concludes with a prayer in which the glory³⁶¹ of Yahweh, who has manifested his glory in creation, may endure³⁶² forever (Perowne 1882:244). Also that he who looked lovingly³⁶³ upon his works when they were first created, pronouncing all “very good³⁶⁴”, may ever rejoice³⁶⁵ in them. Hossfeld (2011c:96) is convinced that Psalm 104 was edited with the addition of verses 31-32.

Allen (1983:34) alerts how wary³⁶⁶ man should be: one look from Yahweh and the earth quakes³⁶⁷, one touch from him and the mountains erupt. The psalmist is (again)

³⁵⁹ Futato (2009:332) explains verses 31 – 35 by saying that, since sin can diminish the gloriousness of creation, the psalmist prays for the removal of all who would threaten the glory so evident in the creation. Brown (2009:676) acknowledges that the world portrayed in the psalm is not perfect, the psalm concludes with a call for the destruction of the wicked (stichs 35ab). Perowne (1882:244) says that sin is the discord of the world. Sin has changed the order into disorder. Hence, the prophetic hope (stich 35) that sinners shall be consumed, that the wicked shall be no more, that thus the earth shall be purified, the harmony be restored, and Yahweh once more, as at the first, pronounce his creation “very good.”

³⁶⁰ Delitzsch (1952b:136) indicates that the Halleluyah (Praise the Lord) is found in stich 35d the first time in the Psalter. Consequently it can be said that it was only coined in a later stage (than the rest of the psalm). Hossfeld & Zenger (2011:39) are of the opinion that the Hallelujah cry, may be traced to a single redactional hand. Westermann (1989:246) says that the “Hallelujah” at the end of Psalm 104:35 is actually the title of Psalm 105.

³⁶¹ Weiser (1961:670) explains that it is the poet’s most ardent desire that the “glory” of Yahweh, to which his whole psalm is devoted, may endure for ever and that Yahweh’s joy in the work of his hands, the reflection of which in the heart of the poet shines throughout the psalm, may never be clouded. Davidson (1998:341) tells that the closing stanza of the poem expresses its continuing confidence in the “glory of the Lord” and in the awesome power of a Yahweh, who is known to “rejoice in his works.”

³⁶² Westermann (1989:251) notes that this final part begins with a wish that Yahweh’s glory as revealed in his works may endure for ever. Allen (1983:34) remarks that in his closing stanza the poet reverts to his initial motif of Yahweh’s power (vv 2-30). He expresses hope that his glorious power will never cease to be revealed in the natural world. He prays that his creatures may continue to receive his smile of favour, as once he took delight in his creation. Also Grogan (2008:175) notes that the psalmist wants to sing Yahweh’s praise throughout his life and to rejoice in him (v 34), just as Yahweh rejoiced in his own works (v 31).

³⁶³ Purkiser (1967:355) says the creator has brought satisfaction, gratitude and joy to all (stich 34b). Should not that happiness granted by a loving creator to all his creatures, give happiness to him too (stich 31b). We must therefore discern in this psalm the thought, unexpressed but none the less present and real, of the happiness of Yahweh (stich 31b). Purkiser (1967:357) states that the last stanza of the psalm continues the adoration of Yahweh’s glory in creation and conservation, but contains the solemn note that correction of evil among men is necessary.

³⁶⁴ Brueggemann (1984:32) writes that the speaker is aware of the fact that the world on its own has no possibility of survival; because the world is all a daily gift from Yahweh. This awareness leads the speaker in verses 31-34 to be moved to spontaneous wonder, gratitude and praise. Von Rad (1979:417) states the fact that rain is poured out on the steppe makes a mockery of all human ideas of economy, just in the same way as the life of the wild horse and the wild ox are beyond the possibility of man’s using them. But nevertheless, all this allows man to see that Yahweh turns a smiling face to his creation. That Yahweh rejoices in his creatures could equally be said here in this psalm too.

³⁶⁵ Kidner (1975:372-3) explains that it was love rather than fear that motivated verses 31-34. This is brought out, not only by the glowing phrases of verse 33 but, consciously or not, by the response of stich 34b to stich 31b. (Stich 31b “May the Lord rejoice in his works,” and stich 34b “as I rejoice in the Lord).

³⁶⁶ Goldingay (2008:195) indicates that verse 32 makes explicit that the more fearsome side of Yahweh is also an aspect of his ongoing involvement in the world. It’s emphasis lies on how slightly Yahweh needs to act in order to produce devastating effects.

using the material of theophany³⁶⁸ to portray Yahweh's awesome power³⁶⁹. Spieckermann (1989:32-48) ascribes the theophany motif in verse 32 to a redactor. As verse 32 seems to disturb the flow of thought from verse 31 to verse 33.

Verse 33 states: "I³⁷⁰ will sing³⁷¹ to the Lord all my life³⁷²; I will sing praise to my God as long³⁷³ as I live" (seeing that it is not possible to praise Yahweh when a person is not living). According to Köckert (2000:275) verses 33 and 34 were part of the first verses that were added on to the poem.

In verse 34 the psalmist says: "May my meditation³⁷⁴ be pleasing³⁷⁵ to him, as I rejoice³⁷⁶ in the Lord". Hossfeld (2011c:96) agrees with Köckert (2000:275) that Psalm 104 was edited in verses 34-35. However Hossfeld is not as specific as Köckert in saying precisely what was done to the psalm in these verses.

³⁶⁷ Goldingay (1987:223) remarks that Psalm 104 is also aware of the dark side to the created world: the trembling of the earth despite its allegedly secure foundations.

³⁶⁸ Clifford (1981:150) shows that so total is divine domination over "earth" and "mountains" that Yahweh's mere glance or touch shakes mountains and stirs up volcanoes. Kraus (1989:304) says that the incomparable power of Yahweh is only hinted at in verse 32. With a single look he can reduce the created world to trembling, and with a single touch he can let the mountains break out in smoke.

³⁶⁹ Kidner (1975:372) explains that the point of verse 32 may be more than simply to assert Yahweh's majesty; it may reinforce the prayer of stich 31b, that the Lord may have cause only for joy, not judgement, as he surveys his works.

³⁷⁰ Ridderbos (1963:70) explains that only in stichs 33ab and 34ab does the poet speak of himself; only in these stichs does he use the terms "I" and "my. Westermann (1989:252) says that the conclusion of this poem represents a promise of praise (v 33), the praise, which the author has struck up in his psalm is to determine his whole life.

³⁷¹ Grogan (2008:175) indicates that the psalmist wants to sing (v 33) Yahweh's praise throughout his life and to rejoice in him (v 34), just as Yahweh rejoiced in his own works (v 31).

³⁷² Keil & Delitzsch (1867:146) explain that the poet will not suffer there to be any lack of the glorifying of Yahweh, inasmuch as he makes it his life's work to praise Yahweh with music and song. Davidson (1998:341) asks what other acceptable response can there be to the wonder of life in Yahweh's world than a lifetime characterized by songs of praise. With which this author whole heartedly agrees.

³⁷³ Terrien (2003:717-8) indicates that the temple singer terminates his poem with a promise to praise as long as the Lord permits him to live. Human rejoicing is endemic, for it communes with the Creator's enjoyment in his words, which in turn fosters human praise with hymns of joy.

³⁷⁴ Allen (1983:34) tells that the poet offers his meditations in stich 34a as a sacrifice acceptable, he trusts Yahweh. Grogan (2008:175) explains his meditation is the psalm itself. See Psalm 19:14: "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight."

³⁷⁵ Westermann (1989:252) states that "linked with the promise of praise is the wish: 'May my poem (meditations) be pleasing to him!'" These few words are of significance to indicate a new stage in Israel's cultural development; the speaker is not simply one unit of the worshipping congregation, he is also the author of a poem and he knows it.

³⁷⁶ Davidson (1998:341-2) says that such songs are but the outward expression of an inner devotion (meditation).....It is not difficult to rejoice in a gracious creator. Psalm 104 invites the reader to share that joy. Weiser (1961:670) shows that the poet longs for the time when Yahweh's joy in his creature (v 31) and the creature's joy in his maker (v 33) will unite in perfect harmony, but he does so not from hatred of the sinners but because of the purity of his joy (v 34) in Yahweh and in his creation.

On verse 35³⁷⁷ there are many diverse opinions. Some argue that it was always³⁷⁸ part of Psalm 104. Others are of the opinion that verse 35 was added as a later³⁷⁹ addendum, while some scholars reckon that verse 35 is not even part of Psalm 104, but that it actually belongs³⁸⁰ to Psalm 105. Proof for this is that stichs 35cd both³⁸¹ proclaim Hallelujah (Praise the Lord). The first two stichs (35ab) of this verse are fundamentally inconsistent³⁸² with Yahweh's command to "love your enemies".

³⁷⁷ Howard D M (1993:61) sees verse 35 as a "gloss," which introduces a sudden shift in topic. The "glosses" are seen as the work of the redactor's hand.

³⁷⁸ According to Spieckermann (1989:32-48) and Köckert (2000:275), stichs 35ab were always part of the original verses of this poem. Thus the difficult stichs 35ab were present right from the beginning of Psalm 104. Smal (1956:164) agrees that verse 35 could always have been present; and that verse 35 joins very well with verse 34. However, contra to the above, Briggs and Briggs (1925:329) argue that stichs 1a and 35c are liturgical glosses; and that verse 35 is a late gloss, altogether unsuited to this psalm.

³⁷⁹ Alter (2007:368) says that this reference to evildoers in stichs 35ab, is nowhere else in evidence in the body of the psalm. It may therefore be that the concluding stichs are an editorially added gesture of piety. Preuss (1991:228) writes that the concluding verse 35 speaks all of a sudden of sinners, who apparently disturb and impair the ordered system of the world, and are to vanish. If this final verse is to be treated as an *addendum*, then the one who was capable of such an *addendum* is to be congratulated.

³⁸⁰ Buttenwieser (1969:158) says that verses 33 – 34 are, to his mind, the original ending of the psalm. The wish expressed in stichs 35ab "that the sinners may disappear from the earth and the wicked be no more," seems to him to be a disturbing thought, is foreign to the theme and spirit of the psalm. Proof that verse 35 is not a genuine part of Psalm 104, is to note that the repetition of the words, "Praise the Lord, O my soul," (stich 35c) with which the psalm also begins, is, as some interpreters have observed, redundant after the poet's vow of verses 33 – 34. Eaton (2003:362) explains that the Hallelujah placed at the end of this psalm in Hebrew, should probably, with LXX, be taken as the beginning of Psalm 105. Psalm 104 then begins and ends with "Bless the Lord, O my soul." Also Zenger (1998:78) says that the Hallelujah in Psalm 104:35d is not original follows from the fact that the injunction, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," in stich 35c forms a framework analogous to the one in Psalms 103:1a and 103:22b.

³⁸¹ Kidner (1975:373) reckons that the final "Bless the Lord, O my soul" echoes the first words of the poem. "Praise the Lord" is in Hebrew, "Hallelujah." In the LXX it opens the next psalm (Ps 105) instead of closing this one. If that is its right position, as it may well be, each of Psalms 103-106 will have a final phrase that exactly matches its beginning. Keil & Delitzsch (1867:146) say that the word "Hallelujah" is appended to the psalm. The Hallelujah, which summons all creatures to the praise of Yahweh; a call of devotion, which occurs nowhere out of the Psalter, and within the *Psalter* is found here for the first time, and consequently was only coined at a later stage. Also Holladay (1993:76) states that the word "Hallelujah" is the word of praise *par excellence*.

³⁸² Clifford (1981:151) explains, the wish that sinners be destroyed may strike modern readers as breaking the joyous and positive tone of the poem. It is not an expression of meanness or vengeance, however, but a (negatively expressed) desire that all on earth accept the Lord's dominion. Sinners refuse to acknowledge Yahweh as the source of the wonderful world. Justice demands their removal. It should be noted that the psalmist puts their removal in Yahweh's hands. Purkiser (1967:133) shows that the destruction of the wicked has been traditionally understood by the Jews as meaning that Yahweh would destroy, not the sinners, but the sin. 'Let sins cease on the earth, and the wicked shall be no more' (stichs 35ab). Bullock (1988:139) states that we can profit from the attitude the apostle Peter expressed toward the epistles of Paul, "His letters contain some things that are hard to understand" (2 Pe 3:16).

Several figures of speech appear in stanza VIII (31-35).

Parallelism brings equilibrium between the two poles of the statement (Burden 1986:49). Parallelism may be defined as the repetition of similar or related grammatical structures in adjacent lines or verses (Berlin 1996:304). In this stanza two examples of *synthetic parallelism* and three examples of *synonymous parallelisms* have been identified.

Synthetic parallelism accounts for parallelisms that lack exact correspondence between their parts but show a more diffuse correspondence between the lines as a whole (Berlin 1996:304). The first example of *synthetic parallelism* in stanza VIII is shown by stichs 31a and 31b. In stich 31a “May the glory of the Lord endure for ever”, and in stich 31b “may the Lord rejoice in his works”, the words that are chosen are not identical but they express or emphasize a particular message (Berlin 1996:307) viz. that the glory of the Lord and also the works of the Lord are great. Stichs 31ab together are actually a prayer, as pointed out by Goldingay (2008:194). The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by stichs 34a and 34b. By reading together stich 34a “may my meditation be pleasing to him”, and stich 34b “as I rejoice in the Lord”, it becomes clear that while the poet is meditating he is also rejoicing. Therefore the thought of the second stich supplements and completes the thought of the first stich (Burney 1925:21). This parallelism helps in the efficient connection of ideas (Goldingay 1987:194). The function of the *synthetic parallelism* here is to bind together two components of the stanza i.e. cohesion (Watson 1995:34).

Synonymous parallelism. The first example of *synonymous parallelism* in stanza VIII is found in stichs 32a and 32b. In both stich 32a “he who looks at the earth, and it trembles”, and stich 32b “who touches the mountains, and they smoke” an earthquake is being described. By means of the parallel that is drawn, they help to focus attention upon the main point of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53) which is that Yahweh can make all these things happen by merely touching or looking. The second example of *synonymous parallelism* in this stanza is shown by stichs 33a and 33b (Goldingay 1987:195-6; 2008:194; Gerstenberger 2001:225). In stich 33a “I will sing to the Lord all my life”, and in stich 33b “I will sing praise to my God as long as I live” the poet is singing to Yahweh. By means of repetition here, the poet provides

emphasis and so improves retention. The third example of *synonymous parallelism* is between stichs 35a and 35b. In stich 35a “But may sinners vanish from the earth” and in stich 35b “and the wicked be no more”. This parallelism uses two synonyms (sinners and wicked), which is another example of repetition, which stimulates the imagination (Burden 1986:53). *Synonymous parallelism* creates an emphasis on repeated ideas; it connects similar ideas (Futato 2009:332).

Metaphor. Stichs 32a and 32b are both *metaphors*³⁸³. Stich 32a “he who looks at the earth, and it trembles”, stich 32b “who touches the mountains, and they smoke” (Klingbeil 2010:130).

Metonymy. There are three examples of *metonymy* in this stanza (VIII). The first example is stichs 33ab; To praise Yahweh all the time. Your whole life through. Stichs 33a and 33b are *repetitions*. Stich 33a “I will sing to the Lord all my life”; stich 33b “I will sing praise to my God as long as I live”. In these two stichs (33a and 33b) some of their words are closely associated with each other (Mickelsen 1963:185). In stich 33a “...all my life” means the same as “...as long as I live”.

The second example of *metonymy* in stanza VIII is stich 34a and stich 34b. The poet is in deep thought about the creation. Stich 34a “may my meditation be pleasing to him,” stich 34b “as I rejoice in the Lord”. These two stichs form a *metonymy* because the one stich suggests the other. In stich 34a the poet “meditates”, while in stich 34b the poet “rejoices”.

The third example of a *metonymy* in this stanza is found in stich 35a and stich 35b. May the wicked and the sinners disappear. Stich 35a “But may sinners vanish from the earth,” stich 35b “and the wicked be no more.” The two stichs are saying the same thing using slightly different words (Burden 1986:42). The function of metonymy is to make the text more interesting, by referring to the meaning of the text by means of association (Watson 1995:133).

³⁸³ Dahood (1970:47) explains that stichs 32ab form two metaphors. Volcanic activity doubtless inspired this *metaphor*. Dahood is referring to the earth that trembles, and the mountains that smoke. Nielsen (2010:201) says that the smoke in stich 32b is a *metaphor* of Yahweh’s anger.

Hyperbolic language exaggerates or overstates the truth. It is a conscious exaggeration by the writer to gain effect (Mickelsen 1963:193). Examples are: Stich 35a “But may sinners vanish from the earth”, stich 35b “and the wicked be no more”. These two stichs are saying that certain people are not tolerated at all; they must “vanish” and “be no more”. In stichs 35ab the sinners are a discordant note in the Lord’s creation, and should therefore be removed. (This curse, which is couched in strongly *hyperbolic* language, is intended as a warning to all who are out of step with the harmony of creation) (Prinsloo 1991:415). The reason for using hyperbolic language is to give more weight to the curse (Watson 1994:460).

In this stanza the name “Lord” is used six times; while it is only used ten times in the entire poem. Repetition is used to convey a sense of urgency (Watson 1995:277), while also adding to the poetic nature of the discourse (Berlin 1996:309). The name Lord is *repeated* in stichs 31ab, 33a, 34b and 35bc.

Inclusio. The framing of a poem or a portion of a poem gives a sense of closure and completeness (Berlin 1996:309). This stanza is part of four *inclusios*. The first *inclusio*. Stich 1a forms an *inclusio* with stich 35c with the words “*Praise the Lord, O my soul*” which is found in both stichs 1a and 35c. The second *inclusio*. Stich 1b also forms an *inclusio* with stich 33b by using the words “*My God*” which occurs in both stichs 1b and 33b. Stich 1b “O Lord *my God*, you are very great.” And stich 33b “I will sing praise to *my God* as long as I live” (Allen 1983:32). The third *inclusio* found within Psalm 104 is formed by stichs 33b and 35cd (Broyles 1999:509 and Van der Lugt 2014:143). Stich 33b “I will sing praise to my God as long as I live”, stichs 35cd “Praise the Lord, my soul. Praise the Lord”). The function of all three these *inclusios* is to alert the reader to the important theme in this Psalm, which is to praise Yahweh. A fourth *inclusio* can be formed between Psalm 104 and Psalm 105. By transferring the last “Praise the Lord” from Psalm 104:35d, to Psalm 105:1, a perfect *inclusio* is formed between Psalms 104 and 105.

3.3.4 Textual development

There is movement in the poetry of Psalm 104, from stanza I to stanza VIII (Howard V 1992:176-180). The psalm starts by praising Yahweh (stich 1a). Then a description

is given of how Yahweh clothes himself (stichs 1bc-2a), after which He makes things for himself, a palace (living space), a chariot and staff, by using the creations in heaven (the water, winds and clouds) (stichs 2bc-4). The story in the poem moves from heaven (vv 2b-4) to earth (vv 5-30).

Yahweh creates the earth (vv 5-10). The terrestrial waters originally covered the entire earth (v 6), a situation that stood in opposition to God's design for a world inhabited by plants, animals and people. So the Lord rebuked the hostile waters (stich 7a), draining the waters from the earth and confining them to the seas (vv 7b - 9). Thus allowing the dry land to appear (v 8). (Allen 1983:31 & Howard V 1992:177)).

Then the poet proceeds to describe how water, the potential enemy of terrestrial life, has been harnessed to become its means of sustenance, serving Yahweh by serving his creatures. Springs, supplying water from the subterranean ocean and forming rivers, are supplemented by rain from his palace in the area of the celestial ocean. Humankind shares the world, not only with domestic animals, but also with wild beasts. Humankind also shares his world, with birds, whose God-given homes are the majestic trees (vv 11 – 18) (Allen 1983:33).

Then night and day are created (vv 19 – 20). In this way Yahweh is showing that certain animals (e.g. the lions) look for their food at night, while they sleep during the day (vv 21 – 22). Humankind is shown that he may work for his food during the day and that they must sleep at night (v 23) (Futato 2009:332).

Yahweh also created the sea and everything on and in it (vv 24-26). The sea is the container of a whole group of creatures. There are many different kinds of sea creatures which Yahweh created, of which Leviathan is the largest (Howard V 1992:177).

In verses 27-30 Yahweh cares for his creation, by giving them suitable places to live, food to eat and water to drink.

In verses 31-34 Yahweh is praised for everything that he has made. The poet's final prayer is that man-made flaws in Yahweh's beautiful handiwork may be removed.

The main thought of stanza VIII (vv 31-35) is to praise Yahweh for what he has done (Allen 1983:34, Howard V 1992:176 & Futato 2009:332).

3.4 Psalm 104 and tradition-history (*Traditionsgeschichte*)³⁸⁴

3.4.1 Introduction

Traditions come from a very long period of time, at least a thousand years, and probably much more (Boadt 1984:548). The implied questions that fill every page and every level of tradition in the Old Testament, are, “Who is God?” “What does God do?” “Why does God do it?” (Boadt 1984:544). Who is God? God is one, there is only one God. What does God do? God looks after his people, the Israelites, and all of creation, and provides them with all their needs. God however also punishes when apostasy sets in. Why does God do it? He is a jealous God and he loves his people. God will look after his people, but they must praise and obey him, and they must worship him as the only God.

There are various traditional historical themes that are found in the Old Testament, that contribute to the significance and meaning of the Old Testament. In this study some of the traditional themes that are found in Psalm 104 are for example, creation, covenant, Yahweh’s presence, Yahweh’s provision, and the praising of Yahweh. The functions or meanings that these traditions have in Psalm 104 are discussed. Israel’s tradition material can be traced because of their reverence for their past³⁸⁵.

The meaning of these traditions is to accentuate the fact that God alone is their God, and He performed several salvation deeds in the history of the people of Israel. There is only one God³⁸⁶. The importance of the traditions is also understood in David’s prayer in 2 Samuel 7:24: “You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, O Lord, have become their God”.

³⁸⁴ Fohrer (1983:118) defines tradition-history as including traditions, themes, motifs, elements and images regarding Israelite history.

³⁸⁵ Joubert (2012:121) notes that at Passover, Jews all over the world solemnly commemorate the Exodus story by reciting: “It is as though we had come out of Egypt this night.”

³⁸⁶ The most important theological theme found in the Old Testament is that *God is one*. This statement governs everything (Boadt 1984:544).

The following exemplary examples have been selected from the traditions/tradition-history, to illustrate the themes that the tradition-history and Psalm 104 have in common:

3.4.2 Creation

Before Israel as a nation was *created* there was a pre-history recorded in the Torah. In the first 11 chapters of the Book of Genesis, the so-called primeval history is described. Carmichael (2001:329) explains that, as God *created* the world, he also *created* the Israelite people as a nation. The meaning of tradition here gives a broad outline of the *creation* of the world, and Psalm 104 seems to have used this outline and then given more detail.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p>The first sentence of the Old Testament, Genesis 1:1 states that “In the beginning God created the <i>heavens</i> and earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of <i>the deep</i>, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters”. Before the beginning there was nothing but God. Psalm 90:2 declares “Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God”.</p>	<p>In this psalm creation is described in the following stichs: Stich 2b “he stretches out the <i>heavens</i> like a tent”.³⁸⁷ Stich 3a “and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their <i>waters</i>. Stichs 5ab “he set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved”. The miracle consists of the stabilization of the mainland above that which is unstable. As is written in Job 26:7 “He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing”.</p>

AA Anderson (1972b:724) indicates that, when Psalm 104:30 says “they are *created*”, this alludes to the continual process of *re-creation*, which cannot be understood apart from God. So the meaning of creation is actually re-creation. In Psalm 104:29-30 we

³⁸⁷ Allen (1983:33) says that this phrase refers to the cosmic tent prepared by Yahweh as his special place or self-revelation, from which he was to come in theophany to create the earth. Cf. AA Anderson (1972b:719), who states that the heavens are likened to a tent stretched out over the whole earth.

read “When you send your spirit, they are *created*, and you **renew** the face of the earth”, which also suggest that God’s *creating* is an ongoing process. For example, the Israelites had to wander in the desert for another forty years until the *next* generation had been *created* (Num 14:31-34).

The *tradition of creation* is also described in Exodus and Numbers where the *creation* of Israel as a nation is portrayed. Israel developed from a large group of loose tribes to become a nation. A part of this description has to do with how Yahweh helped the Israelites to cross the Red Sea. Similar events are also found in Psalm 104, where the psalmist describes how the earth and the sea were separated from one another.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p>Opening up the red Sea.</p> <p>The God who <i>created</i> the universe also created the Israelite nation. Isaiah 43:15 “I am the Lord, your Holy One, Israel’s Creator, your King” (Grogan 2008:251). Yahweh’s <i>creation</i> of the Israelites as a nation was achieved through the exodus (Grogan 2008:236). In Exodus 14:16 we read that the Lord said to Moses “Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the <i>sea</i> to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on <i>dry ground</i>”. All that night the Lord drove the <i>sea</i> back with a <i>strong east wind</i> and turned it into <i>dry land</i> (Exod 14:21-22).</p>	<p>Separating the land from the water.</p> <p>In verses 6-9 the singer turns to the <i>creation</i> of the earth. Stichs 6ab “You covered it with the <i>deep</i> as with a garment; the <i>waters</i> stood above the mountains”. Stichs 7ab “But at your rebuke the <i>waters</i> fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight”. Stichs 9 ab “You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth”. By means of Yahweh’s powerful intervention the <i>waters of chaos</i> were driven back (Kraus 1993:300).</p>

Psalm 104 describes how Yahweh *created* the universe, including the earth and everything on it (Kraus 1993:30). Stichs 24abc “How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the *earth* is full of your creatures”. Stich 31ab “may the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works”. The function of stichs 24abc and stichs 31ab is that in them the poet is praising Yahweh for

creating the earth and its creatures, and also that Yahweh may ‘rejoice in his works’. This is a continuation of the theme of Psalm 104, i.e. to praise Yahweh.

Psalm 104 is not limited by the different kinds of *animals* and *plants* that it may include in the poem. The imagination of the poet set the bounds. In contrast to the poem, the Sinai tradition could only mention those *animals* and *plants* that actually occurred in the desert. The Sinai tradition is therefore limited as to which *animals* and *plants* it could mention. The Sinai tradition mentions a few *animals* that are not found in Psalm 104, and also *vice versa*.

The function of mentioning the *plants* and the *animals* is to show how great Yahweh’s creation was. Apart from creating the universe, the earth, and the Israelite nation, he also created all the other smaller and larger living creatures.

In the following table an example is given of some of the *animals* and *plants* that Yahweh created during these traditions, and also those that were created according to Psalm 104. The people in the traditions had *flocks of goats* and *sheep*, and *herds of cattle* and *donkeys* (Ex 34:3) “not even the flocks and herds may graze in front of the mountain”. The livestock belonged to the people. In the psalm the *goats*, *donkeys* and all the *animals* mentioned are in their wild state, they are not in the service of man. In the tradition Yahweh is caring for his people by making use of the animals, while in Psalm 104 Yahweh is caring for the animals as well as for mankind.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p><i>Birds</i> Numbers 11:31 “Now a wind went out from the Lord and drove <i>quail</i> in from the sea. It brought them down all around the camp...”.</p> <p><i>Animals</i> Exodus 35: 26 “And all the women who were willing and had the skill spun the <i>goat</i> hair”. Numbers 7:16 “one male <i>goat</i></p>	<p><i>Birds</i> Stich 12a “The <i>birds</i> of the air nest by the waters”. Stich 17ab “There the <i>birds</i> make their nests; the <i>stork</i> has its home in the pine trees”.</p> <p><i>Animals</i> Stich 18a “The high mountains belong to the wild <i>goats</i>”.</p>

<p>for a sin offering”.</p> <p>Exodus 22:4 “if the stolen animal is found alive in his possession, whether <i>ox</i> or <i>donkey</i> or sheep...”. Exodus 22:1 “If a man steals an <i>ox</i> ... he must pay back five head of <i>cattle</i> for the <i>ox</i>...”.</p> <p><i>Genesis</i> 49:9 “You are a <i>lion’s</i> cub, O Judah”.</p> <p>Numbers 4:6 “Then they are to cover the ark with hides of <i>sea cows</i>”. <i>Sea cows</i> are native to the Red Sea (NIV:123).</p> <p><i>Plants</i></p> <p>Numbers 13:20 “Are there <i>trees</i> on it or not?” Moses asking Joshua to keep an eye open for trees in Canaan. Exodus 25:10, 13 the ark was made of <i>Acacia</i> wood, a tree that was common in the Sinai desert (NIV:124). Exodus 16:4 “Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘I will rain down <i>bread</i> from heaven for you”. (<i>Manna</i>).</p>	<p>Stichs 11ab “They give water to all the <i>beasts</i> of the field, the wild <i>donkeys</i> quench their thirst. Stich 20b “and all the <i>beasts</i> of the forest prow!”. Stich 14a “He makes grass grow for the <i>cattle</i>”.</p> <p>Stich 21a “The <i>lions</i> roar for their prey”.</p> <p>Stich 26b “and the <i>Leviathan</i>, which you formed to frolic there”.</p> <p><i>Plants</i></p> <p>Stichs 16ab “The <i>trees</i> of the Lord are well watered, the <i>cedars</i> of Lebanon that he planted”. Stich 17ab “the stork has its home in the <i>pine trees</i>”. Stich 14a “He makes <i>grass</i> grow for the <i>cattle</i>”.</p>
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The Creation-tradition functions to express the omnipotence of Yahweh over creation and history. For this he is praised.

3.4.3 Covenant

The covenant was originally only meant for the Israelites. However Yahweh later included all of his creation under his care, as is seen in Psalm 104.

The covenant shows two clear focal points, a single God and a single people bound together for better or for worse (Boadt 1984:155). Here the Lord made a covenant³⁸⁸

³⁸⁸ Jacob (1974:209) says that the covenant is the bond which unites the people to their God.

with them³⁸⁹. In bringing the Israelites into this covenant relationship with himself, God singled out Israel from among the nations³⁹⁰. As Yahweh cares for the Israelites so does he also cares for all of his creation.

The past became contemporary, when the Israelites heard words such as these: Deuteronomy 5:3 “It was not with our fathers that the Lord made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today”. Moses spoke these words to the Israelites just before they entered Canaan. In the same way the words are also true for the poet of Psalm 104. In the poem Yahweh does not *say* that he will look after his creation, but it is implied. So Yahweh nevertheless, *does provide* for his creation all the time. The covenant also serves as background for Psalm 104.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
Exodus 6:7 “I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God”. The realization of this covenant is that Yahweh was with the Israelites all the time, even before the exodus. Also through the exodus and into Canaan.	Stichs 24abc “How many are <i>your</i> works, O Lord! In wisdom <i>you made them</i> all; the earth is full of <i>your</i> creatures”. These stichs indicate that all the creatures belong to Yahweh. Psalm 104 is telling all the time what Yahweh created, and how he looked after everything that he had created. Stichs 30abc “When you send your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth”.

The allusion to the covenant in Psalm 104 confirms the trust and worthiness of Yahweh towards everything and everyone.

³⁸⁹ Those who would receive the blessings of God’s promise were those willing to submit to his will.

³⁹⁰ Exod 19:5-6: “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession”. Cf. Brueggemann (2001:246) says that it is impossible to overstate the cruciality of this event, for here Yahweh becomes decisively the God of Israel .

3.4.4 Yahweh's presence

Yahweh cannot be seen by humankind³⁹¹, because no person can see Yahweh and still live. In the different traditions and in Psalm 104, Yahweh comes on a *cloud*, as a *fire*, on the *wind*, or as *light*, so that people know he is there, even though they cannot see him. Each of these *manifestations* takes place in different situations, yet they are all a proof of Yahweh's presence. In the traditions, the different ways in which Yahweh *appears on earth*, were actually experienced by the Israelites in the desert. It is possible that the author of Psalm 104 used these different ways, that Yahweh used to appear on earth, because he knew them from the tradition-history.

In the tradition-history the *cloud* was visible to the people. In Psalm 104:3bc it is the *moving cloud* that is referred to. God's presence is often indicated by his *glory*, veiled by the *cloud* (GW Anderson 1966:47). Psalm 104 does not have a column of cloud, but in stich 3b it insinuates that the clouds are moving, "He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind". In the tradition Yahweh speaks from the cloud, while in Psalm 104 Yahweh never speaks from the *cloud*.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p><i>Cloud</i></p> <p>Yahweh was a <i>pillar of cloud</i> while the people were crossing the sea (Exod 14:19-20), and also while they were travelling through the desert. Yahweh was also a <i>cloud</i> that covered Mount Sinai to show the people that he was present. (Exod 24:15-16) "When Moses went up on the mountain, the <i>cloud</i> covered it, and the glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai". In Exodus 40:34 "Then the <i>cloud</i> covered the tent of</p>	<p><i>Cloud</i></p> <p>Psalm 104:3bc "He makes the <i>clouds</i> his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind". In Psalm 104 the <i>clouds</i> are Yahweh's chariot, and he is in the chariot; the <i>clouds</i> are in this case representing Yahweh as well as his chariot. In stichs 32ab "He looks at the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they <i>smoke</i>". This <i>smoke</i> could also be <i>cloud</i>, indicating the presence of Yahweh.</p>

³⁹¹ Bullock (1988:131) shows that God is always distinct from the world, even when he moves in the intimate functions of everyday life.

Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle”.	
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Wind, spirit, breath

In the psalm the *Spirit* is not referred to as the “glory of God”. Stich 30a “When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth”. but in stich 31a the “glory of the Lord” is spoken of. So the psalm does not specifically say that the *Spirit* is the *glory* of Yahweh, but the reader of the poem has to understand it so. In the tradition, when the cloud descends onto the mountain or on the Tabernacle the writing in the Old Testament refers to the cloud as the “glory of the Lord” (Exod 40:34).

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p><i>Wind.</i></p> <p>In Exodus 14:21 “...the Lord drove the sea back with a <i>strong east wind</i>. Yahweh used the <i>wind</i>, but Yahweh himself was the <i>wind</i>. It is the <i>movement</i> of the <i>wind</i> that is referred to. The effect of the <i>wind</i> on the waters of the Reed Sea. Numbers 11:31 “Now a <i>wind</i> went out from the Lord and drove quail in from the sea...”.</p> <p><i>Spirit (ruach).</i></p> <p>A person can be described as a “<i>Spirit</i>”, a word which sometimes means the <i>wind</i>, at other times <i>breath</i> (Boadt 1984:248). In Exodus 31:3 it is written “and I have filled him with the <i>Spirit</i> of Yahweh, with skill, ability and knowledge in all</p>	<p><i>Wind.</i></p> <p>In Psalm 104:3c “Yahweh rides on the wings of the <i>wind</i>”. The clouds are driven by the force of the <i>wind</i>. The poet was using his poetic license to describe the cloud and the <i>wind</i>. In stich 4a “He makes <i>winds</i> his messengers”, a poetic way of describing the <i>wind</i>.</p> <p><i>Spirit (ruach).</i></p> <p>The reference in Psalm 104:30 “When you send your <i>Spirit</i>, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth”. The poet is trying to explain <i>how</i> Yahweh managed to create.</p>

<p>kinds of crafts”. In Numbers 11:25 it is written “Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the <i>Spirit</i> that was on him and put the <i>Spirit</i> on the seventy elders”. In this case Yahweh was giving the elders the wisdom to make the correct decisions.</p> <p><i>Breath.</i> In Genesis 2:7 it is written “The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and <i>breathed</i> into his nostrils the <i>breath</i> of life, and the man became a living being”. <i>Breath</i> refers to being alive. Yahweh gives life.</p>	<p><i>Breath.</i> In Psalm 104:29 it is written “When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their <i>breath</i>, they die and return to the dust. Psalm 104 uses the word <i>breath</i> to mean being alive or to give life. Yahweh gives life.</p>
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As a conclusion to this section it must be emphasized that without Yahweh’s breath there can be no life. See Genesis 2:7 “The Lord God...breathed into (the nostrils of man) the breath of life, and man became a living being”.

Light

Light is regularly associated with God’s presence (Berlin 1996:1097). But even the *light* ...is only the royal mantle of the divine *glory*; the shining garment by which we come to know the invisible, but which veils the eternal from the eyes of mortals (Lange 1960:531).

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p>Exodus 19:16 “On the morning of the third day there was thunder and <i>lightning</i>, with a thick cloud over the mountain...”. This <i>light</i> was seen in the cloud of fire</p>	<p>In stich 2a Yahweh is present in <i>light</i>. “He wraps himself in <i>light</i> as with a garment”. Stich 2a refers to <i>light</i> in which Yahweh reveals himself (Kraus</p>

which rested on the Tabernacle. The Holy of Holies was filled with the brightness of the <i>light</i> of God’s presence (Guthrie et al 1970:120).	1993:303).
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The light is making a statement, to show that Yahweh is in charge of everything, also of the light.

Fire

The *fire* is a manifestation of Yahweh’s presence and appearance. In the tradition in the desert the *fire* was used by Yahweh either to give the people light during the night, or to punish them when they had been disobedient. See Numbers 16:35 “And *fire* came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense”. In Psalm 104:31-32 the *fire* is used solely to show the glory of Yahweh. Stichs 31ab “May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works”. Stichs 32ab “he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they *smoke*”.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
Yahweh used the <i>fire</i> to give light, Exodus 40:38 “So the cloud of the Lord was over the tabernacle by day, and <i>fire</i> was in the cloud by night”. Yahweh also used his <i>fire</i> to punish the people when they had been disobedient. Numbers 11: 1-2 “Now the people complained about their hardship in the hearing of the Lord, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then <i>fire</i> from the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp”. In both cases	In this psalm Yahweh is making use of <i>fire</i> to demonstrate his glory. Psalm 104:32b “who touches the mountains, and they <i>smoke</i> ”. In stich 4b Yahweh makes “ <i>flames of fire</i> his servants”. Because the “flames of fire” are demonstrating Yahweh’s presence and his glory, they are working for him, and in this sense they are referred to as

(Exod 40:38; Num 11:1-2) the explanation is to mean the unapproachable holiness of God.	‘servants’.
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Glory of the Lord

The *glory of the lord* is often used in the descriptions of Yahweh’s theophany, and it may denote the manifestation of his presence (AA Anderson 1972b:723). The glory of the Lord can manifest itself in different ways, of which the following are just a few, by means of a cloud, wind, spirit, breath, a light, a fire, or a miracle, or the whole of creation.

The *glory of the Lord* as described in the tradition-history is also found in Psalm 104. The poet of Psalm 104 perceived Yahweh’s presence in all of creation, just as in the traditions, where Yahweh’s *glory* is manifest in all of Yahweh’s creation. In the Old Testament ‘glory’ is the visible manifestation of the supreme and incomparable majesty of God (Boadt 1984: 184). For example “when Moses went to meet the Lord in the ‘Tent of meeting’, God would appear in his ‘cloud of glory’ (Exod 40:34-35) .

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
All Yahweh’s actions are miracles, so in all his actions his <i>glory</i> comes to the fore. Exodus 16:7 “and in the morning you will see the <i>glory of the Lord</i> ”, meaning here that Yahweh has performed a miracle, he has given the Israelites manna to eat. Exodus 33:14 “The Lord replied, ‘My <i>presence</i> will go with you, ... ’”. Numbers 14:21 “Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the <i>glory</i> of the Lord fills the whole earth, not one of the men who saw my <i>glory</i> and the	Stich 31ab “May the <i>glory of the Lord</i> endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works”. The following are some of the manifestations of Yahweh’s glory that are found in Psalm 104. Stich 2a “He wraps himself in <i>light</i> ”; stich 5a “He sets the earth on its foundations”. He speaks to the <i>chaos waters</i> which obey him; he gives <i>water and food</i> to all of his creations; he makes <i>darkness</i> ; he makes the <i>moon and the sun</i> ; in verses 29-30 he is in charge of the dead as well as the

miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert ... will ever see the land I promised on oath".	living. Stichs 29cd "when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust". Stichs 30ab "When you send your spirit, they are created...".
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It is because of Yahweh's glory that he is praised in Psalm 104.

3.4.5 Yahweh's provision

The real meaning of the years in the desert can be found in the lesson God himself had taught there: "A person does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of Yahweh" (Dt 8:2-3) (Boadt 1984:194).

God's people had many lessons to learn during their wanderings in the desert³⁹². Especially how dependant they were on God³⁹³ for the basic necessities such as water and food. See Psalm 105:40-41. "They asked, and he brought them quail and satisfied them with the bread of heaven. He opened the rock, and water gushed out".

The link between initial creation and continual providence is especially clear in Psalm 104 as well as in the traditions of the Israelites from Egypt right up to Canaan. What God has created he will also preserve. And therefore does he daily and richly provide for all creatures, and give to them according to their nature and needs (Lange 1960:531). Nourishment by the products of the environment is a gift from God. Stich 27b "to *give* them their food at the proper time". Stich 28a "When you *give* it to them, they gather it up" (Mays 1994:331). Yahweh provides all the food and water that humankind and animals need.

In the tradition-history the provision of *water* for one group of people, the Israelites, is described, while the provision of *water* for all of Yahweh's creation is described in Psalm 104. The psalm elaborates on the idea used in the tradition-history. The food

³⁹² Routledge (2013:101) explains that God shows his people over and over again that what he says can be trusted. After being saved at the Reed Sea, the people believed in God and Moses. But they soon forgot the works of Yahweh and started to grumble, they returned to a condition of not remembering.

³⁹³ The Lord spoke to Moses from the Tent of Meeting, while they were still in the desert. In Leviticus 26:11-12 we read "I will put my dwelling place among you...I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people."

that is mentioned for the people in the traditions, is the *manna* and then *bread*; while Psalm 104 refers to *food* in general, it also mentions *bread*, *oil* and *wine* for human beings, and *grass* for the cattle. Stichs 28ab in Psalm 104 “When you give it to them, they gather it up”, is reminiscent of Exodus 16:4 “Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘I will rain down *bread* from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day”, showing a definite dependence of the psalm on the hymn.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p><i>Food.</i> During the wanderings in the desert all animals as well as the human being received their <i>food</i> and water from Yahweh. Man did not have to work, to make what Yahweh had given them into food fit for eating. Yahweh provided water, manna and quails in the desert (Allen 1983:34).</p> <p><i>Water to drink.</i> During the exodus Yahweh provides <i>water</i> to drink. During their wanderings through the desert, the Israelites were often confronted with problems in connection with <i>water</i>. At some of the places they stopped there was no <i>water</i> at all (Exod 15:22; 17:1), while at other places the <i>water</i> that was available was bitter (Exod 15:23). In Exodus 15:25 “the Lord showed Moses a piece of wood. He threw it into the <i>water</i>, and the water became sweet”. In Exodus 17:6, Moses makes the <i>water</i> available by</p>	<p><i>Food.</i> All animals and plants receive what ever <i>food</i> they require from Yahweh; for example, stich 14a “he makes <i>grass</i> grow for the cattle”. Only the human being has to work, to make use of what God has given in order to make what he can eat, stich 14b “and <i>plants</i> for man to cultivate”. Stichs 15abc refer to wine, oil and bread (<i>grape vine</i>, <i>olive tree</i> and <i>wheat</i>). Stichs 27ab “These all <i>look to you</i> to give them their food at the proper time”.</p> <p><i>Water to drink.</i> It is a matter of providing the right amount of water for every plant and every living creature. Yahweh gives fountains of water, and all living beings drink, Stichs 10ab “He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. Stichs 11ab “They give water to all the beasts of the field; wild donkeys quench their thirst”. Stich16a “The trees of the Lord are well <i>watered</i>” (Gerstenberger 2001:223). From the heavenly storeroom he “satisfies” the earth (stich 13b) (Kraus</p>

<p>striking the <i>rock</i>, and <i>water</i> comes out of the <i>rock</i>.</p> <p><i>Bread</i>. In the wilderness of Sin, they said ‘what shall we eat’, and Yahweh provided the <i>manna</i>. Numbers 11:7 “The <i>manna</i> was like coriander seed, and looked like resin”. Exodus 16:4 “Then the Lord said to Moses ‘I will rain down <i>bread</i> from heaven for you’”. Later on when the Tabernacle had been constructed the people were instructed to use <i>bread</i> in the Tabernacle.</p> <p><i>Oil for man’s use</i>. Apart from the use of oil to protect the skin, Deuteronomy 28:40 “You will have olive trees throughout your country...”, which is in agreement with Psalm 104:15b “oil to make his face shine”, the oil had many other functions in the tradition. Oil was also used in cooking as an article of food. Oil was one of the offerings in the Tabernacle, Numbers 15:4 “then the one who brings his offering shall present to the Lord a grain offering...mixed with ...<i>oil</i>”.</p> <p><i>Wine</i>. God provides <i>wine</i> – a source of pleasure as well as sustenance (Berlin 1996:1098). Wine was one of the</p>	<p>1993:300). The deadly water chaos became a <i>fountain of life</i> that refreshes the animals of the field and the birds of the sky.</p> <p><i>Bread</i>. Stichs 28abcd “When you <i>give it to them, they gather it up</i>; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things”. It is presumed that the “it” is referring to food. Stichs 14abc “He makes <i>grass</i> grow for the cattle, and <i>plants</i> for man to cultivate, bringing forth <i>food</i> from the earth”. Stichs 15c “<i>bread</i> that sustains his heart”.</p> <p><i>Oil for man’s use</i>. Stichs 15b “<i>oil</i> to make his face shine”; The cheering and refreshing gift of the creator reaches the innermost being of humankind, and it is reflected in the brightness of a face glistening with oil (Kraus 1993:300).</p> <p><i>Wine</i>. Stichs 15a “<i>wine</i> that gladdens the heart of man. <i>Wine</i> was one of the basic foods. The other being bread and oil.</p>
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<p>offerings in the Tabernacle, Numbers 15:7 “...wine as a drink offering”. When the men went to explore Canaan, Moses said to them “do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land (it was the season for the first ripe <i>grapes</i>)” Numbers 13:20.</p> <p><i>Meat.</i> The <i>quail</i> were not a staple diet but a luxury (Guthrie et al 1970:129). Numbers 11:4 “The Israelites started wailing and said ‘If only we had <i>meat</i> to eat’ In Exodus 16:8 Moses said to them, “You will know that it was the Lord when he gives you <i>meat</i> to eat in the evening...”. The description of the people gathering their food in the desert, Exodus 16:17 “The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little”; is reminiscent of stichs 28abcd in the psalm.</p>	<p>Plants are available for both cattle and people; <i>wine</i>, oil and bread however, are designated specifically for human use and enjoyment (Brown 2010:152). Stichs 14abc “he makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate, bringing forth food from the earth”. Stich 15a “wine that gladdens the heart of man”.</p> <p><i>Meat.</i> Stichs 21ab “The lions roar for their prey; and seek their <i>food</i> from God”. With a roar the lion demands his <i>food</i> from God. Indirectly referring to <i>meat</i>, because lions are <i>meat eaters</i>. . Stichs 28abcd “When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things”. In stichs 27ab “these all look to you to give them their food at the proper time”. Thus according to verses 27-28 it is quite probable that Yahweh could have given the lions their <i>meat</i>.</p>
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While the Israelites were in the desert, Yahweh provided the people and their animals with *food* and *water*. This was provided in a way that was meant to teach the people to be obedient to Yahweh, and to be dependant on Yahweh every day for their food and water (Alexander & Alexander 2002:166). In Psalm 104:14 he makes *grass* grow for the cattle. Initially Yahweh gave the people ‘*manna*’ (Num 11:7) possibly a kind of bread (Alexander & Alexander 2002:166), and later on he also gave them meat in the form of *quails* (Exod 16:8). At some of the places where the Israelites stopped in the desert they were given *water*, for example Exodus 15:23 and Exodus 17:6.

3.4.6 Praising Yahweh

In these traditions which stretch from the crossing of the Reed Sea up to the entering into Canaan, there is not much written in the Old Testament about the Israelites praising Yahweh for everything that he was doing for them. Although Moses and Miriam both had songs in which the crossing of the Reed Sea was praised, and every now and then the people said: “everything the Lord has said we will do” (Exod 24:3), and “we will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey” (Exod 24:7). They seem to have been grumbling and wailing most of the time. Both Numbers and Exodus place great emphasis on how Israel grumbled and rebelled against God during the years in the desert. The people’s constant rebellion led Yahweh to punish them (Boadt 1984:192). Numbers 11:1 “Now the people *complained* about their hardship in the hearing of the Lord”. “Numbers 14:2 “All the Israelites *grumbled* against Moses and Aaron”. Israel’s persistent disobedience is matched by God’s reluctance to disavow Israel. In the face of Israel’s stubbornness, God exercises restraint and acts with compassion and forgiveness (Brown 2010:150). Although in Exodus 24:3 the people said to Moses “Everything the Lord has said we will do”, this could imply that the people were grateful for everything that Yahweh was doing for them.

There are however two songs, one of Moses and the other of Miriam, in which Yahweh is praised for saving the people by bringing them through the Reed Sea and demolishing the Egyptian army. In Exodus 15:1-18 there is the Song of Moses, which was sung by Moses and the Israelites. In Exodus 15:20-21 Miriam, the prophetess, takes up the same theme as Moses. In Exodus 15:20 “Miriam took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing”. In Exodus 15:21 “Miriam sang to them: ‘Sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted’. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea”. The motivation for praising God is not fear, but rejoicing in the Lord. See Psalm 104:34 “May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the Lord”. Rejoicing in the Lord, because he has made every arrangement and provision for the life of the world (Berlin 1996:1100).

Human response is necessary to what God does. It is necessary for God’s people to respond to what Yahweh does; they must praise him. A concrete application of this human response is prayer, which is praise of Yahweh (Boadt 1984:546). Ours is a

personal God who demands a personal response of loyalty and obedience. A personal response can even be seen in complaints freely offered (Boadt 1984:546).

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p>Exodus 15:1-21 The <i>songs</i> of Moses and Miriam, <i>praising</i> the Lord. Exodus 15:1-18 is a climax to the story in Exodus 14, and it is <i>praise</i>, therefore glowing words and epic exaggeration are to be expected (Boadt 1984:170). A concrete human response to God, is <i>prayer</i> or the <i>praise</i> of God (Boadt 1984:547). The exodus was the supreme saving act of God for his people, and it would be difficult for any reader of the Old Testament in general or of the Psalms in particular to miss the importance given to it in this literature (Grogan 2008:251). In general the basis for praise was the saving deeds of the Lord in Israel, but creation also was frequently the psalmist's reason for praise (Bullock 1988:135).</p>	<p>Ps 104 praises Yahweh as the one who created the world and provides for all creatures that live in it. The word 'praise' is used four times in this poem. Stich 1a "Praise the Lord, O my soul. Stiches 33b "I will sing <i>praise</i> to my God as long as I live". The psalmist wishes to use his life upon this earth to praise Yahweh (AA Anderson 1972b:725). Stich 35cd "Praise the Lord, O my soul. Praise the Lord". All creation is called upon to praise the creator. Even the formidable Leviathan is transformed into God's partner in play (stiches 26bc). Psalm 104 praises the lord as the creator who provides for all life (Mays 1994:19). Psalm 104:31-35 the psalmist wants to sing God's praise throughout his life, and to rejoice in him, just as God rejoiced in his own works (Mays 1994:331). The creature's response to the creator must be praise in word and deed, so that the word is the beginning of the deed, and the deed is the fulfilment of the word.</p>

Boadt (1984:546) remarks that it is necessary for God's people to respond to what Yahweh does, and a personal response can even be seen in complaints freely offered. So the Israelites did respond to Yahweh by complaining and grumbling, but they did

not often praise Yahweh. Moses however was in constant conversation with the Lord, for example see Numbers 14:26 and 16:22.

3.4.7 Terms and motifs that the tradition-history and Psalm 104 have in common.

Wickedness/sinners

In the tradition-history Yahweh himself declares that the Israelites are a *stiff-necked* community (Exod 32:9). The people are *wicked*, because they are disobedient and ungrateful. While in Psalm 104 it is the poet, who declares that there are *sinners* and *wicked* people, it is possible that in the psalm, the psalmist is just acknowledging that there *are* sinful people, and because they disturb the serenity of creation, he wishes them to disappear. The function of referring to *sinners* in the tradition, is because Yahweh wants all his people to obey him as their share of the covenant; and they are not doing their share. In the psalm the primary function of these curses was to protect the covenant rather than to destroy the *sinners*. Similarly the psalmist may not have been motivated by a hatred of the *wicked*, but by his desire to see that the creator is acknowledged as such (AA Anderson 1972b:725).

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p>The Tabernacle was designed to emphasize the fact that God dwelt amid but apart from his people. His people are <i>sinful</i> and cannot enter his holy presence (Guthrie et al 1970:120). Numbers 14:27 “How long will this <i>wicked</i> community grumble against me”? Exodus 34:9 “Although this is a <i>stiff-necked</i> people, forgive our <i>wickedness</i> and our <i>sin</i>”. Building a golden calf was <i>wicked</i>. Exodus 32:8 “...they have made themselves an <i>idol cast in the shape of a</i></p>	<p>Stichs 35ab “But may <i>sinners</i> vanish from the earth and the <i>wicked</i> be no more”. For human beings who turn away from God, and do not praise him, but live consciously only for self, and in self-reliance, there is no longer room in the vast realm of joy, order, and dependence directed to God. Such people are <i>sinners</i> (Kraus 1993:304).</p>

<p><i>calf</i>. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it... Exodus 32:30 "...Moses said to the people, 'you have committed a great <i>sin</i>'".</p>	
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Dying.

In Psalm 104 the created things are indicated as all belonging to God, and subject to his disposal.

The meaning of the 'dying' that takes place in the traditions, is to show that Yahweh is continually protecting his people, and also keeping them on the 'straight and narrow road'. Yahweh wants his people to keep the covenant (Exod 19:5) and he also wants them to obey him (Exod 20:1-17; Num 5:1-31), which they often promise to do (Exod 19:8; 24:3) yet they continually disobey him. Every time that they disobey Yahweh he punishes them, see Numbers 14:18 "The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished.

This punishment usually involves people being killed. For example after building the calf, three thousand people died with the sword (Exod 32:27-28). Also Exodus 32:35 "And the Lord struck the people with a plague because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made". See also Numbers 11:1, 4 and 33; 14:18.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p>Exodus 32:35 "And the Lord struck the people with a <i>plague</i> because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made".</p> <p>Numbers 16:31-33 "As soon as he finished saying this, the ground under them (Korah, Dathan and Abiram) split apart and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, with their households and all Korah's men and all their possessions... the earth closed over them, and <i>they perished and were gone from the</i></p>	<p>The created things are indicated as all belonging to God, and subject to his disposal. Stichs 29abc "When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they <i>die</i> and return to dust.</p>

<i>community</i> ".	
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Fear

The meaning of fear in the tradition-history and in the poem is that it is caused in both cases by the unknown, the strange, the new. Everything that the Israelites were experiencing in the desert was new and very strange to them. For example: Exodus 20:18 “When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear”. And also: Exodus 34:29-30 “When Moses came down from Mount Sinai...he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. When...the Israelites saw Moses his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him”. Their fear is therefore not a surprise. The tradition is explaining, in a broad sense, the many and strange experiences of the people. See also for example Exodus 19:16³⁹⁴. In the psalm, death is implied, and that is also an unknown experience, hence the people in the poem ‘are terrified’. Because of fear the coney hides in the crag of the rocks (Ps 104:18) “The crags are a refuge for the coney”. The coney is afraid of being exposed to the open space where their enemies are. This fear keeps them alive. See also Psalm 104:29 “When you hide your face they are terrified”. When Yahweh hides his face it means that the people cannot find Yahweh. They want to be near to Yahweh, and when they cannot find him they are terrified.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
Exodus 34:30 “When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were <i>afraid</i> to come near him”.	Stich 29a ‘When you hide your face, they are <i>terrified</i> ’.

Work

In both, the tradition-history, as well as in Psalm 104, mention is only made of man working. This does not mean that the animals in the tradition were *not* working, they

³⁹⁴ Exod 19:16 “...there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled”.

probably were. On the other hand, in Psalm 104 only the working of humankind is mentioned. The primary area in which a person expressed himself was daily work (Boadt 1984:252).

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
<p>Jethro visits Moses. Exodus 18:13 “Moses took his seat to <i>serve as judge</i> for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening”. In Exodus 18:18 “The <i>work</i> is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone”. Jethro advises him to appoint other men to help him with the <i>work</i>.</p> <p>For the building of the Tabernacle skilled workers were used, Stich 35:10 “All who are skilled among you are to come and <i>make</i> everything the Lord has commanded”.</p>	<p>Stichs 14bc “and plants for man to <i>cultivate</i>, bringing forth food from the earth”. Stichs 23ab “Then man goes out to his <i>work</i>, to his labour <i>until evening</i>”. Stich 24ab “How many are your <i>works</i>, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all”. Stich 31b “may the Lord rejoice in his <i>works</i>”.</p>

Mankind has to work to produce his food, while all the other animals do not work for their food. Yahweh gives each kind of animal what it needs. See Psalm 104:27 and 28: “These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things”.

Which ever way the food is acquired, Yahweh is always in charge. For humankind it is Yahweh that makes the food grow, and for all the other animals it is Yahweh that gives them their food. Yahweh is always in charge.

Clothes / garment.

Apart from a covering, clothes can also have a significant meaning. In this psalm the *clothes* mentioned in the tradition and the *clothes* mentioned in the psalm, are in

completely different circumstances. The *clothes* in Psalm 104 point to the fact that Yahweh is royalty, which means that Yahweh has to be honoured, he has to be treated with deference and respect. Joshua and Caleb tear their *clothes* to show their frustration with the people who will not believe them and in so doing are being disobedient to Yahweh.

Tradition-history	Psalm 104
Numbers 14:6 “Joshua and Caleb who were among those who had explored the land, tore their <i>clothes</i> and said to the entire Israelite assembly “The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good”.	Stich 2a “He wraps himself in light as with a <i>garment</i> . The clothes here point to the fact that Yahweh is the King, he is royalty.

3.4.8 Conclusion to tradition-history

In this section some of the functions or meanings that are found in the traditions (in the tradition-history) as well as in Psalm 104 have been identified and discussed. The *larger themes* that were identified were creation, the covenant, Yahweh’s appearance, Yahweh’s provision and the praise of Yahweh. A few examples of motifs that occur in both the tradition-history and in the psalm have eclectically been discussed. These include wickedness/sinners, dying, fear, work and clothes / garments.

The continuing activity of the creator is not limited to the world of nature. It is just as clearly visible in the events of history, especially in God’s gracious dealings with his chosen people (Ringgren 1963:98). Rendtorff (2001:320) explains it as follows: “Everything that later had to be said about God and his part in the history of his people Israel, had its basis in the belief that the God who redeemed Israel from Egyptian slavery, was the one and only God who created the world and who was mightier than any other power in the world”.

The function or the meaning of the traditions, motifs, themes and images in Psalm 104 contribute to the rhetorical function of Psalm 104, namely to praise Yahweh for his

work in creation and history. The author of Psalm 104 was influenced by the tradition, when he composed this psalm.

CHAPTER 4

THE GREAT ATON HYMN – DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC ANALYSES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into a **diachronic analysis**, and a **synchronic analysis** of the Great Aton Hymn. The diachronic analysis includes the historical background, the social and cultural contexts, as well as the literary and rhetorical contexts. The synchronic analysis includes the form (*genre*), the structure, and the movement.

The Great Aton Hymn was most probably composed by Akhenaton to praise the sun-god Aton. There were many sun-gods before Aton, but this sun-god was different from all the previous ones because he was not part of a pantheon. Akhenaton introduced a monotheistic religion, with Aton as the only god.

4.2 Diachronic analysis

For the diachronic analysis the historical³⁹⁵, the social (customs) and the cultural (values and norms) aspects, as well as the literary and the rhetorical contexts of the Great Aton Hymn is exposed.

4.2.1 Historical background³⁹⁶

Weigall (1911:157) states that the Great Aton Hymn was *composed* by the Egyptian king Akhenaton³⁹⁷ during the 9th to 10th years of his reign³⁹⁸. Many different dates are

³⁹⁵ Breasted (1909:4-5) explains that as among all other early peoples, it was in his natural surroundings that the Egyptian first saw his gods. The trees and springs, the stones and hilltops, the birds and beasts, were creatures like himself, or possessed of strange and uncanny powers of which he was not master. ...the earliest gods were the controlling forces of the material world.

³⁹⁶ Hornung (1983:245) states that before *circa* 1370 BCE, Egypt always had polytheistic religions, and a sun-god was part of this pantheon. When Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV) came to power he introduced a monotheistic religion, with Aton the sun-god as the only god. Cf Baikie (1926:314).

³⁹⁷ Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV, Amenophis IV, Amenhetep IV). The 10th pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt (*circa* 1388 – *circa* 1358 BCE). In his 5th year of reign Amenhotep IV changed his birth name to Akhenaton.

³⁹⁸ Weigall (1911:115) reminds that Akhenaton had been educated in the worship of Ra-Horakht-Aton, the sun-god worshipped by his father (Amenhotep III). Hart (1999:45) conjectures that it is possible

given for the period of Akhenaton's reign. For example: 1350-1334 BCE,³⁹⁹ 1353-1336 BCE⁴⁰⁰ or 1368-1352 BCE.⁴⁰¹ Depending on which dates are used Akhenaton ruled for 16 or 17 years as pharaoh of Egypt.⁴⁰² This means that the Great Aton Hymn could have been composed approximately during the years 1342-1341 BCE, 1354-1344 BCE or 1360-1359 BCE,⁴⁰³ when Akhenaton was 20 or 21 years of age. It is possible that Akhenaton could have written his hymn over a period of two to three years, or even longer.

The following is an excerpt from the text of the Great Aton Hymn, taken from the translation of Williams R J (1958:145):

“Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon of heaven,
O living Aton, thou who wast the first to live.
When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon,
Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty”.

The *development* of the Great Aton Hymn seems evident. This hymn is *not* an original composition⁴⁰⁴; previous pharaohs had similar hymns⁴⁰⁵. David (2000:27) indicates that recent studies have shown that the Great Aton Hymn contains little that was not formerly attributed to other gods.⁴⁰⁶ This stretches right back to the first sun-god

that, if Akhenaton did not compose the Great Aton Hymn himself, he most certainly had to give his royal scrutiny.

³⁹⁹ http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/educational_site/ancient_texts/e... 2013/11/06 03:56 PM

⁴⁰⁰ Samson (1972:4&7).

⁴⁰¹ <http://www.maat.sofiatopia.org/aten.htm> 2013/11/06 04:19PM

⁴⁰² <http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/akhenaten.html> 2015/01/30 11:17 AM

⁴⁰³ Weigall (1911:157); Cf <http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/dynasties.htm>; Also Breasted (1934:281-286). Akhenaton produced his hymn before the middle of the 14th century (*circa* 1350-1335 BCE).

⁴⁰⁴ Breasted (1959:319) explains that the Great Aton Hymn was a new form of the old Solar faith; with the difference being that Aton was monotheistic, where all the previous sun-gods had been part of a polytheistic religion. Alter (2007:xiii-xiv) explains that the author of the Great Aton Hymn tapped his predecessors for verbal formulas, imagery, elements of mythology and even entire sequences of lines of poetry.

⁴⁰⁵ According to Baikie (1926:306) the sun-god, who under one or other of his various aspects, had been the object of adoration in Egypt as far back as any records can be traced. Hornung (1999:4) agrees with Baikie that the worship of the sun belonged to the most ancient roots of the 'polymorphic polytheism' of Egypt. Baikie (1926:250) explains further that Atenism had its roots deep down in the ancient Egyptian faith and was a development from it.

⁴⁰⁶ Even before David (2000:27,45), Aldred (1968:189-190) was already of the opinion that many of the ideas expressed in the Great Aton Hymn had already appeared in similar compositions to other gods. Williams R J (1958:149) states that the Great Aton Hymn is itself dependent on earlier models.

Atum,⁴⁰⁷ and also through various other sun-gods⁴⁰⁸ worshipped by the pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty.⁴⁰⁹ Evidence shows that the worship of Akhenaton's sun-god (Aton), was not a sudden innovation on the part of Akhenaton, but the climax of many centuries of worshipping a sun-god⁴¹⁰.

Some examples of a few of the hymns written for the sun-gods⁴¹¹ are helpful here in order to see where Akhenaton apparently acquired many of the ideas he could have used, while composing the Great Aton Hymn.

A few of the *similarities between the Great Aton Hymn (circa 1350-1335 BCE), and hymns to Atum (early prehistory)* are the following.⁴¹²

- 1 Thy rays, they encompass the lands (Aton line 6).
*Lighting earth with your rays*⁴¹³ (Atum).
- 2 Thou didst create the earth While thou wast alone (Aton line 54).
*At the moment of creation, Atum spoke: I alone am the creator*⁴¹⁴ (Atum).
- 3 Men live through thee, while (their) eyes are upon thy beauty (Aton lines 101-102).
*The West's people turn their faces to you, rejoicing at your beautiful sight*⁴¹⁵ (Atum).

⁴⁰⁷ Breasted (1959:39) notes that the earliest name for the sun-god was Atum.

⁴⁰⁸ Rea (2006:139) states that syncretism was practised by the Egyptians. I.e. two or more gods were combined to form a new composite god. With the various sun-gods this was often done. Cf. Hornung (1999: 54, 197); Also Spence (1990:159) states that Aton did not absorb any of the other sun-deities that were used before Akhenaton's reign, and because of this, he was a much more colourless deity than the sun-gods before him..

⁴⁰⁹ David (2000:166) states that Akhenaton's contribution to religion was not the introduction of a new sun-god, but rather his attempt to make this deity the object of exclusive worship.

⁴¹⁰ Cf. Hart (1999: 46-47). Originally the new cult paid homage to the physical orb of the sun (for which the Egyptian word was *aton*).

⁴¹¹ Hornung (1999:49) explains that the various sun-gods had different symbols, which represented them. The first sun-god at Heliopolis was conceived of as a falcon. Eventually the mixed form of a human body and an animal's head would vanish, and only the hands, emanating from the rays of the sun, would serve as a reminder of his former human form.

⁴¹² Atum the first solar deity. One of the early gods of Egyptian mythology associated with Heliopolis. Also Breasted (1959:42, 76) who refers to Atum as "ancient Atum".

⁴¹³ Cf. Siuda (2009:38).

⁴¹⁴ Matthews and Benjamin (2006:8).

⁴¹⁵ Cf. Siuda (2009:38).

A few of the *similarities between the Great Aton Hymn (circa 1350-1335 BCE), and hymns to Ra.*⁴¹⁶ (circa 2895-2680 BCE)⁴¹⁷

- 4 Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of the sky (Aton line 1).
*Hail to thee, fair Ra of every day, who dost rise in the morning without ceasing*⁴¹⁸(Ra).
- 5 When thou settest in the western horizon of the sky (Aton line 11).
*When thou dost rest in Manu (the mountain of the west), then they sleep as if they were dead*⁴¹⁹(Ra).

A few of the *similarities between the Great Aton Hymn (circa 1350-1335 BCE), and hymns to Amun (circa 1479-1425 BCE)*⁴²⁰

- 6 Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all that thou hast made (Aton line 6).
Thou art Re, and thou carriest them all away captive (Aton line 7).
*Sole lord taking captive all lands every day*⁴²¹(Amun).
- 7 Thou makest the season ... (Aton line 80).
Winter to bring them coolness. And heat that they may taste thee (Aton line 81).
He makes the seasons by the months (Amun).
*Heat when he desires, cold when he desires*⁴²²(Amun).

⁴¹⁶ According to Breasted (1909:360) Akhenaton made no attempt to conceal the identity of his new deity with the old sun-god Ra. Akhenaton instructed his vizier in the new faith, and Akhenaton said to his vizier, "The words of Ra are before thee ... my august father who taught me their essence It was known in my heart, revealed to my face." Thus, Akhenaton attributes the new faith to Ra as its source, and claims to have been himself the channel of its revelation.

⁴¹⁷ Moret (1927:23), who writes that these dates indicate the third and fourth Dynasties. Also Breasted (1959:15, 17).

⁴¹⁸ Cf. Moret (1927:318).

⁴¹⁹ Cf. Moret (1927:318).

⁴²⁰ Lichtheim (1976:35,43) refers to a poetic speech of Amun which borrows from the poetical stela of Thutmose III (circa 1479 -1425 BCE), (Akhenaton's great, great grand father). Peet (1931:81) states that the Great Cairo Hymn to Amun was based to a great extent on older material. Also Aldred (1968:189) states that the Great Hymn to Amun, which dates to the reign of Amenhotep II (circa 1436-1411 BCE) (Akhenaton's great grandfather), but which has elements of greater antiquity, reveals the same joy in nature and speaks of the god almost exclusively in his solar aspect, which had resulted from his fusion with Ra to form Ra-Atum.

⁴²¹ Breasted (1934:275-6). From a sun-hymn on a stela written by the twin brothers, Suti and Hor.

⁴²² Breasted (1934:276). From a sun-hymn written by the twin brothers, Suti and Hor.

8 When thou risest in the eastern horizon (Aton line 3).
When thou settest in the western horizon of the sky (Aton line 11).
*Who riseth in the eastern horizon. Who setteth in the western horizon*⁴²³(Amun).

9 All beasts are satisfied with their pasture. Trees and plants are verdant.
The birds which fly from their nests ... (Aton lines 31-33).
Who made pasture [for] all beasts, and fruit trees for mankind (Amun).
*And the birds that take wing in the sky...*⁴²⁴(Amun).

*Similarities between the Great Aton Hymn (circa 1350-1335 BCE) and one of the hymns to Amun-Ra (circa 2680-2540 BCE)*⁴²⁵

10 Thou didst create the earth ...Men, all cattle large and small (Aton lines 54-5).
*Maker of men, creator of all animals*⁴²⁶(Amun-Ra).

A comparison between the Great Hymn to Amun and the hymn of the twin brothers Suti and Hor show that the religious thought of the period immediately preceding the reign of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton) was distinctly monotheistic in tendency⁴²⁷.

It was during Akhenaton's reign (circa 1350-1335 BCE) that Aton was promoted to being the only accepted god in a monotheistic Egyptian society. Originally Akhenaton brought Aton gradually into the pantheon (while he was still at Thebes). It was Akhenaton, who first initiated the appearance of Aton as the one true god.⁴²⁸ Aton was now worshiped as a god, rather than as an object associated with the sun-god.

⁴²³ According to Sugden (1928:163) the opening of the Great Aton Hymn has been quoted in the hymn to Amun.

⁴²⁴ Williams R J (1958:149) says that this interest in nature is not peculiar to the Atenist faith. It was anticipated in the Great Hymn to Amun, contained in a papyrus written in the time of Amenhotep II (circa 1436-1411 BCE), but utilising sources from a still earlier period; Cf Breasted (1934:26).

⁴²⁵ Moret (1927:23, 315, 318) refers to this period as the fifth Dynasty.

⁴²⁶ Kitchen (2003:331). The Great Cairo Hymn to Amun (circa 1500-1400), from well before Akhenaton's time, already praised Amun-Ra as creator of the other gods as well as of humanity; Cf. Breasted (1934:278).

⁴²⁷ Breasted (1959:6).

⁴²⁸ David (2000:26) asks "was the Aton cult simply a development of an earlier religious tradition, which had been fostered by Akhenaton's father, Amenhotep III, and his grand father Tuthmosis IV, or

All previous sun-gods had hymns composed to them and with which they could be worshipped. It was therefore a natural step for Akhenaton to compose one or more hymns to his sun-god (Aton), which could be used to praise and worship him.

Superficially all the people around Akhetaton worshipped Aton. But, because they did not understand this new kind of religion, the working class went back to their old gods in secret (cf Bes).⁴²⁹ It is, however, possible that there were people, who genuinely worshipped Aton, seeing that the Atonist religion survived for 250 years, i.e. long after Akhenaton died.

4.2.2 Social and cultural perspectives

It is not known whether Akhenaton composed the Great Aton Hymn while he was still in residence at Thebes or only after he had moved to Akhetaton. For the purpose of this study it is assumed that the composition took place at Akhetaton.

4.2.2.1 Atonist faith

What is known about the Atonist faith⁴³⁰ is learnt from the buildings and the tombs⁴³¹ at Tell el-Amarna.

a Buildings

There were quite⁴³² a number of sun temples at Akhetaten, which were all open-air⁴³³ temples⁴³⁴. Apart from the temples and palaces there were also houses⁴³⁵ in which the people lived.

was it an entirely new concept, a religious revolution, which was brought about by Akhenaton himself”.

⁴²⁹ Refer to paragraph 4.2.2.2, “The people in Akhetaton”.

⁴³⁰ Weigall (1911:191) suggests that few real converts seem to have been made; for the religion, which was far above the understanding of the people. In deference of the Pharaoh’s wishes Aton was accepted, but no real love was shown for the new form of worship; not even in Akhetaten itself was it understood.

⁴³¹ Baikie (1932:247) indicates that the scenes on the walls of the tombs, though abundant and detailed, yield very limited information concerning the people and things in Akhetaten. Taken together, they only reveal one personality, one family, one home, one career and one mode of life. The pharaoh’s figure, family and retinue dominate everything.

b Worship

The Aton religion⁴³⁶ never became a religion for the ordinary people in Egypt.⁴³⁷ Only Akhenaton could pray directly to Aton.⁴³⁸ He regarded himself as the sole prophet of Aton.⁴³⁹ The rest of the people directed their prayers to Akhenaton, and through him the blessings of Aton were given to them. He acted as their intermediary.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³² Baikie (1932: 242-245) remarks that the city of Akhetaten had three palaces and several temples. Besides the great temple, which stood in the centre of Akhetaten, there were also various shrines. Aldred (1968:237) explains that the decoration of palace and temple walls was often carried out in coloured stone inlays, and in glazed tiles or glass, applied in a kind of mosaic.

⁴³³ Aldred (1968: 237) states that the pattern of Aton's temples at Akhetaten, follow the distinctive pattern of the Heliopolitan sun-temple in being open to the sky. I.e. open to the rays of Aton. Hornung (1999:73) concludes that wherever the king strode, he was in contact with his god. And as soon as Aton rose in the morning, he filled the temple completely with his presence.

⁴³⁴ Kemp (1989:85, 279-281) explains that inside the temples there were many altars. This provision of many altars is a feature of Akhenaton's cult. Contemporary tomb scenes, which depict the temples show the altars piled with food- and drink-offerings. In one of the temples there were several hundred offering-tables, laid out over a veritable field of space. Cf. Aldred (1968:194). These mud-brick altars were built to be heaped each day with fresh offerings. Aldred (1968:45) says that the rock-hewn tombs give vivid pictures of the daily life of the royal family at Akhetaten; such as the daily worship in the temples to the Aton under the open sky.

⁴³⁵ Hornung (1999:67) explains that the dwellings of the officials and courtiers contained as many as twenty rooms. Many of these houses had baths and toilets, and often they also had a cult chapel for the worship of an image of the king and his family. The officials were paid their salaries in the form of grain, as indicated by the large silos and the ovens in their homes. The simpler houses belonged to the larger, lower social class who carried out all the many tasks that had to be performed. The servants and slaves had no houses of their own, but were integrated into the households of their masters.

⁴³⁶ Weigall (1911:125) remarks that the ceremonial side of the religion does not seem to have been complex. The priests, of whom there were very few, offered sacrifices to the Aton as well as burned incense. At these ceremonies the king and his family often officiated. Cf. Breasted (1959: 329). The Aton hymn was probably recited from day to day in the course of the ceremony. Also for Lichtheim (1997: 45) this hymn was undoubtedly composed for recitation by the pharaoh. Aldred (1968:233) remarks that Akhenaton transferred to Akhetaten the ritual of sun-worship, which had in the past been observed at Heliopolis.

⁴³⁷ Breasted (1959:6-7) notes that the Atonist movement was exclusively political, artificial, and imposed upon the people by official pressure from above.

⁴³⁸ Hornung (1999:46) remarks that Akhenaton is depicted from time to time lying outstretched on the ground before the Aton. On a stela, the royal family is depicted on their knees beneath the radiant Aton, and on another stela they are all lying flat on the ground, "kissing the earth."

⁴³⁹ Hornung (1999:103) states that in the Great Aton Hymn we learn that even when Aton has "gone away" at night and left the world in the sleep of death, he (Aton) nevertheless remains in the heart of the Pharaoh. This was his enduring place. Weigall (1911: 124) tells that in order to prevent the more ignorant of his disciples from worshipping the sun itself, Akhenaton seems to have selected the sunrise and the sunset as the two hours for ceremonial adoration. Also Hornung (1999:54-55). Although Aton was originally the disc of the sun, it was later not the disc anymore, but rather the light that radiates from it. From early times, the sun with its rays had served in the writing system as a hieroglyph to mean "to shine."

⁴⁴⁰ Hornung (1999:67) writes that some of the better class houses had shrines to pay respect to a portrait of the Pharaoh or the royal family under the sun-disk with its rays. Van de Mierop (2011:203) states that because there were no statues of Aton, he was represented by a sun-disk with rays. The rays end in hands which may hold the *ankh*-sign of life to the nostrils of the king and queen, but to no-one else. Williams R J (1958:142) remarks that the hand was the hieroglyphic symbol for life.

Some of the tombs were decorated with paintings.⁴⁴¹ On some of the walls of some tombs, Aton is shown as a disk from which many rays descended.⁴⁴² There are several hymns celebrating Aton, hewn out of the rock walls of the tombs of some of the courtiers of Akhenaton.⁴⁴³ One of the scenes in one of the tombs shows a choir of blind singers⁴⁴⁴ with their blind harpist.⁴⁴⁵

4.2.2.2 The people in Akhetaton

Akhetaton, the city that Akhenaton built, was established in Middle Egypt, about midway between Thebes (in the south) and the Mediterranean sea in the north, on the east bank of the Nile (Breasted 1934:280; Thomas 1958:143 and Day 2013:211). Akhetaton was built at the foothills of the eastern mountain range, on the eastern side of the Nile river. A semi-circle of cliffs enclose the site of Akhetaton on the eastern side (Aldred 1968:67). This site, where Akhetaton was built, is today known as Tell el-Amarna.

Apart from Akhenaton and his family, the rest of the people can roughly be divided into the officials and courtiers, and the ordinary working people.⁴⁴⁶ The *officials and courtiers* were eager to please Akhenaton possibly because of the many gifts which he

⁴⁴¹ Kemp (1989:261-272) explains that the scenes on the walls are variations on a limited number of themes, most of which centre on the life of the royal family. Some of these pictures also show bright scenes from nature. David (1982:163) tells that the scenes, which emphasized the beauty of the plants and animals reflected the creative power of Aton. Weigall (1911:118) explains that the youthful high priest Akhenaton called upon his subjects to search for their god, not in the confusion of battle or behind the smoke of human sacrifice, but amidst the flowers and the trees, amidst the wild duck and the fishes. He urged his people to worship “in truth”, simply without an excess of ceremony.

⁴⁴² Hornung (1999:73) says that Aton’s effect on his temple and the world was not worked through words he spoke to Pharaoh, but through his rays. His life-maintaining and life-giving hands were present everywhere in the sanctuary. Therefore, the sanctuary was overfilled with altars on which food lay ready for the god. And the offering was still always accompanied by the singing of hymns and by music and incense.

⁴⁴³ Kemp (1989:262-263). Aldred (1968:187) explains that the Great Aton Hymn, which is inscribed in the tombs of some of his courtiers at Tell el-Amarna, particularly in that of Ay who, as the pharaoh’s private secretary, is most likely to have given the full authorized version.

⁴⁴⁴ Peet (1931:58) remarks that on the tomb walls of Egyptian noble men, scenes are not uncommon in which singing, often to the accompaniment of a flute or harp, or both, is represented. It is clear that singing played a great part both in everyday life, and in religious services.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. Baikie (1932: 255).

⁴⁴⁶ Van de Mieroop (2011:203) says that at Tell el-Amarna there was also a workman’s village, located about five kilometers into the desert. This village housed the workmen and artists who carved out and decorated the tombs.

gave to his loyal followers.⁴⁴⁷ It seems that many of the ordinary (working)⁴⁴⁸ people still worshipped their old gods, which they had before coming to Akhetaton.⁴⁴⁹

4.2.3 Documentation of the Great Aton Hymn

It is imperative to determine *where* and *how* the Great Aton Hymn was found. *What* is the function of the Great Aton Hymn? *Why* is Aton only found hewn out of rock at Tell el-Amarna? *Why* was the Great Aton Hymn found where it was. The Great Aton Hymn was found in Ay's tomb, probably because Ay wanted to praise Aton, while he was still alive; Ay wanted to praise Aton when he (Ay) was in the underworld (when he was dead); Ay also wanted to please Akhenaton and to show his affiliation with Akhenaton with regard to Aton, as a senior official, Ay probably had permission from Akhenaton to inscribe this hymn in his tomb. *Why* was the Great Aton Hymn composed? Most probably it was composed to praise and worship the sun-god Aton as the sole god.

a Where

The doctrine of Aton, as taught by the pharaoh, was undoubtedly recorded in many writings.⁴⁵⁰ But, it has survived in only two forms: the statements of the king on the

⁴⁴⁷ Baikie (1926:143) tells that Atonism was, from start to finish, almost exclusively a court religion. It began on the steps of the throne, found its mouthpiece in a king, and never, so far as can be judged, succeeded in gaining any grasp of the affections and interests of the great mass of the nation.

⁴⁴⁸ David (1982:162) explains that the cult of Aton seems to have had little appeal to the ordinary people; the lack of a cult statue which could be paraded at festivals, and of a mythology with human interest, prevented the mass of people from identifying with Aton. Hornung (1999:111) explains that they continued to worship their time-honoured deities, as the discovery of traditional gods such as Bes in the workman's village at Tell el-Amarna; and the figurines of old traditional deities in the houses at Tell el-Amarna have shown. Williams R J (1958:144) remarks that it was inevitable that a doctrine of so contemplative and intellectual a nature would be incomprehensible to the common folk who either ignored it or adopted a hostile attitude towards it.

⁴⁴⁹ Hornung (1999:55) points out that Aton was the personal god of Akhenaton, but the personal god of the individual was the Pharaoh Akhenaton. Akhenaton was the son of Aton.

⁴⁵⁰ Wiegall (1911:150) states that it was not unusual for the Egyptians to compose hymns in honour of their gods, and a few have been preserved upon the walls of the old temples. Kemp (1989:270) explains that The pictures painted by artists on the walls of several of the rock tombs, show that the ancient Egyptians' love of trees and gardens was well represented in the city. Also rock-hewn tombs with their scenes in relief. And tombs that display an almost unique mixture of carved reliefs and painted scenes (Van de Mieroop 2011:198; Kemp1989:261).

*boundary stelae*⁴⁵¹ and the hymns and prayers inscribed in the *tomb*⁴⁵² of the courtiers at Akhetaten, now known as Tell el-Amarna.⁴⁵³

In Ay's tomb⁴⁵⁴ there is a copy of an elaborate hymn; and it seems that there were two main psalms in use at the temples: a longer and a shorter version of the same composition (Weigall 1911:150).

It was not unusual for the Egyptians to compose hymns in honour of their gods, and a few such have been preserved to us upon the walls of the old temples (Weigall 1911:150). At Akhetaten it was apparently the custom to write short extracts from their hymns, that were sung in the temples, on the walls of their tombs⁴⁵⁵ (David 1982:166). Apart from these short extracts, there was also a much longer copy of a hymn in one tomb, that of Ay (Davies N de G 1908:29-31). This longer copy is today referred to as the Great Aton Hymn (Weigall 1911:150; Hornung 1999:78). Both the Great Aton Hymn, and the Shorter Hymn to Aton are known from Tell el-Amarna (Day 2013:211).

⁴⁵¹ From the Boundary Stelae at Amarna, we know that Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV) had dedicated his new city to Aton (Lichtheim 1997:90; Aldred 1987:46).

⁴⁵² Lichtheim (1997:90) states that the tombs contain numerous short prayers and hymns addressed to Aton, or jointly to Aton and to the king. These brief compositions resemble one another closely, and thereby show that they were derived from a common stock of formulations assembled by the royal scribes. One such text is found in nearly identical versions in five tombs: "The Shorter Hymn to Aton" or "The Short Hymn to Aton." Kemp (1989:272) explains that the rock tombs are in two groups, the North and the South, hewn in the cliffs and hills which border the site in a great arc to the east. They belonged to courtiers and officials.

⁴⁵³ Cf. Lichtheim 1997: 90 and Day 2013:211.

⁴⁵⁴ Lichtheim (1997:44-46) explains that the texts in the tomb of the courtier Ay, have yielded the most extensive statements of Aton worship. Here we have not only several short hymns and prayers, but above all, the long text which has come to be known as "the Great Aton Hymn." The East wall of the tomb is inscribed with three hymns and prayers to Aton and to the king. The West wall contains the great hymn. Written in 13 text columns of hieroglyphics, which begin at the top of the wall. Below the text are the kneeling relief figures of Ay and his wife. Rensburg (2003:66) explains that the hieroglyphic system of writing developed in Egypt in the fourth millennium BCE. This system consisted only of symbols and signs which had to be interpreted. Hieroglyphic writing was used in a variety of media; for incising stone (for example pyramid walls, temple walls, public monuments, tomb walls stelae etc), and inscribing papyrus with reed pen and ink. By approximately 2000 BCE, however, a more cursive style emerged for writing on papyrus, known as **hieratic**. The writing system of Egypt was cumbersome, as indicated by the fact that it contained several hundred signs (Rensburg 2003:66). The reed pens were trimmed to a point, and were dipped in ink made from lamp-black and vegetable gum. Millard (2003:75) explains that the Egyptian hieroglyphs were carved or painted on hard surfaces and engraved on metal.

⁴⁵⁵ The short hymn to Aton could have been one of these extracts.

In 1890, a portion of the Hymn to Aton was maliciously destroyed.⁴⁵⁶ In 1895, the first study of this hymn was conducted by Breasted (Hornung 1999:10, 78).

During the 18th Dynasty Aton made its first unequivocal appearance in the reign of Tuthmosis IV, when it is described on a large *scarab*, as a great universal god, whose exalted position in the sky entitles him to rule over the empire of all that he shines upon (Aldred 1968:166-213).

In Akhenaton's time at Akhetaton, letters were also written on papyrus⁴⁵⁷ (Kemp 1989:301).

b How

The Great Aton Hymn does not physically fit into any book. It does however fit into the manner that the Egyptians were writing; the words they chose and the short sentences they used. The praise that was lauded onto the sun-god Aton was quite customary of the type of language used at that time (Breasted 1959:7).⁴⁵⁸

The ancient Egyptians had an institution where scrolls on religious and other serious topics (medicine, astronomy etc) were studied and copied (Kemp 1989:288). Copies of old texts would have made it into a library, and it is noteworthy that Akhenaton did not dispense with this traditional centre of learning.

The over 300 clay letters found at Tell el-Amarna show that the scribes in Tyre, Byblos, Jerusalem and Amarna were adept at Akkadian cuneiform the *lingua franca* of the period; (Millard 2003:74; Yapp 1979:62). The basic picture that emerges from

⁴⁵⁶ Hornung (1999:78) remarks that luckily it is preserved in a copy made earlier by Urbain Bouriant. Thus, we have the complete text of this poem, in which Akhenaton's ideas found their purest expression.

⁴⁵⁷ David (2000:43) remarks that religious texts are found in tomb and temple walls, on papyri and on artifacts, Aldred (1968:64) says that a contemporary letter written on papyrus, and dated to Akhenaton's 5th regnal year has come to light, and still names Akhenaton, Amenophis IV, thus giving the latest date by which he is known to have still used this name. It is not known whether the Great Aton Hymn was written on papyrus, which was available during Akhenaton's rule.

⁴⁵⁸ Buttenwieser (1969:183) describes the Great Aton Hymn as crude, materialistic and monotheistic. Contra to Buttenwieser, Weigall (1911:150) says of the Great Aton Hymn that both in purity of tone and in beauty of style it must rank high amongst the poems of antiquity. Cf also Lichtheim (1997:45) who describes the Great Aton Hymn as an eloquent and beautiful statement of the doctrine of the one god.

this evidence is one of bilingualism; the scribes of the Levant could read and write both their native West Semitic language and the Akkadian Cuneiform (Rensburg 2003:65).

The language that the people used, while they were singing or reciting the hymns to Aton at Akhetaton, was Late Egyptian (Van de Mieroop 2011:210). From as early as the Late-Old Kingdom, wisdom literature was handed down in writing; but in the time of Akhenaton all teaching and instruction were imparted orally by the king himself (Hornung 1999:52). This implies that either the king wanted to be in control at all times, or that the ordinary people could not write.

c Why

Having decided that there should be a monotheistic sun-god in the place of the polytheistic pantheon that had been in place for many thousands of years, a hymn had to be composed to proclaim the greatness of the new sun-god, Aton (Breasted 1959:329). The author of the Great Aton Hymn could have been Akhenaton himself, or even some of his courtiers or priests (Breasted 1959:329).⁴⁵⁹

The king had a scribe (or many) in his palace, who wrote on clay tablets in cuneiform script. The king sent letters on clay tablets to Western Asiatic courts. In this correspondence between Egypt and other states of great power status, the mutual mode of address was “brother... .” These letters created a mental world into which all the correspondents were drawn. For the pharaoh-king of Egypt, it was a world of maybe fifty members, each one a ruler or occasionally another member of a ruler’s family. The members rarely, if ever, met. They wrote to each other with long intervals in the correspondence, but there were enough of them to sustain at the Egyptian court a permanent office and secretariat to deal with them (Kemp 1989:225).

⁴⁵⁹ *Contra* to Breasted, Yapp (1979:107) writes that Akhenaton did compose his Great Aton Hymn.

4.3 Synchronic analysis

4.3.1 Introduction

Since Breasted indicated the relationship that seemed to exist between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, many scholars have examined these two poems in order to find their similarities and differences, and also to ponder the possible reason(s) why this should be so. The Great Aton Hymn received much attention after its discovery at Tell el-Amarna, because of this perceived close relationship with Psalm 104.

In this section the form, structure and development of the Great Aton Hymn⁴⁶⁰ are outlined.

As a result of acts of vandalism, a portion of the latter part of the hymn has been lost. Researchers are dependent on a copy made three-quarters of a century ago by Bouriant.⁴⁶¹ The prose introduction, which is part of the original hymn, when it was inscribed in the tomb of Ay, is given in this study, although many of the translations have omitted it.

4.3.2 Form

Montserrat (2000:38) describes the poem to Aton as an eulogy.⁴⁶² Most authors describe the ‘Great Poem’ to Aton as a hymn. If it is a hymn (i.e. a Song of Praise) or

⁴⁶⁰ Weigall (1911:150) says that this hymn is quite unlike any other Egyptian composition, both in purity of tone and in beauty of style. Weigall further says that this hymn must rank high amongst the poems of antiquity. Williams R J (1958:145) who describes the Great Aton Hymn as a major document of the new faith, as well as a fine example of the Egyptian poetic genius. Lichtheim (1997:45) describes the Great Aton Hymn as an eloquent and beautiful statement of the doctrine of the one god. *Contra* to Weigall and Williams R J, Buitendijk (1969:183) describes this hymn as “crude, materialistic and monotheistic.”

⁴⁶¹ Williams R J (1958:145). Cf also Davies (1908:29).

⁴⁶² Cf. Montserrat (2000:38). To describe the eulogies to Aton as hymns is to confuse the understanding of the texts and their purpose. ‘Hymns’ seem to be an unsuitable word, because it suggests a congregation of ordinary people singing. Nothing whatever is known about how (if at all) these poetic compositions were performed; communal singing is improbable, as the (hymn) is said to be an adoration of the Aton spoken in Akhenaton’s words. They are eulogies, formal and rhetorical statements of praise, rather than outpourings of emotion. Breasted (1934:281) refers to these songs to Aton as hymns.

a poem, it should be divided into an introduction, a body and a conclusion.⁴⁶³ In this study the ‘Great Hymn’ to Aton is studied as a hymn, thus the Great Aton Hymn.

4.3.3 Translations

Breasted (1934:281-186)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
	<p><i>Adoration of Re-Harakhti-who-rejoices-in-lightland In-his-name-Shu-who-is-Aten, living forever; the great living Aten who is in jubilee, the lord of all that the Disc encircles, lord of sky, lord of earth, lord of the house-of-Aten in Akhet-Aten; (and of) the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who lives by Maat, the Lord of the Two lands, Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of-Re; the Son of Re who lives by Maat, the Lord of Crowns, Akhenaten, great in his lifetime; (and) his beloved great Queen, the Lady of the Two Lands,</i></p> <p><i>Nefer-nefru-Aten Nefertiti, who lives in health and youth forever. The Vizier, the Fanbearer on the right of the King, Ay-He says:</i></p>	
Thou dawnest beautifully in the horizon of the sky,	1 Splendid you rise in heaven's lightland,	1 Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon
0 living Aton who wast the Beginning of life!	O living Aten, creator of life!	2 O living Aten, thou who wast the first to live.
When thou didst rise in the eastern horizon,	When you have dawned in eastern lightland,	3 When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon,
Thou didst fill every land	You fill every land with	4 Thou hast filled every

⁴⁶³ Westermann (1980:92) says that all psalms classified as hymns have the same basic structure. “It is this clear-cut structure which distinguishes the Old Testament hymns from the Egyptian hymns, with which they otherwise have many things in common.”

with thy beauty.	your beauty.	land with thy beauty.
Thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over every land,	5 You are beautiful, great, radiant, High over every land;	5 Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land;
Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even to the end of all that thou hast made.	Your rays embrace the lands, To the limit of all that you made.	6 Thy rays encompass the lands to the very limit of all thou hast made.
Thou art Re, and thou penetratest to the very end of them;	Being Re, you reach their limits,	7 Being Re, thou dost reach to their limit
Thou bindest them for thy beloved son (the Pharaoh).	10 You bend them (for) the son whom you love;	8 And curb them [for] thy beloved son;
Though thou art far away, thy rays are upon earth;	Though you are far, your rays are on earth,	9 Though thou art distant, thy rays are upon the earth;
Though thou art in the faces of men, thy footsteps are unseen.	Though one sees you, your strides are unseen.	10 Thou art in their faces, yet thy movements are unknown (?).
When thou settest in the western horizon of the sky,	When you set in western lightland,	11 When thou dost set on the western horizon,
The“ earth is in darkness like death.	Earth is in darkness as if in death;	12 The earth is in darkness, resembling death.
They sleep in their chambers, Their heads are wrapped up,	15 One sleeps in chambers, heads covered,	13 Men sleep in the bed- chamber with-their heads covered,
Their nostrils are stopped, And none seeth the other,	One eye does not see another.	14 Nor does one eye behold the other.
While all their things are stolen, Which are under their heads,	Were they robbed of their goods That are under their heads,	15 Were all their goods stolen Which are beneath their heads,
And they know it not.	People would not remark it.	16 They would not be aware of it.
“Every lion cometh forth from his den,	20 Every lion comes from its den,	17 Every lion has come forth from his den,

All serpents, they sting.	All the serpents bite;	18 All the snakes bite.
Darkness broods, The world is in silence,	Darkness hovers, earth is silent,	19 Darkness prevails, and the earth is in silence,
He that made them resteth in his horizon.	As their maker rests in lightland.	20 Since he who made them is resting in his horizon.
"Bright is the earth when thou risest in the horizon;	Earth brightens when you dawn in lightland,	21 At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon,
When thou shinest as Aton by day	25 When you shine as Aton of daytime;	22 Dost shine as Aten by day,
Thou drivest away the darkness.	As you dispel the dark,	23 Thou dost dispel the darkness
When thou sendest forth thy rays,	As you cast your rays,	24 And shed thy rays.
The Two Lands (Egypt) are in daily festivity.	The Two Lands are in festivity.	25 The Two Lands are in festive mood,
Men waken and stand upon their feet	Awake they stand on their feet,	26 Awake, and standing on (their) feet,
When thou hast raised them up.	30 You have roused them;	27 For thou hast raised them up;
Their limbs bathed, they take their clothing,	Bodies cleansed, clothed,	28 They cleanse their bodies and take (their) garments;
Their arms uplifted in adoration to thy dawning.	Their arms adore your appearance.	29 Their arms are (lifted) in adoration at thine appearing;
Then in all the world they do their work.	The entire land sets out to work,	30 The whole land performs its labour.
"All cattle rest upon their pasturage,	All beasts browse on their herbs;	31 All beasts are satisfied with their pasture;
The trees and the plants flourish,	35 Trees, herbs are sprouting,	32 Trees and plants are verdant.
The birds flutter in their marshes,	Birds fly from their nests,	33 The birds which fly from their nests,

<p>Their wings uplifted in adoration to thee.</p> <p>All the antelopes dance upon their feet,</p> <p>All creatures that fly or alight,</p> <p>They live when thou hast shone upon them.</p> <p>“The barques sail up-stream and down-stream alike.</p> <p>Every highway is open because thou dawnest.</p> <p>The fish in the river leap up before thee.</p> <p>Thy rays are in the midst of the great green sea.</p> <p>“Creator of the germ in woman, Who makest seed into men,</p> <p>Making alive the son in the body of his mother,</p> <p>Soothing him that he may not weep,</p> <p>Nurse even in the womb, Giver of breath to sustain alive every one that he maketh!</p> <p>When he descendeth from the body (of his mother) on the day of his birth,</p> <p>Thou openest his mouth altogether,</p>	<p>Their wings greeting your <i>ka</i>,</p> <p>All flocks frisk on their feet,</p> <p>All that fly up and alight,</p> <p>40 They live when you dawn for them.</p> <p>Ships fare north, fare south as well,</p> <p>Roads lie open when you rise;</p> <p>The fish in the river dart before you,</p> <p>Your rays are in the midst of the sea.</p> <p>45 Who makes seed grow in women, Who creates people from sperm;</p> <p>Who feeds the son in his mother's womb,</p> <p>Who soothes him to still his tears.</p> <p>50 Nurse in the womb, Giver of breath, To nourish all that he made.</p> <p>When he comes from the womb to breathe, On the day of his birth,</p> <p>You open wide his mouth, 55 You supply his needs.</p>	<p>Their wings are (spread) in adoration to thy soul;</p> <p>34 All flock skip with (their) feet;</p> <p>35 All that fly up and alight</p> <p>36 Live when thou hast risen [for] them.</p> <p>37 Ships sail upstream and downstream alike,</p> <p>38 For every route is open at thine appearing.</p> <p>39 The fish in the river leap before thee,</p> <p>40 For thy rays are in the midst of the sea.</p> <p>41 Thou creator of issue in woman, who makest semen into mankind,</p> <p>42 And dost sustain the son in his mother's womb,</p> <p>43 Who dost soothe him with that which stills his tears,</p> <p>44 Thou nurse in the very womb, giving breath to sustain all thou dost make!</p> <p>45 When he issues from the womb to breathe on the day of his birth,</p> <p>46 Thou dost open his mouth completely and</p>
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<p>Thou suppliest his necessities.</p> <p>“When the fledgling in the egg chirps in the shell,</p> <p>Thou givest him breath in the midst of it to preserve him alive.</p> <p>Thou hast made for him his term in the egg, for breaking it.</p> <p>He cometh forth from the egg to chirp at his term;</p> <p>He goeth about upon his two feet When he cometh forth therefrom.</p> <p>"How manifold are thy works! They are hidden before men</p> <p>O sole God, beside whom there is no other.</p> <p>Thou didst create the earth according to thy heart. While thou wast alone:</p> <p>Even men, all herds of cattle and the antelopes;</p> <p>All that are upon the earth, That go about upon their feet;</p> <p>They that are on high, That fly with their wings.</p> <p>The highland countries, Syria and Kush, And the land of Egypt;</p> <p>Thou settest every man</p>	<p>When the chick in the egg speaks in the shell,</p> <p>You give him breath within to sustain him;</p> <p>When you have made him complete, To break out from the egg,</p> <p>60 He comes out from the egg, To announce his completion,</p> <p>Walking on his legs he comes from it.</p> <p>How many are your deeds, Though hidden from sight,</p> <p>65 O Sole God beside whom there is none!</p> <p>You made the earth as you wished, you alone,</p> <p>All peoples, herds, and flocks;</p> <p>All upon earth that walk on legs,</p> <p>All on high that fly on wings,</p> <p>70 The lands of Khor and Kush, The land of Egypt.</p> <p>You set every man in his</p>	<p>supply his needs.</p> <p>47 When the chick in the egg cheeps inside the shell,</p> <p>48 Thou givest it breath within it to sustain it.</p> <p>49 Thou hast set it its appointed time in the egg to break it,</p> <p>50 That it may emerge from the egg to cheep at its appointed time;</p> <p>51 That it may walk with its feet when it emerges from it.</p> <p>52 How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view!</p> <p>53 Thou sole god, there is no other like thee</p> <p>54 Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone:</p> <p>55 Mankind, cattle, all flocks,</p> <p>56 Everything on earth which walks with (its) feet,</p> <p>57 And what are on high, flying with their wings.</p> <p>58 The foreign lands of Hurru and nubia, the land of Egypt...</p> <p>59 Thou dost set each man</p>
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<p>into his place, Thou suppliest their necessities,</p> <p>Every one has his food, And his days are reckoned.</p> <p>The tongues are divers in speech, Their forms likewise</p> <p>and their skins are distinguished, For thou makest different the strangers.</p> <p>"Thou makest the Nile in the Nether World,</p> <p>Thou bringest it as thou desirest, To preserve alive the people of Egypt</p> <p>For thou hast made them for thyself,</p> <p>Thou lord of them all, who weariest thyself for them;</p> <p>Thou lord of every land, who risest for them,</p> <p>Thou Sun of day, great in glory,</p> <p>All the distant highland countries, Thou makest also their life,</p> <p>Thou didst set a Nile in the sky.</p> <p>When it falleth for them,</p> <p>It maketh waves upon the</p>	<p>place, You supply their needs;</p> <p>Everyone has his food, 75 His lifetime is counted.</p> <p>Their tongues differ in speech, Their characters likewise;</p> <p>Their skins are distinct, For you distinguished the peoples.</p> <p>80 You made Hapy in <i>duat</i>,</p> <p>You bring him when you will, To nourish the people,</p> <p>For you made them for yourself.</p> <p>Lord of all, who toils for them,</p> <p>85 Lord of all lands, who shines for them,</p> <p>Aten of daytime, great in glory!</p> <p>All distant lands, you make them live,</p> <p>You made a heavenly Hapy</p> <p>descend for them;</p> <p>He makes waves on the</p>	<p>in his place and supply his needs;</p> <p>60 Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned.</p> <p>61 Their tongues are diverse in speech and their natures likewise;</p> <p>62 Their skins are varied, for thou vary the foreigners.</p> <p>63 Thou dost make the Nile in the underworld,</p> <p>64 And bringest it forth as thou desirest to sustain the people,</p> <p>65 As thou dost make them for thyself,</p> <p>66 Lord of them all, who dost weary thyself with them,</p> <p>67 Lord of every land, who dost rise for them,</p> <p>68 Thou Aten of the day, great in majesty.</p> <p>69 As for all distant foreign lands, thou makest their life,</p> <p>70 For thou hast set a Nile in the sky,</p> <p>71 That it may descend for them,</p> <p>72 That it may make</p>
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<p>mountains, Like the great green sea,</p> <p>Watering their fields in their towns.</p> <p>How benevolent are thy designs, O lord of eternity!</p> <p>There is a Nile in the sky for the strangers</p> <p>And for the antelopes of all the highlands that go about upon their feet.</p> <p>But the Nile, it cometh from the Nether World for Egypt.</p> <p>"Thy rays nourish every garden;</p> <p>When thou risest they live, They grow by thee.</p> <p>Thou makest the seasons In order to make develop all that thou hast made.</p> <p>Winter to bring them coolness, And heat that they may taste thee.</p> <p>"Thou didst make the distant sky in order to rise therein,</p> <p>In order 'to behold all that thou hast made,</p> <p>While thou wast yet alone Shining in thy form as living Aton,</p> <p>Dawning, glittering, going afar and returning.</p>	<p>mountains like the sea,</p> <p>90 To drench their fields and their towns.</p> <p>How excellent are your ways, O Lord of eternity!</p> <p>A Hapy from heaven for foreign peoples,</p> <p>And all lands' creatures that walk on legs,</p> <p>For Egypt the Hapy who comes from <i>duat</i>.</p> <p>95 Your rays nurse all fields,</p> <p>When you shine they live, they grow for you;</p> <p>You made the seasons to foster all that you made,</p> <p>Winter to cool them, heat that they taste you.</p> <p>You made the far sky to shine therein,</p> <p>100 To behold all that you made;</p> <p>You alone, shining in your form of living Aten,</p> <p>Risen, radiant, distant, near.</p>	<p>waves on the mountains like the sea,</p> <p>73 To water their fields amongst their towns.</p> <p>74 How excellent are thy plans, thou lord of eternity!</p> <p>75 The Nile in the sky is for the foreign peoples,</p> <p>76 For the flocks of every foreign land that walk with (their) feet,</p> <p>77 While the (true) Nile comes forth from the underworld for Egypt.</p> <p>78 Thy rays suckel every field;</p> <p>79 When thou dost rise, they live and thrive for thee.</p> <p>80 Thou makest the seasons to nourish all that thou hast made:</p> <p>81 The winter to cool them; the heat that they (?) may taste thee.</p> <p>82 Thou didst make the distant sky to rise in it,</p> <p>83 To see all that thou hast made.</p> <p>84 Being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aten,</p> <p>85 Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near,</p>
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<p>Thou makest millions of forms Through thyself alone;</p> <p>Cities, villages, and fields, highways and rivers.</p> <p>All eyes see thee before them,</p> <p>For thou art Aton of the day over the earth.</p> <p>When thou hast gone away,</p> <p>And all men, whose faces thou hast fashioned. In order that thou mightest no longer see thyself alone,</p> <p>[Have fallen asleep, so that not] one [seeth] that which thou hast made,</p> <p>Yet art thou still in my heart.</p> <p>"There is no other that knoweth thee</p> <p>Save thy son Ikhnaton.</p> <p>Thou hast made him wise In thy designs and in thy might.</p> <p>"The world subsists in thy hand,</p> <p>Even as thou hast made them.</p> <p>When thou hast risen they</p>	<p>You made millions of forms from yourself alone,</p> <p>Towns, villages, fields, the river's course;</p> <p>105 All eyes observe you upon them,</p> <p>For you are the Aten of daytime on high.</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p> <p>You are in my heart,</p> <p>There is no other who knows you,</p> <p>Only your son, Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of-Re,</p> <p>110 Whom you have taught your ways and your might.</p> <p>(Those on) earth come from your hand</p> <p>as you made them,</p> <p>When you have dawned</p>	<p>86 Thou makest millions of forms from thyself alone:</p> <p>87 Cities, towns, fields, road, and river.</p> <p>88 Every eye perceives thee level with them,</p> <p>89 When thou art the Aten of the day above the earth (?)</p> <p>90 When thou didst go away because all men existed,</p> <p>91 Thou didst create their faces that thou mightest not see [thy] self [alone],</p> <p>92 . . one . . . which thou didst make.</p> <p>93 Thou art in my heart;</p> <p>94 There is no other that knows thee,</p> <p>95 Save thy son Akhenaten,</p> <p>96 For thou hast made him skilled in thy plans and thy might.</p> <p>97 The earth came into being by thy hand,</p> <p>98 Just as thou didst make them (i.e. mankind).</p> <p>99 When thou hast risen,</p>
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<p>live,</p> <p>When thou settest they die;</p> <p>For thou art length of life of thyself, Men live through thee</p> <p>The eyes of men see beauty Until thou settest.</p> <p>All labour is put away</p> <p>When thou risest again [Thou] makest \negevery hand\rightarrow to flourish for the king</p> <p>And \negprosperity\rightarrow is in every foot,</p> <p>Since thou didst establish the world,</p> <p>And raise them up for thy son, Who came forth from thy flesh,</p> <p>The king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Living in Truth, Lord of the Two Lands. Nefer-khepru-Re, Wan-Re (Ikhnaton), Son of Re, living in Truth, lord of diadems,</p> <p>Ikhnaton, whose life is long; (And for) the chief royal wife, his beloved, Mistress of the Two Lands, Nefer-nefru-Aton, Nofretete,</p>	<p>they live,</p> <p>When you set they die;</p> <p>You yourself are lifetime, one lives by you.</p> <p>115 All eyes are on (your) beauty until you set,</p> <p>All labor ceases when you rest in the west;</p> <p>When you rise you stir [everyone] for the King,</p> <p>Every leg is on the move</p> <p>since you founded the earth.</p> <p>You rouse them for your son who came from your body,</p> <p>120 The King who lives by Ma'at, the Lord of the Two Lands, Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of-Re, The Son of Re who lives by Ma'at, the Lord of crowns, Akhenaten, great in his lifetime; (And) the great Queen whom he loves, the Lady of the Two Lands:</p> <p>125 Nefer-nefru-Aten</p>	<p>they live;</p> <p>100 When thou dost set, they die.</p> <p>101 For thou art lifetime thyself; one lives through thee;</p> <p>102 Eyes are upon (thy) beauty until thou dost set.</p> <p>103 All labour is put aside when thou dost set in the west:</p> <p>104 When [thou] risest [thou] makest . . . flourish for the king.</p> <p>105 As for all who hasten on foot.</p> <p>106 Ever since thou didst fashion the earth,</p> <p>107 Thou dost raise them up for thy son who came forth from thyself,</p> <p>108 The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Akhenaten.</p>
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Living and flourishing for ever and ever.”	Nefertiti, living forever.	
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4.3.4 Structure

The Great Aton Hymn is known from the translations of Breasted (1934), Davies (1908), Hays (2014), Lichtheim (1997) and⁴⁶⁴ Williams R J (1958). This hymn has been divided into 14 stanzas by using the content of the lines.⁴⁶⁵ The numbering of the lines that are used is taken from the translation of Williams R J (1958:145-148).

It is only in Hebrew and in Egyptian poetry that the style figure of parallelism is the very warp and woof of the structure of the poems (Sugden 1928:154). Among the oldest literary fragments that have been found in Egypt are the religious hymns. These fragments exhibit an early poetic form, that of couplets displaying parallelism in arrangement of words and thought (Breasted 1959:96-7).

Apart from the damaged lines (90-92), none of the lines in this hymn can be considered as problematic. Although the five translations of Breasted (1934), Davies (1908), Hays (2014), Lichtheim (1997) and Williams R J (1958) differ slightly with their chosen words, the meaning of the text seem to agree at large.

The translation of the Great Aton Hymn done by Williams R J was used to divide this hymn into stanzas. Breasted’s translation does not have the lines numbered, but while working with it, I gave these lines the same numbers that Williams used in his translation. The translations of the Great Aton Hymn done by Breasted (1934:281-286), Davies (1908:29-31) and Lichtheim (1997:45-46) do none of them have their lines

⁴⁶⁴ The introduction to Aton is as follows: Adoration of *Re-harakhti-wh-rejoices-in-lightland In-his-name-Shu-who-is-Aten*, living forever; the great living Aten who is in jubilee, the lord of all that the Disk encircles, lord of sky, lord of earth, lord of Lower Egypt, who lives by Maat, the lord of the Two lands, *Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of-Re*; the Son of Re, who lives by Maat, the Lord of Crowns, *Akhenaten*, great in his lifetime; (and) his beloved great Queen, the Lady of the Two Lands, *Nefernefru-Aten Nefertiti*, who lives in health and youth forever. The Vizier, the Fanbearer on the right of the King,...[Ay]; he says: (Lichtheim 1997:45).

⁴⁶⁵ Breasted’s (1934:281-286) translation has been used for all the quotations of the lines in stanzas I to XIV. Breasted (1934: 281) explains that the original of this hymn as found on the stone wall in the tomb of Ay, was not divided into stanzas. This division has however been introduced for the sake of clearness. And the titles of the stanzas have been inserted to aid the modern reader.

numbered. Hays’ (2014:357-361) numbering of the lines of the hymn completely differ from the numbering used by Williams R J (1958:145-148).

4.3.4.1 Stanza I (1-10)⁴⁶⁶ Splendour of Aton as he rises in the heavens⁴⁶⁷

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
	<p>Adoration of <i>Re-Harakhti-who-rejoices-in-lightland In-his-name-Shu-who-is-Aten</i>, living forever; the great living Aton who is in jubilee, the lord of all that the Disc encircles, lord of sky, lord of earth, lord of the house-of-Aten in Akhet-Aten; (and of) the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who lives by Maat, the Lord of the Two lands, <i>Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of-Re</i>; the Son of Re who lives by Maat, the Lord of Crowns, Akhenaten, great in his lifetime; (and) his beloved great Queen, the Lady of the Two Lands, <i>Nefer-nefru-Aten Nefertiti</i>, who lives in health and youth forever. The Vizier, the Fanbearer on the right of the King, Ay-He says:</p>	
<p>“Thou dawnest beautifully in the horizon of the sky,</p> <p>0 living Aton who wast the Beginning of life!</p> <p>When thou didst rise in the eastern horizon,</p>	<p>1 Splendid you rise in heaven's lightland,</p> <p>O living Aton, creator of life!</p> <p>When you have dawned in eastern lightland,</p>	<p>1 Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon</p> <p>2 0 living Aton, thou who wast the first to live.</p> <p>3 When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon,</p>

⁴⁶⁶ In this stanza the words “land” or “earth” are mentioned four times (lines 4, 5, 6 and 9). The words “beautiful” (lines 1 and 4) and “Aton’s rays” (lines 6 and 9) are mentioned twice each. While reference to Aton either rising or setting occurs three times (lines 1, 3 and 9). Fokkelman (2000:267) explains that repetition was a favourite Canaanite technique and is also a mark of some of the earliest biblical poetry.

⁴⁶⁷ Williams R J (1958:148).

Thou didst fill every land with thy beauty.	You fill every land with your beauty.	4 Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty.
Thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over every land,	You are beauteous, great, radiant, High over every land;	5 Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land;
Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even to the end of all that thou hast made.	Your rays embrace the lands, To the limit of all that you made.	6 Thy rays encompass the lands to the very limit of all thou hast made.
Thou art Re, and thou penetratest to the very end of them;	Being Re, you reach their limits,	7 Being Re, thou dost reach to their limit
Thou bindest them for thy beloved son (the Pharaoh).	10 You bend them (for) the son whom you love;	8 And curb them [for] thy beloved son;
Though thou art far away, thy rays are upon earth;	Though you are far, your rays are on earth,	9 Though thou art distant, thy rays are upon the earth;
Though thou art in the faces of men, thy footsteps are unseen.	Though one sees you, your strides are unseen.	10 Thou art in their faces, yet thy movements are unknown (?).

Several figures of speech appear in stanza I (1-10).

A *metaphor* presents us with an image, which points to something which is not immediately obvious (Ryrie 2004:19). Line 1 “Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon of heaven”. This line is a *metaphor* because of the words “horizon of heaven”. The function of the *metaphor* is that it describes something in a symbolic manner, providing colour and strength to the description (Loader 1987:111).

Parallelism is a specific type of repetition, where two lines are placed next to each other to promote cohesion and balance (Burden 1986:53). In stanza I there are four kinds of parallelisms, *synthetic parallelism*, *synonymous parallelism*, *introverted parallelism* and *antithetical parallelism*. Parallelisms are used for binding together components of the stanza or of the poem (Watson 1995:34). Parallelisms help make

an idea or argument clear and easy to remember. The function of *parallelism* is that it creates a balance between the two poles of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53

Synthetic parallelism is formed by couplets, in which the second line *repeats* by means of one or more synonymous terms *part* of the sense of the first line; and by means of one or more other terms *adds* something fresh, to which nothing in the first line is parallel (Gray 1972:49). The second line of *synthetic parallelism* explains or elaborates on the first line. In this stanza there are two examples of *synthetic parallelism*:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is between lines 2 and 3.

Line 2 “O living Aton, thou who wast the first to live”.

Line 3 “When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon”.

Line 2 sketches that Aton was the first to rise in the morning, while line 3 shows that Aton rises in the East. Line 3 is elaborating on line 2.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is between lines 3 and 4.

Line 3 “When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon”.

Line 4 “Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty”.

Line 4 is explaining further on line 3, meaning that once Aton has risen (line 3), his light fills the whole land (line 4).

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is to aid in the efficient connection of ideas.

Synonymous parallelism. Here is a correspondence of ideas between the two lines of the couplet. The second line reinforcing the first line; as it were echoing the sense of the first line in equivalent, though different words (Burney 1925:16). In this stanza there are three examples of *synonymous parallelism*:

The first example of *synonymous parallelism* is between lines 4 and 5.

Line 4 “Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty”.

Line 5 “Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land”;

Line 4 sketches that Aton is beautiful, while line 5 using different words, agrees that Aton is beautiful.

The second example of *synonymous parallelism* is between lines 6 and 7.

Line 6 “Thy rays encompass the lands to the very limit of all thou hast made”.

Line 7 “Being Ra, thou dost reach to their limit”. Lines 6 and 7 both express the idea that Aton’s rays reach all the earth.

The third example of *synonymous parallelism* is between lines 9b and 10a.

Line 9b “...thy rays are upon the earth”.

Line 10a “Thou art in their faces...”.

Line 9b exposes Aton’s rays as being on the earth, while line 10a reinforces this idea by explaining that while the rays are on the earth, they are also shining on the faces (of the people) who are on the earth.

The function of *synonymous parallelism* is to achieve balance between consecutive lines (Burden 1986:108).

Introverted parallelism. Where four lines are so arranged that the first corresponds to the fourth, and the second to the third (Oesterley and Robinson 1958:140). In this stanza there are two examples of *introverted parallelism*:

The first example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 3-6.

In the first part of this example line 3 is connected to line 6.

Line 3 “When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon”

In the second part of this example lines 4 and 5 are connected.

Line 4 “Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty”

Line 5 “Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land”.

Lines 4 and 5 are bound to each other because together they show that once Aton is shining in every land, he (Aton) is “fair, great, dazzling and high above every land”.

line 6 “Thy rays encompass the lands to the very limit of all thou hast made.

Lines 3 and 6 are bound to each other because together they describe that once Aton has risen, he shines in every land. Although lines 4 and 5 form the second part of this introverted parallelism, these two lines also form a chiasm.

The second example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 4 -7.

In the first part of this example lines 4 and 7 are connected.

Line 4 “Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty”.

In the second part of this example lines 5 and 6 are connected.

Line 5 “Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land”

Line 6 “Thy rays encompass the lands to the very limit of all thou hast made”.

Lines 5 and 6 are bound to each other because together they proclaim that Aton is shining in every land, and that while he is shining Aton is seen as fair, great, dazzling and high above every land.

Line 7 “Being Ra, thou dost reach to their limit”.

Lines 4 and 7 are bound to each other because together they portray that Aton shines in every land, which he fills with his beauty.

The function of *introverted parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Antithetical parallelism is formed by a couplet, when the second line expresses a thought which is in sharp contrast to that which was declared in the first line (Mickelsen 1963:325). In this stanza there is just one example of *antithetical parallelism* which is formed by lines 9a and 9b.

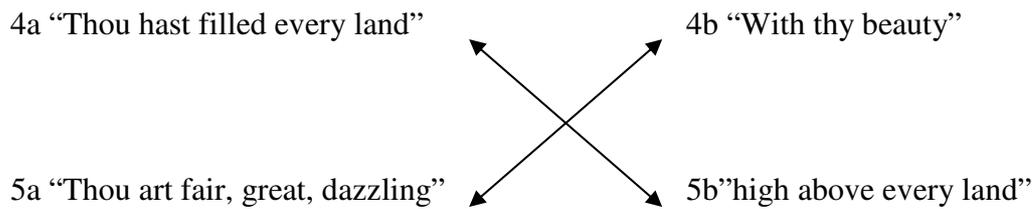
Line 9a “Though thou art distant”,

Line 9b “thy rays are upon the earth”.

Line 9a explains that Aton’s rays are far away. Line 9b describes that Aton’s rays are close by.

The function of *antithetical parallelism* is to bring balance, as the main thought in line 9a is contrasted by line 9b.

Chiasm is the arrangement of four lines or four half lines, according to an ABB`A` pattern (Alter 1985:116). In this stanza there is only one example of a *chiasm*. Lines 4 and 5 form a *chiasm*. Line 4 “Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty”. Line 5 “Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land”. The *chiasm* is formed as follows: Line 4a “Thou hast filled every land...” and line 5b “high above every land”, connect with each other. While line 4b “...With thy beauty” and line 5a “Thou art fair, great, dazzling” connect to each other.



The content of this chiasm emphasizes the beauty of Aton, which shines on the whole world. The function of the *chiasm* is that it helps with the structure of the poem by breaking the monotony of persistent direct parallelism (Watson 1994:369; 1995:32)

4.3.4.2 Stanza II (11-20) When Aton sets, it is dark.⁴⁶⁸ Night and man⁴⁶⁹.

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
When thou settest in the western horizon of the sky,	When you set in western lightland,	11 When thou dost set on the western horizon,
The“ earth is in darkness like death.	Earth is in darkness as if in death;	12 The earth is in darkness, resembling death.
They sleep in their chambers, Their heads are wrapped up,	15 One sleeps in chambers, heads covered,	13 Men sleep in the bed-chamber with -their heads covered,
Their nostrils are stopped, And none seeth the other,	One eye does not see another.	14 Nor does one eye behold the other.
While all their things are stolen, Which are under their heads,	Were they robbed of their goods That are under their heads,	15 Were all their goods stolen Which are beneath their heads,
And they know it not.	People would not remark it.	16 They would not be aware of it.
“Every lion cometh forth from his den,	20 Every lion comes from its den,	17 Every lion has come forth from his den,

⁴⁶⁸ Reference to Aton either rising or setting occurs in lines 11, 12, 19 and 20.

⁴⁶⁹ Breasted (1834:282).

All serpents, they sting. Darkness broods, The world is in silence, He that made them resteth in his horizon.	All the serpents bite; Darkness hovers, earth is silent, As their maker rests in lightland.	18 All the snakes bite. 19 Darkness prevails, and the earth is in silence, 20 Since he who made them is resting in his horizon.
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This stanza describes the terrors of darkness, when Aton is absent from the sky, as contrasted with the joys of day, when he has returned to pour his beneficent rays on the earth (Williams R J 1958:148).

Lines 11 and 12⁴⁷⁰ describe, when Aton sets in the West, death, decay, confusion and dread befall the earth. The god is absent, will he re-appear: darkness is an ominous, eerie reality for this poem.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza II (11-20).

Metaphors frequently present us with images which point to something profound which are not immediately obvious (Ryrie 2004:19). In this stanza there are two examples of *metaphors*. First example of a *metaphor* is found in line 12. “The earth is in darkness, resembling death”. Darkness does not have to mean death, but when there is death it gives the impression of darkness being present. The second example of a *metaphor* is found in line 20. “Since he who made them is resting in his horizon”. The Egyptians believed that Aton had made the earth, and as the sun (Aton) crosses from east to west it looks as if it will disappear behind the horizon. It seems as if Aton is “resting” on the horizon. The function of a *metaphor* is to express the abstract in terms of the concrete.

Parallelism consists of two lines, where the second line is parallel to the first line (Mickelsen 1963:324). In this stanza there are two kinds of parallelisms, *synthetic parallelism* and *emblematic parallelism*. The function of the parallel is that they help to focus attention upon the main point of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53)

⁴⁷⁰ Harrelson (1975:19-22).

Synthetic parallelism accounts for parallelisms that lack exact correspondence between their parts, but show a more diffuse correspondence between the lines as a whole (Berlin 1996:304). There are four examples of *synthetic parallelism*:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 11 and 12.

Line 11 “When thou dost set on the western horizon”.

Line 12 “The earth is in darkness, resembling death”.

When Aton sets (disappears) on the western horizon, he no longer lights up the earth and it is dark. This darkness resembles death to the poet. Line 12 is describing what the earth looks like, it is dark, because in line 11 Aton sets. Line 12 therefore sketches what happens to the earth once Aton has gone under (line 11). Line 12 is making the picture clearer that is sketched by line 11.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by the two halves of line 13, lines 13a and 13b.

Line 13a “men sleep in the bed-chamber...”.

Line 13b “...with their heads covered”.

The heads are covered or wrapped up indicating that the people are sleeping. Lines 13a and 13b together complete one incident, which is to depict how men sleep. They cover their heads when they sleep.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 15 and 16.

Line 15 “Were all their goods stolen which are beneath their heads”.

Line 16 “They would not be aware of it”.

Because the people are sleeping, and their heads are also wrapped up, they would not notice it if everything that is under their heads were stolen.

The fourth example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 19 and 20.

Line 19 “Darkness prevails, and the earth is in silence”.

Line 20 “Since he who made them is resting in his horizon”.

Line 20 is elaborating on line 19. Line 19 portrays Aton leaving the earth in darkness, while line 20 depicts Aton as going down on the horizon.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is to aid in the efficient connection of ideas.

Emblematic parallelism is a form of *synonymous parallelism* in which one line of the couplet contains a *metaphor* or a *simile* (Van Gemeren 2008:49) that balances with the second line (Loader 1987:109). In this stanza there are two examples of *emblematic parallelism*:

The first example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 11 and 12.

Line 11 “When thou dost set on the western horizon”.

Line 12 “The earth is in darkness, resembling death”.

Because of the *metaphor* (...“darkness, resembling death”) in line 12, which balances with line 11 which portrays the sun setting and thus causing darkness, these two lines form an *emblematic parallelism*.

The second example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 19 and 20.

Line 19 “Darkness prevails, and the earth is in silence”.

Line 20 “Since he who made them is resting in his horizon”.

Because of the *metaphor* (“... resting in his horizon”), which balances with line 19, these two lines form an *emblematic parallelism*. Line 19 depicts the earth as in darkness, while line 20 describes Aton as resting on the horizon, meaning that it will soon be dark.

The function of *emblematic parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34)

4.3.4.3 Stanza III (21-30) When Aton rises, it is light. The activities of humans is described when it is light ⁴⁷¹

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
"Bright is the earth when thou risest in the horizon;	Earth brightens when you dawn in lightland,	21 At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon,
When thou shinest as Aton by day	25 When you shine as Aten of daytime;	22 Dost shine as Aten by day,
Thou drivest away the darkness.	As you dispel the dark,	23 Thou dost dispel the darkness

⁴⁷¹ Lichtheim (1997:45).

When thou sendest forth thy rays,	As you cast your rays,	24 And shed thy rays.
The Two Lands (Egypt) are in daily festivity.	The two Lands are in festivity.	25 The Two Lands are in festive mood,
Men waken and stand upon their feet	Awake they stand on their feet,	26 Awake, and standing on (their) feet,
When thou hast raised them up.	30 You have roused them;	27 For thou East raised them up;
Their limbs bathed, they take their clothing,	Bodies cleansed, clothed,	28 They cleanse their bodies and take (their) garments;
Their arms uplifted in adoration to thy dawning.	Their arms adore your appearance.	29 Their arms are (lifted) in adoration at thine appearing;
Then in all the world they do their work.	The entire land sets out to work,	30 The whole land performs its labour.

This stanza⁴⁷² is a contrast to stanza II, when Aton has returned to pour his beneficent rays on the earth (Williams R J 1958:148).

Several figures of speech appear in stanza III (21-30).

Metaphor is a comparison without the mention of “like” or “as”. The comparison is implicit and non-literal (Caird 1980:144). There is only one example of a *metaphor* in this stanza, it is in line 25. Line 25 “The Two Lands are in festive mood”. When Aton rises in the morning, Egypt is in festive mood. Meaning that the people are so excited when Aton rises in the morning that they celebrate his rising. The *metaphor* is the land being in a mood, festive or otherwise. Function of the *metaphor*. It frequently presents us with images which point to something profound which is not immediately obvious (Ryrie 2004:19).

⁴⁷² Reference to Aton, either rising or setting, occurs in lines 21, 22, 23, 24 and 29.

Parallelism occurs in *couplets*. The poet follows one assertion by another line of thought parallel to the first. A verse then consists of at least two parts in which the second part is parallel to the first (Mickelsen 1963:324). There are five kinds of *parallelisms* in this stanza. *Synthetic parallelism*, *synonymous parallelism*, *introverted parallelism*, *antithetical parallelism* and *emblematic parallelism*. The function of parallelism is to express or emphasize a particular message or content (Berlin 1996:307).

Synthetic parallelism: After an initial line, a second line continues the thought, theme, or narrative of the poem without any obvious concern to maintain grammatical, structural, or thematic similarity to the initial line (GH Wilson 2002:43). There are three examples of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 25 and 26.

Line 25 “The Two Lands are in festive mood”.

Line 26 “Awake, and standing on (their) feet”.

Because the people of Egypt (the Two Lands) are in a festive mood, they are standing (or dancing) on their feet. The festive mood and the dancing are connected in this example of *synthetic parallelism*.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 26 and 27.

Line 26 “Awake, and standing on (their) feet”.

Line 27 “For thou hast raised them up”.

Line 27 implies that the people have been woken, while Line 26 proclaims that once the people were awake they stood on their feet. “Awake” and “standing up” are connected.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 27 and 28. Line 27 “For thou hast raised them up”.

Line 28 “They cleanse their bodies and take (their) garments”.

Line 27 describes that the people, having raised their bodies from a lying down position (they were sleeping), they wash their bodies and then take their clothes with them. The people wash and dress themselves after Aton has woken them. The two

actions of, the people washing themselves, once Aton has woken them, are connected in this example of *synthetic parallelism*.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is to aid in the efficient connection of ideas (Watson 1995:34).

Synonymous parallelism: The two lines express the same basic idea in different ways (Van Gemeren 2008:48). There are three examples of *synonymous parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synonymous parallelism* is formed by lines 21 and 22.

Line 21 “At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon”.

Line 22 “Dost shine as Aton by day”.

Both lines are saying that once Aton (the sun) has risen a new day has dawned.

The second example of *synonymous parallelism* is formed by lines 22 and 23.

Line 22 “Dost shine as Aton by day”.

Line 23 “Thou dost dispel the darkness”.

Both lines are saying that during the day there is no darkness.

The third example of *synonymous parallelism* is formed by lines 23 and 24.

Line 23 “Thou dost dispel the darkness”.

Line 24 “And shed thy rays”.

Both lines describe that the rays of the sun take the darkness away.

The function of *synonymous parallelism* is to bind components of the stanza together (Mickelsen 1963:325).

Introverted parallelism occurs where four lines are so arranged that the first line corresponds to the fourth line, and the second line corresponds to the third line (Oesterley and Robinson 1958: 140). There are two examples of *introverted parallelism* in this stanza. They are formed by lines 26-29 and lines 27-30.

The first example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 26-29.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 26 and 29.

Line 26 corresponds to line 29. Line 26 “Awake, and standing on (their) feet”.

The second part of this example is formed by lines 27 and 28

Line 27 “For thou hast raised them up”.

Line 28 “They cleanse their bodies and take (their) garments”. Lines 27 and 28 are bound together because together make a complete thought, the people wash themselves and get dressed. The people raise themselves up to a standing position in order to wash themselves, and then cloth themselves.

Line 29 “Their arms are (lifted) in adoration at thine appearing”. Lines 26 and 29 are bound to each other because while the people are standing on their feet, their arms are at the same time lifted up. Both movements are in order to adore Aton. Lines 26-30 give a clear picture (highlights the actions) of the preparation of the people in the morning, before they worship Aton.

The second example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 27-30.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 27 and 30.

Line 27 “For thou hast raised them up”.

The second part of this example is formed by lines 28 and 29.

Line 28 “They cleanse their bodies and take (their) garments.

Line 29 “Their arms are (lifted) in adoration at thine appearing”.

Lines 28 and 29 are bound to each other because, after the people have cleansed their bodies, they adore Aton as he rises from the horizon.

Line 30 “The whole land performs its labour”.

Lines 27 and 30 are bound to each other because after the people have raised themselves up from laying down to standing, they go out to do their work.

The function of *introverted parallelism* is cohesion (Mickelsen 1963:326).

Antithetical parallelism means that the two lines of the couplet are in contrast to one another (Bullock 1988:35). There is only one example of *antithetical parallelism* in this stanza, and it is formed by lines 30 and 31.

Line 30 “The whole land performs its labour”.

Line 31 “All beasts are satisfied with their pasture”.

While the people are working, the animals are enjoying their grazing. Line 30 explains that the land, meaning plants, are working, while line 31 sketches that the animals are enjoying the pasture (the plants).

The function of *antithetical parallelism* is to achieve balance (Burden 1986:108).

Emblematic parallelism is a form of *synonymous parallelism* in which one member of the couplet contains a metaphor or a simile (Van Gemeren 2008:48). There are two examples of *emblematic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example is formed by lines 21 -22.

Line 21 “At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon”.

Line 22 “Dost shine as Aton by day” (simile).

The content of these two lines are bound because both lines expose that at daybreak Aton shines.

The second example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 24-25.

Line 24 “And shed thy rays”.

Line 25 “The Two Lands are in festive mood”.

The content of lines 24 and 25 are bound because the two lines together form one picture. The two lines describe that when Aton is shining the people celebrate.

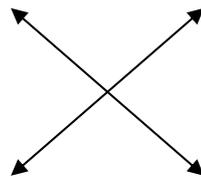
The function of *emblematic parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza.

Chiasm is the arrangement of four lines according to an ABB`A` pattern. A form of mirroring, named after the Greek letter *chi*, which looks like an X (Alter 1985:116).

In this stanza there is one example of a *chiasm*. Lines 21 and 22 form a *chiasm*. Line 21 “At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon”. Line 22 “Dost shine as Aton by day”. The *chiasm* is formed as follows: “At daybreak...” from line 21a, connects with “...by day” from line 22b. While “...when thou dost rise on the horizon” from line 21b connects with “...Dost shine as Aton” from line 22a”.

21a “At daybreak “

21b”when thou dost rise on
the horizon”



22a “Dost shine as Aton”

22b “by day”

The content that this chiasm welds together is that Aton rises on the horizon and that he (Aton) shines all day. The function of the *chiasm* is that it welds its components together (Watson 1994:370).

Personification appears where a thing, quality, or idea is represented as a person (Mickelsen 1963:187). There are two examples of *personification* in this stanza. The first example of *personification* is found in line 26. “Awake, and standing on their feet”. This line is referring to line 25, which writes of the Two Lands (Egypt), meaning that the Two Lands are standing on their feet. The second example of *personification* is found in line 30. “The whole land performs its labour”, meaning that the Two Lands (Egypt) are busy working. Line 30 “The whole land performs its labour”, should be read together with line 21 “At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon”, meaning that once Aton has risen on the horizon, every human starts to do his work. The function of *personification* is merely decorative, enhancing the rhetorical effect of the message (Berlin 1996:313).

Simile is an explicit stated comparison employing words such as “like” and “as” (Mickelsen 1963:182). There is one example of a *simile* in this stanza, and it is found in line 22. “Dost shine as Aton by day”. The bright sunlight of the day is compared to the sun itself (Aton the sun-god). Line 22 “Dost shine as Aton by day” must be read together with line 21 “At daybreak , when thou dost rise on the horizon”, meaning that when Aton rises at daybreak he is already shining just as brightly as he does during the day. The function of the simile may be purely decorative, adding interest and colour to what is being said (Ryrie 2004:19).

4.3.4.4 Stanza IV (31-36) Activity of plants and animals when it is light.⁴⁷³

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
"All cattle rest upon their pasturage,	All beasts browse on their herbs;	31 All beasts are satisfied with their pasture;
The trees and the plants flourish,	35 Trees, herbs are sprouting,	32 Trees and plants are verdant.

⁴⁷³ In this stanza there is only one word that is repeated. The word “fly” occurs in lines 33 and 35.

The birds flutter in their marshes,	Birds fly from their nests,	33 The birds which fly from their nests,
Their wings uplifted in adoration to thee.	Their wings greeting your <i>ka</i> ,	their wings are (spread) in adoration to thy soul;
All the antelopes dance upon their feet,	All flocks frisk on their feet,	34 All flocks skip with (their) feet;
All creatures that fly or alight,	All that fly up and alight,	35 All that fly up and alight
They live when thou hast shone upon them.	40 They live when you dawn for them.	36 Live when thou hast risen [for] them.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza IV (31-36).

Parallelism. In this stanza there are two kinds of parallelisms, *synthetic parallelism* and *synonymous parallelism*. The function of the parallelism is that it assists the exegesis of the text, in that they add new elements to the line of thought being pursued and so help the reader, through associations of words to see new connections and to follow the unfolding of the theme with greater ease (Burden 1986:53).

Synthetic parallelism. There is one example of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza, and it is in lines 35 and 36.

Line 35 “All that fly up and alight”.

Line 36 “Live when thou hast risen (for) them”.

The diffuse correspondence between these two lines is that line 35 refers to all animals that fly, while line 36 refers to Aton rising (flying). The movement of Aton in line 36, connects with the flying of the flying animals (line 35). The idea of movement that is portrayed in line 36, is taking the idea further that is found in line 35. Movement and flying are connected to each other.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is cohesion, the binding together of components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Synonymous parallelism occurs where the same thought is expressed in both lines by using different words (Berlin 1996:304). There are two examples of *synonymous parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synonymous parallelism* is found in the two halves of line 33. Line 33a and 33b.

Line 33a “The birds which fly from their nests...”.

Line 33b “...their wings are (spread) in adoration to thy soul”.

Both halves of line 33 refer to the flying of birds. The main point being made by line 33ab, is that while the birds are flying their wings are spread out, and this spread of the wings looks as if they are in adoration of Aton.

The second example of *synonymous parallelism* is found in lines 34 and 35.

Line 34 “All flocks skip with (their) feet”.

Line 35 “All that fly up and alight”.

The main point of the statement being made by lines 34 and 35 together, is that they are referring to all the animals on earth, those that walk with their feet and those that fly with their wings.

The function of *synonymous parallelism* is to help to focus attention upon the main point of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53).

4.3.4.5 Stanza V (37-38) Inanimate objects (ships and roads).

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
“The barques sail up-stream and down-stream alike.	Ships fare north, fare south as well,	37 Ships sail upstream and downstream alike,
Every highway is open because thou dawnest.	Roads lie open when you rise;	38 For every route is open at thine appearing.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza V (37-38).

Parallelism is formed by a couplet, where line B is parallel in some way to line A (Watson 1994:104). In this stanza there is one example of *synonymous parallelism*. The function of this *parallelism* is to create a balance between the two poles of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53).

Synonymous parallelism. Lines 37 and 38 together form a *synonymous parallelism*.

Line 37 “Ships sail upstream and downstream alike”.

Line 38 “For every route is open at thine appearing”.

Line 37 shows that the ships can sail upstream as well as downstream alike, while line 36 exposes that the ships can sail anywhere (every route is open). The ships could be sailing on the Nile river as well as on the Mediterranean sea. The members of the *synonymous parallelism* express the same basic idea using different words (Van Gemeren 2008:48).

The function of this *synonymous parallelism* is to bind the two lines together (Watson 1995:34).

4.3.4.6 Stanza VI (39-40) Action of fish in the water, because the sun is there.

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
The fish in the river leap up before thee.	The fish in the river dart before you,	39 The fish in the river leap before thee,
Thy rays are in the midst of the great green sea.	Your rays are in the midst of the sea.	40 For thy rays are in the midst of the sea.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza VI (39-40).

Parallelism: The first thing a parallel construction does, is to introduce a form of repetition (Kugel 1981:56). In this stanza *synthetic parallelism* is found. The function of parallelism is that they provide emphasis, and so improve retention (Burden 1986:53).

Synthetic parallelism is formed here by lines 39 and 40 together.

Line 39 “The fish in the river leap before thee”.

Line 40 “For thy rays are in the midst of the sea”.

Line 40 sketches that Aton’s rays are everywhere, even in the “midst of the sea”, while line 39 portrays the fish “leaping before Aton”, meaning that because Aton shines on the water, the fish leap out of the water, trying to get nearer to Aton.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is that it offers the poet maximum flexibility in the creation of lines that develop, direct and advance the movement of the poem (G H Wilson 2002:44).

4.3.4.7 Stanza VII (41-46) Aton creates man⁴⁷⁴.

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014 :357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
“Creator of the germ in woman, Who makest seed into men,	45 Who makes seed grow in women, Who creates people from sperm;	41 Thou creator of issue in woman, who makest semen into mankind,
Making alive the son in the body of his mother,	Who feeds the son in his mother’s womb.	42 And dost sustain the son in his mother’s womb,
Soothing him that he may not weep,	Who soothes him to still his tears.	43 Who dost soothe him with that which stills his tears,
Nurse even in the womb, Giver of breath to sustain alive every one that he maketh!	Nurse in the womb, 50 Giver of breath, To nourish all that he made.	44 Thou nurse in the very womb, giving breath to sustain all thou dost make!
When he descendeth from the body (of his mother) on the day of his birth,	When he comes from the womb to breath, On the day of his birth,	45 When he issues from the womb to breathe on the day of his birth,
Thou openest his mouth altogether, Thou suppliest his necessities.	You open wide his mouth, 55 You supply his needs.	46 Thou dost open his mouth completely and supply his needs.

⁴⁷⁴ The only word that is repeated in this stanza, is the word “womb” (lines 42, 44 and 45).

Several figures of speech appear in stanza VII (41-46).

A *metaphor* is a comparison without the mention of “like” or “as” (Tremper Longman III 1988:115). In this stanza there is one example of a *metaphor* and this is found in line 44. Line 44 “Thou nurse in the very womb, giving breath to sustain all thou dost make”! The *metaphor* in this line is “Thou nurse in the very womb”, meaning that the womb is acting as a nurse (looking after the baby). The baby is in the womb, and Aton is the nurse giving him breath so that he lives. Aton is also the womb, where he forms the baby. The function of the *metaphor* is to convey, or at least to link, realities which cannot be described in rational prose (Ryrie 2004:24).

Parallelism. In this stanza there are three kinds of *parallelisms*. *Synthetic parallelism*, *synonymous parallelism*, and *introverted parallelism*. The function of *parallelism* is to create a balance between the two poles of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53).

Synthetic parallelism, where, after an initial line, a second line continues the thought, theme, or narrative of the poem without any obvious concern to maintain grammatical, structural, or thematic similarity to the initial line (G H Wilson 2002:43). In this stanza there are three examples of *synthetic parallelism*:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* consists of lines 44a and 44b.

Line 44a “Thou nurse in the very womb...”

Line 44b “...giving breath to sustain all thou dost make”.

Line 44b is continuing the thought found in line 44a, meaning that the nurse is caring for the baby. Aton is caring for the baby in the womb. Aton is the nurse looking after the baby in the womb. Aton supplies the baby with food and air while the baby is in the womb. Aton is therefore the connecting factor between lines 44a and 44b.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 45a and 45b.

Line 45a “When he issues from the womb...”.

Line 45b “...to breath on the day of his birth” meaning that once the baby is born, it starts to breath.

Line 45b is elaborating on the thought of line 45a.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 46a and 46b.

Line 46a “Thou dost open his mouth completely ...”.

Line 46b “...and supply his needs”.

Line 46b is continuing the thought of line 46a, meaning that once the baby is born Aton sees to all its needs.

Function of *synthetic parallelism* is that the two lines complement one another, in order to create the desired effect (Van Gemeren 2008:48). The desired effect in this poem here, is that the greatness of Aton must be realized. Aton is responsible for creating all of life, and then he also looks after everything that he has made.

Synonymous parallelism. In this stanza there is one example of *synonymous parallelism*. It is formed by lines 41a and 41b.

Line 41a “Thou creator of issue in woman...”.

Line 41b “...who makest semen into mankind”.

Both lines have to do with creating, the process in woman and the process in man. Aton creates the issue in woman, as well as the semen in man.

The function of *synonymous parallelism* is to create balance (Burden 1986:108).

Introverted parallelism. There are two examples of *introverted parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 41-44.

The first part of this example is found between lines 41 and 44.

Line 41 “Thou creator of issue in woman, who makest semen into mankind”,

The second part of this example is formed by lines 42 and 43.

Line 42 “And dost sustain the son in his mother’s womb”,

Line 43 “Who dost sooth him with that which stills his tears”.

Lines 42 and 43 are bound to each other because they both have to do with Aton caring for the baby. In line 42 Aton cares for the baby inside the womb, and in line 43 Aton cares for the baby once the baby has been born, outside the womb.

Line 44 “Thou nurse in the very womb, giving breath to sustain all thou dost make”.

Lines 41 and 44 are bound to each other because these two lines have to do with Aton making the baby and then Aton caring for the baby in the womb.

The second example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 42-45.

The first part of this example is made by lines 42 and 45.

Line 42 “And dost sustain the son in his mother’s womb”,

The second part of this example is formed by lines 43 and 44.

Line 43 “Who dost sooth him with that which stills his tears”,

Line 44 “Thou nurse in the very womb, giving breath to sustain all thou dost make”.

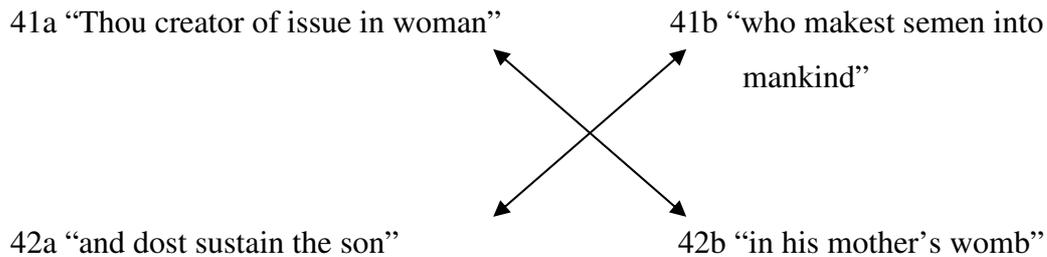
Lines 43 and 44 are bound to each other because they both have to do with the caring of the baby. In line 43 Aton is comforting the baby, and in line 44 Aton gives the baby breath.

Line 45 “When he issues from the womb to breath on the day of his birth”.

Lines 42 and 45 are bound to each other because they follow logically on each other. In line 42 the baby is still in the womb and in line 45 the baby is outside the womb. Where ever the baby is, Aton gives him breath and food. Aton cares for the baby all the time.

Function of *introverted parallelisms* here is that they bind together components of the stanza (Mickelsen 1963:326). In both examples of *introverted parallelism* the lines in which Aton is caring for the baby, are bound. Which means that the following lines are bound. In the first example of lines 41-44, lines 41 and 44 are bound, while lines 42 and 43 are bound. In the second example of lines 42-45, lines 42 and 45 are bound, while lines 43 and 44 are bound.

Chiasm. A *chiasm* is made up of two lines which are arranged in such a manner that they form an ABB`A` pattern (Cereško 1976:9). This *chiasm* is formed by lines 41 and 42. Line 41 “Thou creator of issue in woman, who makest semen into mankind”. Line 42 “And dost sustain the son in his mother’s womb”. The *chiasm* is formed as follows: line 41a “Thou creator of issue in woman”, links to line 42b “in his mother’s womb”. And line 41b “who makest semen into mankind” links to line 42a “and dost sustain the son”, thus forming the ABB`A` pattern.



The content that is emphasized here is that Aton is in charge of everything. Aton creates the issue in woman and the semen in man. Aton also looks after the baby while it is in the womb. The function of the *chiasm* is that the chiastic word pattern ABB`A` is employed for emphasis (Cereško 1976:9). The *chiasm* has the effect of repeating a thought or word, and in this way accentuating the word or thought.

4.3.4.8 Stanza VIII lines (47-51) Creation of birds⁴⁷⁵.

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
<p>“When the fledgling in the egg chirps in the shell,</p> <p>Thou givest him breath in the midst of it to preserve him alive.</p> <p>Thou hast made for him his term in the egg, for breaking it.</p> <p>He cometh forth from the egg to chirp at his term; </p> <p>He goeth about upon his two feet When he cometh forth therefrom.</p>	<p>When the chick in the egg speaks in the shell,</p> <p>You give him breath within to sustain him;</p> <p>When you have made him complete, To break out from the egg,</p> <p>60 He comes out from the egg, To announce his completion,</p> <p>Walking on his legs he comes from it.</p>	<p>47 When the chick in the egg cheeps inside the shell,</p> <p>48 Thou givest it breath within it to sustain it.</p> <p>49 Thou hast set it its appointed time in the egg to break it,</p> <p>50 That it may emerge from the egg to cheep at its appointed time;</p> <p>51 That it may walk with its feet when it emerges from it.</p>

⁴⁷⁵ The only words that are repeated in this stanza are the words “chirps” in lines 47 and 50, and “egg” in lines 47, 49 and 50.

Several figures of speech appear in stanza VIII (47-51).

Parallelism: The two lines that form a *parallelism*, keep each other in balance, just as the two arms of a scale together give the full picture (Burden 1986:49). Three kinds of *parallelisms* are found in this stanza, *synthetic parallelism*, *introverted parallelism* and *antithetical parallelism*. The function of parallelism is that it helps to focus attention upon the main point of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53).

Synthetic parallelism There are four examples of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 47 and 48.

Line 47 “When the chick in the egg cheeps inside the shell”⁴⁷⁶.

Line 48 “Thou gives it breath within it to sustain it”.

According to the poet, once Aton hears the chick he then gives it breath in order to live. Aton therefore connects the chick cheeping in line 47, to the chick breathing in line 48.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 49a and 49b. Line 49a “Thou hast set it its appointed time”.

Line 49b “in the egg to break it “, meaning that the chick inside the egg will break the shell of the egg as soon as the chick is ready to come out of the egg. Line 49b explains line 49a.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* is made by lines 50a and 50b. Line 50a “That it may emerge from the egg”.

Line 50b “to cheep at its appointed time”, meaning that when the time is right the chick will cheep as it comes out of the egg. Line 50b is elaborating on line 50a. Lines 49 and 50 say exactly the same thing with slightly different words.

The fourth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 51a and 51b.

⁴⁷⁶ Line 47 “When the chick in the egg speaks in the shell.” This image of the chick in the egg, was used by the Egyptians in their script as a sign for the word “within”. Hornung (1983 :200): This “within” here expresses god’s constant care for the world. Just like the rays of the sun, this constant care of god penetrates all the world of creation.

Line 51a “That it may walk with its feet”.

Line 51b “when it emerges from it”.

The two parts of line 51 together give one thought, meaning that as the chick is emerging from the egg, the chick is walking on its feet. Line 51b is explaining line 51a.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is that it offers the poet maximum flexibility in the creation of lines that develop, direct, and advance the movement of the poem (G H Wilson 2002:44).

Introverted parallelism. There are two examples of *introverted parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *introverted parallelism* stretches over lines 48 to 51.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 48 and 51.

Line 48 “Thou givest it breath within it to sustain it”.

The second part of this example is formed by lines 49 and 50.

Line 49 “Thou hast set it its appointed time in the egg to break it”.

Line 50 “That it may emerge from the egg to cheep at its appointed time”.

At the right time the shell will break and the chick will emerge. The shell breaking and the chick emerging are bound in this example. Exactly as Aton had planned it. So Aton binds lines 49 and 50.

Line 51 “ That it may walk with its feet when it emerges from it”,

meaning that Aton is making the chick strong, while it is inside the shell, in order to enable the chick to walk when it comes out of the shell. Aton is in charge. Aton is looking after the chick.

The second example of *introverted parallelism* stretches over lines 49 to 52.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 49 and 52.

Line 49 “Thou hast set it its appointed time in the egg to break it”.

The second part of this example is formed by lines 50 and 51.

Line 50 “That it may emerge from the egg to cheep at its appointed time”.

Line 51 “That it may walk with its feet when it emerges from it.

Both lines 50 and 51 begin with the words “that it may”, indicating a close relationship between these two lines. Lines 50 and 51 are bound because of

the actions of the chick. Line 50 describes the chick emerging from the egg, while line 51 expresses that once the chick has emerged from the egg it walks about.

Line 52 “How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view”.

Just as the content of the egg is a mystery, so also Aton has made many things which are not understood. Lines 49 and 52 are bound because of the mystery surrounding the egg and the chick within the egg.

The function of *introverted parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Antithetical parallelism. There is one example of *antithetical parallelism* in this stanza. It is formed by lines 49b and 50a (Breasted 1834:283).

Line 49b “...in the egg to break it”.

Line 50a “That it may emerge from the egg...”. The chick breaks the egg so that he may emerge from it.

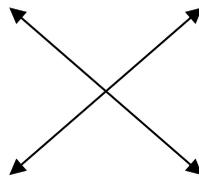
In line 49b the chick is inside the egg while the chick is breaking the egg, while line 50a portrays the chick as emerging from the egg, meaning that the chick is going out of the egg. The contrast in the content here is that in line 49b the chick is still inside the egg, while in line 50a the chick is outside of the egg.

The function of *antithetical parallelism* is to create contrast (Bullock 1988:35).

Chiasm. There is one example of a *chiasm* in this stanza which is made by lines 49-50. Line 49 “Thou hast set it its appointed time in the egg to break it”. Line 50 “That it may emerge from the egg to cheep at its appointed time”. The *chiasm* is formed as follows: Line 49a “Thou hast set it its appointed time”, connects with line 50b “to cheep at its appointed time”. And line 49b “in the egg to break it”, connects to line 50a “That it may emerge from the egg”.

49a “Thou hast set it its appointed time”

49b “in the egg to break it”



50a “That it may emerge from the egg”

50b “to cheep at its appointed time’

The content that is emphasized in this chiasm is that at its appointed time the chick will break the egg and emerge from it. The function of a *chiasm* is to break the monotony of persistent direct *parallelism*. A *chiasm* is used to vary the steady drumbeat of the normal pattern (Watson 1994:369).

4.3.4.9 Stanza IX (52-53) Praising Aton for his creations.⁴⁷⁷

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
"How manifold are thy works! They are hidden before men O sole God, beside whom there is no other.	How many are your deeds, Though hidden from sight, 65 O Sole God beside whom there is none!	52 How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view! 53 Thou sole god, there is no other like thee

The earth is Aton’s field of action (line 52), but he himself is hidden in the heavenly beyond, and requires an intermediary in order to come into contact with mankind, for he has no cult images on earth (Hornung 1983:230).

Several figures of speech appear in stanza IX.

Parallelism. In Egyptian and Hebrew poetry *parallelism* consists in a balance of thought (Mickelsen 1963:324). In this stanza three kinds of parallelisms are found: *synthetic parallelism*, *synonymous parallelism*, and *emblematic parallelism*. The

⁴⁷⁷ In this stanza no words are repeated.

function of parallelism is that they provide emphasis and so improve retention (Burden 1986:53).

Synthetic parallelism is a loose kind of *parallelism* that lacks exact correspondence between their lines, but shows a more diffuse correspondence between the lines as a whole (Berlin 1996:304). This stanza has one example of *synthetic parallelism*, which is formed by lines 52a and 52b.

Line 52a “How manifold is that which thou hast made”.

Line 52b “hidden from view”,

Meaning that many of the things that Aton has made are not visible to mankind.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is to bind the components of the stanza together (Watson 1995:34).

Synonymous parallelism. This stanza has one example of *synonymous parallelism* and it is formed by line 53 and 54.

Line 53 “Thou sole god, there is no other like thee”.

Line 54 “Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone”.

Both lines are praising Aton as creator and only god (monotheism).

The function of *synonymous parallelism* is to transfer the usual perception of a thought into the sphere of a new thought (Brown 2010:259-277).

Emblematic parallelism. This stanza has one example of an *emblematic parallelism*, which is made by lines 52 and 53.

Line 52 “How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view”.

Line 53 “Thou sole god, there is no other like thee”.

These two lines form an *emblematic parallelism*, because of line 53, which is a *simile*.

The thought in line 53 is a further advancement of the thought in line 52.

The function of *emblematic parallelism* is to bind the components of the stanza together (Watson 1995:34).

A *simile* is a comparison which is made explicit by the presence of the word “*like*” or “*as*”. In this stanza there is one example of a *simile*, which is found in line 53. Line 53 “Thou sole god, there is no other like thee” should be read in conjunction with line 52 “How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view”!

The function of a *simile* is that authors make use of *similes* to make their writing more vivid and entertaining (Burden 1987:61).

4.3.4.10 Stanza X (54-77)⁴⁷⁸ Universal creation⁴⁷⁹

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
Thou didst create the earth according to thy heart. While thou wast alone:	You made the earth as you wished, you alone,	54 Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone:
Even men, all herds of cattle and the antelopes;	All peoples, herds, and flocks;	55 Mankind, cattle, all flocks,
All that are upon the earth, That go about upon their feet;	All upon earth that walk on legs,	56 Everything on earth which walks with (its) feet,
They that are on high, That fly with their wings.	All on high that fly on wings,	57 And what are on high, flying with their wings.
The highland countries, Syria and Kush, And the land of Egypt;	70 The lands of Khor and Kush, The land of Egypt.	58 The foreign lands of Hurru and Nubia, the land of Egypt—
Thou settest every man into his place, Thou suppliest their necessities,	You set every man in his place, You supply their needs;	59 Thou dost set each man in his place and supply his needs;
Every one has his food, And his days are reckoned.	Everyone has his food, 75 His lifetime is counted.	60 Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned.
The tongues are divers in speech, Their forms likewise	Their tongues differ in speech, Their characters likewise;	61 Their tongues are diverse in speech and their natures likewise;
and their skins are distinguished, For thou makest different the strangers.	Their skins are distinct, For you distinguished the peoples.	62 Their skins are varied, for thou dost vary the foreigners.

⁴⁷⁸ In this stanza quite a few words are repeated. Reference to Aton either rising or setting is found in lines 67, 68 and 69. The word “Nile” is found in lines 63, 70, 75 and 77. Reference to the words “land” or “earth” is found in lines 56 and 67. Reference to the idea that Aton supplies the needs of the land, man and animals; and also that Aton “made” or “created” is found in lines 54, 59, 60, 64 and 69.

⁴⁷⁹ Breasted (1834:284) explains that in these lines Aton is hailed as a universal god, creating and sustaining all peoples.

<p>"Thou makest the Nile in the Nether World,</p> <p>Thou bringest it as thou desirest, To preserve alive the people of Egypt</p> <p>For thou hast made them for thyself,</p> <p>Thou lord of them all, who weariest thyself for them;</p> <p>Thou lord of every land, who risest for them,</p> <p>Thou Sun of day, great in glory,</p> <p>All the distant highland countries, Thou makest also their life,</p> <p>Thou didst set a Nile in the sky.</p> <p>When it falleth for them,</p> <p>It maketh waves upon the mountains, Like the great green sea,</p> <p>Watering their fields in their towns.</p> <p>How benevolent are thy designs, O lord of eternity!</p> <p>There is a Nile in the sky for the strangers</p> <p>And for the antelopes of all the highlands that go about upon their feet.</p>	<p>80 You made Hapy in <i>duat</i>,</p> <p>You bring him when you will, To nourish the people,</p> <p>For you made them for yourself.</p> <p>Lord of all, who toils for them,</p> <p>85 Lord of all lands, who shines for them,</p> <p>Aten of daytime, great in glory!</p> <p>All distant lands, you make them live,</p> <p>You made a heavenly Hapy</p> <p>descend for them;</p> <p>He makes waves on the mountains like the sea,</p> <p>90 To drench their fields and their towns.</p> <p>How excellent are your ways, O Lord of eternity!</p> <p>A Hapy from heaven for foreign peoples,</p> <p>And all land's creatures that walk on legs,</p>	<p>63 Thou dost make the Nile in the underworld,</p> <p>64 And bringest it forth as thou desirest to sustain the people,</p> <p>65 As thou dost make them for thyself,</p> <p>66 Lord of them all, who dost weary thyself with them,</p> <p>67 Lord of every land, who dost rise for them,</p> <p>68 Thou Aten of the day, great in majesty.</p> <p>69 As for all distant foreign lands, thou makest their life,</p> <p>70 For thou hast set a Nile in the sky,</p> <p>71 That it may descend for them,</p> <p>72 That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea,</p> <p>73 To water their fields amongst their towns.</p> <p>74 How excellent are thy plans, thou lord of eternity!</p> <p>75 The Nile in the sky is for the foreign peoples,</p> <p>76 For the flocks of every foreign land that walk, with (their) feet,</p>
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<p>But the Nile, it cometh from the Nether World for Egypt.</p>	<p>For Egypt the Hapy who comes from <i>duat</i>.</p>	<p>77 While the (true) Nile comes forth from the underworld for Egypt.</p>
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Several figures of speech appear in stanza X.

Parallelism: The most common form of *parallelism* is the couplet, where line B is *parallel* in some way to line A (Watson 1994:104). There are five types of *parallelisms* in this stanza, *synthetic parallelisms*, *synonymous parallelisms*, *introverted parallelisms*, *antithetical parallelisms* and *emblematic parallelisms*. The function of the parallelisms are that they help to make an idea or argument clear and easy to remember. They also show that each repeated structure is of equal importance (Burden 1986:107).

In *synthetic parallelism* the thought of the first line is extended, it flows on, but the balance of true parallelism is not there (Mickelsen 1963:326). In this stanza there are twelve examples of *synthetic parallelisms*:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 54a and 54b.

Line 54a “Thou didst create the earth according to thy will”,
line 54b “being alone”, meaning that Aton by himself created everything.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 55 and 56.

Line 55 “Mankind, cattle, all flocks”.

Line 56 “Everything on earth which walks with (its) feet”. According to the poet all animals that walk do so with their feet. Line 55 explains what the “everything” in line 56 includes. Line 56 refers to all animals that walk, while line 55 enumerates the different kinds of animals.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 59a and 59b.

Line 59a “Thou dost set each man in his place”.

Line 59b “and supply his needs”.

The two lines together complete the single thought of Aton looking after mankind.

The fourth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 63 and 64.

Line 63 “Thou dost make the Nile in the underworld”⁴⁸⁰.

Line 64 “And bringest it forth as thou desirest to sustain the people”. Since the Egyptians knew nothing of the sources of the Nile⁴⁸¹, they regarded it as bubbling up from the subterranean waters they called Nun (Breasted 1934:28).

The fifth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 64b and 65.

Line 64b “as thou desirest to sustain the people”.

Line 65 “As thou dost make them for thyself”.

In line 64b Aton is providing the people with water, which (according to line 65) he had made.

The sixth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 65 and 66.

Line 65 “As thou dost make them for thyself”.

Line 66 “Lord of them all, who dost weary thyself with them”.

Aton, having made all of mankind, finds that he is weary. Aton is described as the evening sun in line 66 (Williams R J 1958:150). Aton having worked very hard (line 65), is now tired (line 66). The “evening sun” in line 66 means that the sun is going down. In the understanding of Akhenaton the sun (Aton) was going to sleep.

The seventh example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 67 and 68.

Line 67 “Lord of every land, who dost rise for them”.

Line 68 “Thou Aton of the day, great in majesty”. Aton is described as the morning sun in line 67, and as the midday sun in line 68 (Williams R J 1958:150). Aton is the connecting link between these two lines.

The eighth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 70 and 71.

⁴⁸⁰ Refer also to Lichtheim (1997:46) line 77 “For Egypt the Hapy who comes from the Duat.” Hapy is the inundating Nile, which emerges from Duat, the netherworld to nourish Egypt, while foreign peoples are sustained by a “Nile from heaven” who descends as rain”.

⁴⁸¹ Breasted (1959:8-9): Two great phenomena of nature that had made the most profound impression upon the Nile dwellers, and that had dominated religious and intellectual development from the earliest times, were the sun and the Nile.

Line 70 “For thou hast set a Nile in the sky”.

Line 71 “That it may descend for them”.

In line 70 the rain is described as coming from “a Nile in the sky”, which then pours the rain onto mankind in line 71.

The ninth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 71 and 72a.

Line 71 “That it may descend for them”.

Line 72a “That it may make waves on the mountains”. The rain that pours onto the people in line 71, also falls on the mountains creating rivulets (small streams) in line 72a.

The tenth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 72a and 72b.

Line 72a “That it may make waves on the mountains”.

Line 72b “like the sea”.

The small streams that are formed on the mountains can become so large and many, that they resemble the sea. Line 72b is explaining what the water on the mountain looks like (line 72a). Lines 72a and 72b together sketch a completed picture of what the rain looks like on the earth.

The eleventh example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 72 and 73.

Line 72 “That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea”.

Line 73 “To water their fields amongst their towns”.

Lines 72 and 73 together sketch a complete picture. After the rain has made small streams on the mountains, these become bigger streams (line 72) until the water eventually flows down the mountains onto the fields (line 73).

The twelfth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 75 and 76.

Line 75 ‘The Nile in the sky is for the foreign peoples’.

Line 76 “For the flocks of every foreign land that walk with (their) feet”.

Line 75 explains that only the heavenly Nile (the rain) can benefit the desert dwellers and the foreign lands, where it descends in torrents from the hills, unlike the river of Egypt, whose source is not known (Davies 1908:30). Lines 75 and 76 explain that the rain also falls on the foreign people and their animals.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is that it contributes to the terseness of the poetry (Futato 2009:9).

Synonymous parallelism is where the two lines express the same basic idea, but in different ways (Van Gemeren 2008:48). There are four examples of *synonymous parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synonymous parallelism* is formed by lines 59b and 60a.

Line 59b “and supply his needs”.

Line 60a “Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned”.

Lines 59b and 60a are balanced because they both portray the food of the people. Lines 59b and 60a are very similar to Psalm 104:27-28: “These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things”.

The second example of *synonymous parallelism* is formed by lines 61a and 61b.

Line 61a “Their tongues are diverse in speech”.

Line 61b “and their natures likewise”.

These two lines are describing the foreign people that the poem started writing about from line 58. The different people (nations) have different languages and also different natures. There is balance here because the language as well as the nature of the people differ.

The third example of *synonymous parallelism* is formed by lines 62a and 62b.

Line 62a “Their skins are varied”.

Line 62b “for thou dost vary the foreigners”.

Line 62 is proclaiming that the different foreigners have different skin colours. They are different.

The fourth example of *synonymous parallelism* is formed by lines 66 and 67.

Line 66 “Lord of them all, who dost weary thyself with them”.

Line 67 “Lord of every land, who dost rise for them”.

Lines 66 and 67 are still talking about the foreigners. Aton is tired (because of the foreigners) when he goes down on the western horizon (line 66), but Aton also rises

on the eastern horizon and shines on the foreigners as well as on his own people, the Egyptians. The content of lines 66 and 67 balance each other, because in line 66 Aton goes down while in line 67 Aton rises.

The function of *synonymous parallelism* is to bring about balance (Burden 1986:108).

Introverted parallelism is where four lines are so arranged that the first line corresponds to the fourth line, and the second line corresponds to the third line (Oesterley and Robinson 1958:140). There are three examples of *introverted parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 58 to 61.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 58 and 61.

Line 58 “The foreign lands of Hurru and Nubia⁴⁸², the land of Egypt”.

The second part of this example is formed by lines 59 and 60.

Line 59 “Thou dost set each man in his place and supply his needs”.

Line 60 “Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned.

Lines 59 and 60 portray that although the foreigners are different from the Egyptians, Aton also sees to their needs, because Aton created them as well as the Egyptians. Lines 59 and 60 are bound to each other because Aton having created all living things on earth, Aton then looks after them all.

Line 61 “Their tongues are diverse in speech and their natures likewise”.

Lines 58 and 61 are bound to each other because both of these two lines (58 and 61) show that the language as well as the natures of the foreign people are different from those of the Egyptians.

The second example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 62-65.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 62⁴⁸³ and 65.

Line 62 “Their skins are varied, for thou dost vary the foreigners”.

⁴⁸² Williams RJ (1958:150) explains that in line 58 the Hurru and Nubia respectively were the most northerly and southerly lands known to the Egyptians.

⁴⁸³ Lichtheim (1997:46). Line 62 “their skins are varied”. The Great Aton Hymn expresses the cosmopolitan and humanist outlook of the New Kingdom at its purest and most sympathetic. All peoples are seen as the creatures of the sun-god, who has made them diverse in skin colour, speech, and character. Their diversity is described objectively, without a claim of, for example, superiority.

The second part of this example is formed by lines 63⁴⁸⁴ and 64.

Line 63 “Thou dost make the Nile in the underworld”.

Line 64 “And bringest it forth as thou desirest to sustain the people”.

Lines 63 and 64 are bound because the two together complete the thought i.e.

Aton having made the rain, gives it to all his people to use.

Line 65 “As thou dost make them for thyself”.

Lines 62 and 65 are bound to each other because the two together complete the thought. Even though the foreigners do not have the same skin colouring as the Egyptians, Aton also created them for himself.

The third example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 70-73.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 70 and 73.

Line 70 “For thou hast set a Nile in the sky”.

The second part of this example is formed by lines 71 and 72.

Line 71 “That it may descend for them”.

Line 72 “That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea”.

Lines 71 and 72 are bound together because both lines explain about water.

Line 71 expresses that the rain is falling, while line 72 sketches that the rain makes streams of water on the mountains.

Line 73 “To water their fields amongst their towns”.

Lines 70 and 73 are bound because the rain that Aton has made in the sky (“set a Nile in the sky”), is also used to water the fields of the people.

The function of *introverted parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Mickelsen 1963:326).

Antithetical parallelism occurs when the second line expresses a thought which is in sharp contrast to that which was declared in the first line (Mickelsen 1963:325). There is one example of *antithetical parallelism* in this stanza. This example is formed by lines 56⁴⁸⁵ and 57.

Line 56 “Everything on earth which walks with (its) feet”.

Line 57 “And what are on high, flying with their wings”.

⁴⁸⁴ Breasted (1959:6-9). See line 63: Since the Egyptians knew nothing of the sources of the Nile⁴⁸⁴, they regarded it as bubbling up from the subterranean waters they called Nun.

⁴⁸⁵ Davies (1908:31). Line 56 “on foot,” literally, “on two feet;” but this restriction is plainly not intended; lines 56 and 57 form an *antithetical parallelism*.

Both lines 56 and 57 speak about the movement of animals. In line 56 the animals that walk on the earth is indicated, while in line 57 the flying animals (the birds) are spoken of. Line 56 proclaims that the one way the animals move is by means of their feet, while line 57 depicts another way of moving, which is those animals that have wings and can fly.

The function of *antithetical parallelism* is that by setting things in contrast, they create tension or even doubt or stimulate the imagination (Burden 1986:51).

Emblematic parallelism. There are four example of *emblematic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 68⁴⁸⁶ and 69. Line 68 “Thou Aton of the day, great in majesty”.

Line 69 “As for all distant foreign lands, thou makest their life”.

Line 69 is a *simile* because of the words “As for all distant foreign lands”. Lines 68 and 69 are bound together because line 69 illustrates line 68. Aton is so great (line 68) that he is also the creator of the foreign people (line 69).

The second example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 69⁴⁸⁷ and 70.

Line 69 “As for all distant foreign lands, thou makest their life”.

Line 70 “For thou hast set a Nile in the sky”.

Line 70 is a *metaphor*. Because of the rain that falls (line 70), also all the foreign people can live (line 69). Lines 69 and 70 are bound because Aton also cares for the foreign people.

The third example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 71 and 72.

Line 71 “That it may descend for them”.

Line 72 “That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea”.

⁴⁸⁶Davies (1908:30). Line 68 The thought is of the sun setting in the far west as if weary of his task, but rising again in awful majesty

⁴⁸⁷Williams RJ (1958:150). See lines 69-77. In these lines we read of Aton’s concern for foreign lands. Rain was a rare phenomenon in Egypt, and the author (Akhenaton) thinks of it as the result of a heavenly Nile dropping its waters from on high to the foreign lands beneath.

Line 72 is a *simile* because of “like the sea”. Lines 71 and 72 are bound together because both lines speak about the rain, which falls (line 71) on the people, and also makes streams of water on the mountains (line 72).

The fourth example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 74 and 75.

Line 74 “How excellent are thy plans, thou lord of eternity”.

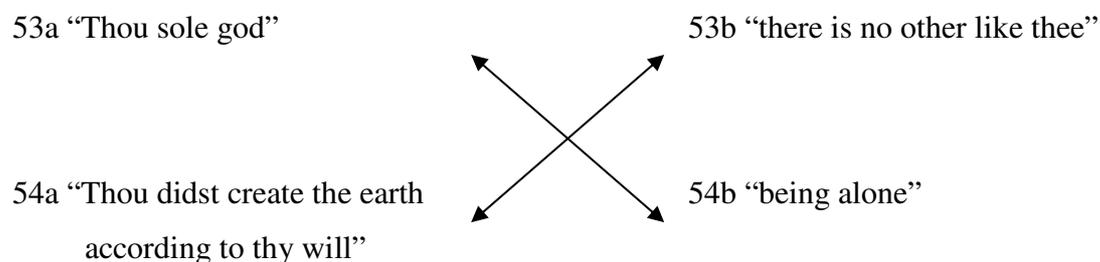
Line 75 “The Nile in the sky is for foreign peoples”.

In line 74 Aton is praised for his excellent plans, and in line 75 Aton gives rain even to the foreign people. Line 75 is a *metaphor* because of “the Nile in the sky”, and that is why lines 74 and 75 together make an *emblematic parallelism*. Lines 74 and 75 are bound because together they praise Aton for his wonderful plan of sending rain from the sky.

The function of *emblematic parallelism* is to bind components of the stanza together (Watson 1995:34).

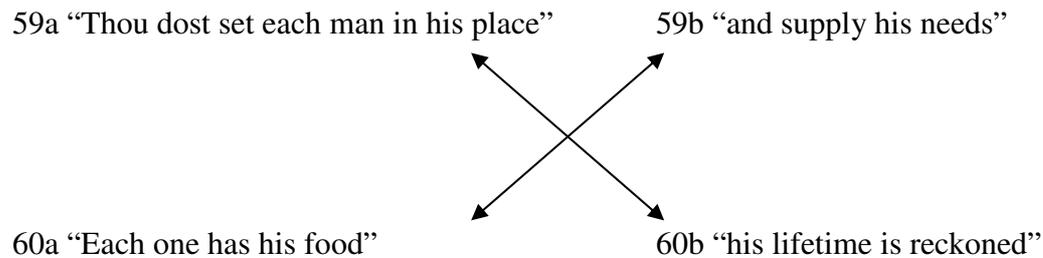
Chiasm is the arrangement of four lines according to an ABB`A` pattern. It is a form of mirroring named after the Greek letter *chi*, which looks like an X (Alter 1985:116). There are three examples of *chiasm* in this stanza:

The first example of a *chiasm* is formed by lines 53 and 54. Line 53 “Thou sole god, there is no other like thee” . Line 54 “Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone”. This *chiasm* is formed as follows: Line 53a “Thou sole god” connects to line 54b “being alone”. And line 53b “there is no other like thee” connects to line 54a “Thou didst create the earth according to thy will”.



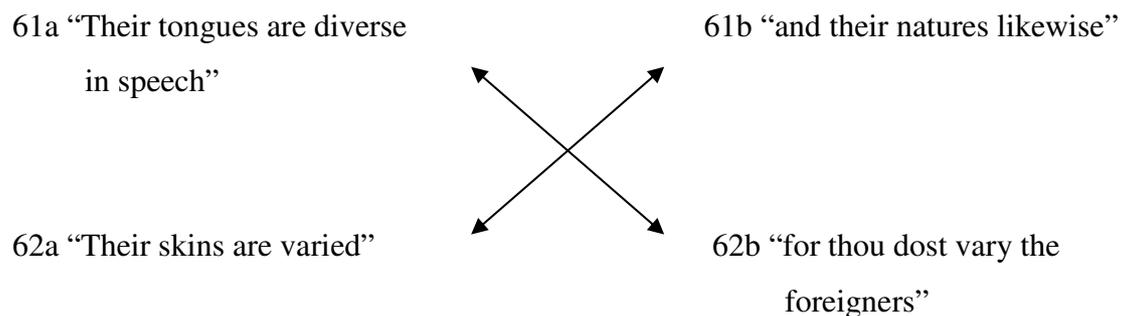
The content that is emphasized by lines 53 and 54 is that Aton is the only god, and that Aton created everything.

The second example of a *chiasm* is formed by lines 59 and 60. Line 59 “Thou dost set each man in his place and supply his needs”. Line 60⁴⁸⁸ “Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned”. This *chiasm* is formed as follows: Line 59a “Thou dost set each man in his place” connects to line 60b “his lifetime is reckoned”. While line 59b “and supply his needs” connects to line 60a “Each one has his food”.



The content that is emphasized by lines 59 and 60 is that Aton gives every human his food, and also his allotted time to live.

The third example of a *chiasm* is formed by lines 61 and 62. Line 61 “Their tongues are diverse in speech and their natures likewise”. Line 62 “Their skins are varied, for thou dost vary the foreigners”. This *chiasm* is formed as follows: Line 61a “Their tongues are diverse in speech” connects to line 62b “for thou dost vary the foreigners”, while line 61b “and their natures likewise” connects to line 62a “Their skins are varied”.



The content that is emphasized by lines 61 and 62 is that the foreigners that Aton created have different languages, skin clouring and natures. The function of the *chiasm* is that it forms a framework into which the poet can fit his improvised lines

⁴⁸⁸ Hornung (1983:167). See lines 60-62: Akhenaton describes in the Great Aton Hymn how his god separated the foreign people’s languages, distinguished their characters, and cares for their sustenance.

(Watson 1995:33). The framework is formed by the improvised lines, which contain the thoughts or words that are used to make the cross over pattern.

Personification is a literary device whereby we treat as a person that which is recognized to be not a person (Caird 1980:80). There are two examples of *personification* in this stanza. The first example of *personification* is in line 54. “Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone”. The *personification* is the reference to earth which does not mean the earth alone but also everything that is found on the earth, living as well as non-living. The second example of *personification* is found in line 61. “Their tongues are diverse in speech and their natures likewise”. The *personification* is found in the word tongues, the tongue is referred to as if it were the tongue that has speech. The function of *personification* is that it elevates the impact of the language (Burden 1986:44)

4.3.4.11 Stanza XI (78-89) Aton as the creator of the seasons⁴⁸⁹ .⁴⁹⁰

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
"Thy rays nourish every garden;	95 Your rays nurse all fields,	78 Thy rays suckle every field;
When thou risest they live, They grow by thee.	When you shine they live, they grow for you;	79 When thou dost rise, they live and thrive for thee.
Thou makest the seasons In order to make develop all that thou hast made.	You made the seasons to foster all that you made,	80 Thou makest the seasons to nourish all that thou hast made:
Winter to bring them coolness, And heat that they may taste thee.	Winter to cool them, heat that they taste you.	81The winter to cool them; the heat that they (?) may taste thee.
"Thou didst make the distant sky in order to rise therein,	You made the far sky to shine therein,	82 Thou didst make the distant sky to rise in it,

⁴⁸⁹ The words that are repeated in this stanza are the following: Reference to Aton either rising or setting is found in lines 79, 84, 85 and 89. The word “field” is found in lines 78 and 87. Reference to the idea that Aton supplies the needs of the land, man and animals; and also that Aton “made” or “created” is found in lines 80, 82, 83 and 86.

⁴⁹⁰ Williams R J (1958:150) observes that the text is damaged and uncertain at the end of line 80.

In order 'to behold all that thou hast made,	100 To behold all that you made;	83 To see all that thou hast made.
While thou wast yet alone Shining in thy form as living Aton,	You alone, shining in your form of living Aten,	84 Being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aten,
Dawning, glittering, going afar and returning.	Risen, radiant, distant, near.	85 Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near,
Thou makest millions of forms Through thyself alone;	You made millions of forms from yourself alone,	86 Thou makest millions of forms from thyself alone:
Cities, villages, and fields, highways and rivers.	Towns, villages, fields, the river's course;	87 Cities, towns, fields, road, and river.
All eyes see thee before them,	105 All eyes observe you upon them,	88 Every eye perceives thee level with them,
For thou art Aton of the day over the earth.	For you are the Aten of daytime on high.	89 When thou art the Aten of the day above the earth (?)

Several figures of speech appear in stanza XI (78-89).

Parallelism. There are four kinds of *parallelism* in this stanza, *synthetic parallelism*, *introverted parallelism*, *antithetical parallelism*, and *emblematic parallelism*. The function of parallelism is that it helps to make an idea or argument clear and easy to remember (Burden 1986:107).

Synthetic parallelisms. There are six examples of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 78 and 79.

Line 78 "Thy rays suckle every field".

Line 79 "When thou dost rise, they live and thrive for thee".

Lines 78 and 79 express that the crops/grass thrive with the sun shining onto them.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 80a and 80b.

Line 80a "Thou makest the seasons".

Line 80b “to nourish all that thou hast made”.

Line 80a describes that the sun (Aton) is responsible for making the seasons. The different seasons give food to everything that Aton created. Aton’s creative ability binds lines 80a and 80b.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 82 and 83.

Line 82 “Thou didst make the distant sky to rise in it”.

Line 83 “To see all that thou hast made”.

According to lines 82 and 83 the sun rises up high in order to be able to see everything that he has made.

The fourth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 83 and 84.

Line 83 “To see all that thou hast made”.

Line 84 “Being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aton”.

Line 84 proclaims that when Aton rises he is alone and living, while line 83 explains that when Aton rises he can see. The thought that combines these two lines is that Aton rises. According to lines 83 and 84 when the Aton rises he is alive, in contrast to Aton being dead when it is dark.

The fifth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 84 and 85.

Line 84 “being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aton”.

Line 85 “Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near”.

Line 85 portrays that whether Aton is near or far away he always has the same form, while line 84 explains that Aton is always alone.

The sixth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 88 and 89.

Line 88 “Every eye perceives thee level with them”.

Line 89 “When thou art the Aton of the day above the earth”.

According to lines 88 and 89, all the people can see Aton when he has risen. When Aton is shining during the day (line 89), it looks to all the people as if their eyes are level with him, meaning they can see Aton (line 88). The visibility of Aton is the factor that binds lines 88 and 89.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Introverted parallelism. There are three examples of *introverted parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 82-85.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 82 and 85.

Where line 82 “Thou didst make the distant sky to rise in it”,

The second part of this example is formed by lines 83 and 84.

Line 83 “To see all that thou hast made”,

Line 84 “Being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aton”.

Aton looks down on all that he has made, while he is alone in the sky.

Line 85 “Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near”.

Lines 82 and 85 are bound together because they both expose how Aton uses the sky. Aton is present in the sky, he moves in the sky, he appears into the sky and he disappears out of the sky.

The second example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 83-86.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 83 and 86.

Line 83 “ To see all that thou hast made”,

The second part of this example is formed by lines 84 and 85.

Line 84 “Being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aton”,

Line 85 “Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near”.

Lines 84 and 85 are bound to each other because line 84 shows that Aton was alone when he formed himself, while line 85 describes that once Aton had been made , he appeared as shining, whether he was near or far away. While Aton is alone in the sky, he is continually shining.

Line 86 “Thou makest millions of forms from thyself alone”.

Lines 83 and 86 are bound to each other because line 86 portrays that Aton has made millions of forms from himself, while line 83 exposes that Aton looks at all these forms of himself.

The third example of *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 85-88.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 85 and 88.

Line 85 “Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near”.

The second part of this example is formed by lines lines 86 and 87.

Line 86 “Thou makest millions of forms from thyself alone”,

Line 87 “Cities, towns, fields, road, and river”.

Lines 86 and 87 are bound to each other because Line 86 explains that Aton makes millions of forms of himself, while line 87 depicts that these forms of Aton are seen in all the cities, towns, fields, roads and rivers.

Line 88 “Every eye perceives thee level with them”.

Lines 85 and 88 are bound to each other because together they explain that while Aton is shining on the earth every one can see him.

The function of *introverted parallelism* is cohesion (binding together components of stanzas) (Watson 1995:34).

Antithetical parallelism. There is one example of *antithetical parallelism* in this stanza, it is formed by lines 81a and 81b.

Line 81a “The winter to cool them”.

Line 81b “the heat that they may taste thee”.

Aton’s creations can feel the cool of winter, as well as the heat of summer.

The function of *antithetical parallelism* is to form a contrast (Bullock 1988:35).

Emblematic parallelism occurs where one of the members of the couplet provides a *simile* or a *metaphor*. There are three examples of *emblematic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 80 and 81.

Line 80 “Thou makest the seasons to nourish all that thou hast made”.

Line 81 “The winter to cool them; the heat that they may taste thee” (*metaphor*).

In line 80 the poet describes the fact that Aton makes all the seasons, to feed what he had created, while in line 81 the poet explains in more detail what happens during winter and summer.

The second example of an *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 83 and 84.

Line 83 “To see all that thou hast made”.

Line 84 “being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aton” (*simile*).

The two lines together form one thought. Line 83 exposes that Aton “made it all”, while line 84 sketches that Aton made everything even though he was “alone”. There was only one god, meaning that the people were monotheistic in their religion.

The third example of *emblematic parallelism* is formed by lines 87 and 88.

Line 87 “Cities, towns, fields, road, and river”.

Line 88 “Every eye perceives thee level with them” (*metaphor*).

Line 88 portrays that everybody can see Aton, while line 89 expresses that this “everybody” also includes the “cities, towns, fields, roads and rivers”. The living as well as the non-living, everything sees Aton. Here the living and the non-living images are bound because they both see Aton.

The function of the *emblematic parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Personification is attributing human characteristics to something nonhuman (Tremper Longman III 1988:113) There is one example of *personification* in this stanza, it is line 78. “Thy rays suckle every field”. It is a *personification* because the rays are treated as living beings, having the ability to suckle. The function of *personification* is to make the written description more vivid (Burden 1987:62).

Lines 90 -92 are damaged on the only known existing copy, and the meaning of the lines escapes us (Williams RJ 1958:150 and Lichtheim 1997: 46)⁴⁹¹.

Breasted (1934:285)	Davies (1908:31)	Hays (2014:360)	Lichtheim (1997:46)	Williams (1958:148)
90 When thou hast gone away,	90 When thou didst depart,	90	90	90 When thou didst go away because all men existed,

⁴⁹¹ Although lines 90-92 have been damaged, Williams R J (1958) and Breasted (1834:294) have given a translation for lines 90 and 91, and a partial translation for line 92. Davies (1908) has a translation for line 90, a partial translation for line 91, and no translation for line 92. While Lichtheim (1997) has no translation for any of the three lines. Line 92 seems to have been severely damaged; and most of what Williams R J (1958) and Breasted (1834) have written on this line could possibly be conjecture.

⁴⁹² Lichtheim (1997:46) explains that these lines consist of several obscure sentences containing corruptions and a lacuna.

91 And all men, whose faces thou hast fashioned , in order that thou mightest no longer see thyself alone,	91 when all men whose faces thou didst create that thou mightest not see [thine(?)] own self [alone (?)]	91	91	91 Thou didst create their faces that thou mightest not see [thy] self [alone],
92 [Have fallen asleep, so that not] one [seeth] that which thou hast made,	92	92	92 ⁴⁹²	92 one which thou didst make.

By using Breasted’s translation of these damaged lines (lines 90-91) it is possible that they could be translated as follows: “Even when Aton sets (goes down) he is not alone, because he has created many people. When the people are however asleep they do not see Aton or the many things that he has created”.

4.3.4.12 Stanza XII (93-96)⁴⁹³ Revelation to the king⁴⁹⁴

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
Yet art thou still in my heart.	You are in my heart,	93 Thou art in my heart;
"There is no other that knoweth thee	There is no other who knows you,	94 There is no other that knows thee,
Save thy son Ikhnaton.	Only your son, Neferkheprure, Sole-one- of-Re,	95 Save thy son Akhenaten,

⁴⁹³ No words are repeated in this stanza.

⁴⁹⁴ Breasted (1834:285).

Thou hast made him wise In thy designs and in thy might.	110 Whom you have taught your ways and your might.	96 For thou hast made him skilled in thy plans and thy might.
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Several figures of speech appear in stanza XII (93-96).

Parallelism. There are four kinds of parallelisms in this stanza. *Synthetic parallelism*, *synonymous parallelism*, *introverted parallelism*, and *emblematic parallelism*. The function of *parallelism* is to create a balance between the two poles of the statement being made (Burden 1986:53).

Synthetic parallelism. There are two examples of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 94 and 95.

Line 94 “There is no other that knows thee”.

Line 95 “Save thy son Akhenaton”.

The two poles that are formed in lines 94 and 95 are “no one” in line 94 and “only one” in line 95. The statement that Aton was known to Akhenaton alone, is confirmation of the fact that only he, with his family, could worship Aton directly (Williams R J 1958:148).

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 95 and 96.

Line 95 “Save thy son Akhenaton”.

Line 96 “For thou hast made him skilled in thy plans and thy might”.

Aton has made his son, Akhenaton, clever and skilled. Line 96 sketches that Aton has told Akhenaton about all his plans, while line 95 exposes Akhenaton as Aton’s son. The thought binding these two lines is that because Akhenaton is Aton’s son, Aton has told Akhenaton things that no one else knows.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Synonymous parallelism. There is one example of *synonymous parallelism* in this stanza, and it is formed by lines 93 and 94.

Line 93 “Thou art in my heart”.

Line 94 “There is no other that knows thee”,
meaning that it is only Akhenaton that knows and loves Aton, because according to Akhenaton he is Aton’s son.

The function of *synonymous parallelism* here is to present a global picture (Watson 1995:125).

Introverted parallelism is where four lines are so arranged that the first line corresponds to the fourth line, while the second line corresponds to the third line (Oesterley & Robinson 1958:140). There is one example of *introverted parallelism* in this stanza, and it is formed by lines 93-96.

The first part of this example is formed by lines 93 and 96.

Line 93 “Thou art in my heart”

The second part of this example is formed by lines 94 and 95.

Line 94 “There is no other that knows thee”

Line 95 “Save thy son Akhenaton”.

Line 94 depicts that nobody knows Aton as well as Akhenaton knows Aton, while line 95 explains that only Aton’s son, Akhenaton, knows Aton. Lines 94 and 95 are bound because the two lines together form one thought i.e. only Akhenaton knows Aton. In lines 94 -95 the poet of this poem has put Akhenaton in the centre of the poem.

Line 96 “For thou hast made him skilled in thy plans and thy might”. Lines 93 and 96 are bound to each other because line 96 exposes that Aton has shown Akhenaton all his plans, because as line 93 shows Aton is in Akhenaton’s heart. This is why Akhenaton knows what Aton does and thinks.

The function of *introverted parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Emblematic parallelism. There is one example of *emblematic parallelism* in this stanza and it is formed by lines 92 and 93.

Line 92 “...one...which thou didst make”.

Line 93 “Thou art in my heart” (metaphor).

Line 93 proclaims that Aton is in Akhenaton’s heart, while line 92 depicts Aton as having made it all, Aton made himself and he also made Akhenaton. The aspect that is bound is that there is a very close bond between Aton and Akhenaton. When we

recall that the Egyptian constantly used “heart” as the seat of the mind, we are suddenly aware that he possessed no word for “mind” (Breasted 1959:44).

The function of *emblematic parallelism* is cohesion (binding together components of the stanza) (Watson 1995:34).

4.3.4.13 Stanza XIII (97-103)⁴⁹⁵ The world and man are dependant on

Aton.

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
"The world subsists in thy hand,	(Those on) earth come from your hand	97 The earth came into being by thy hand,
Even as thou hast made them.	As you made them,	98 Just as thou didst make them (i.e. mankind).
When thou hast risen they live,	When you have dawned they live,	99 When thou hast risen, they live;
When thou settest they die;	When you set they die;	100 When thou dost set, they die.
For thou art length of life of thyself, Men live through thee	You yourself are lifetime, one lives by you.	101 For thou art lifetime thyself; one lives through thee;
The eyes of men see beauty Until thou settest.	115 All eyes are on (your) beauty until you set,	102 Eyes are upon (thy) beauty until thou dost set.
All labour is put away When thou settest in the west.	All labour ceases when you rest in the west;	103 All labour is put aside when thou dost set in the west;

Several figures of speech appear in stanza XIII (97-103).

Parallelism. There are four kinds of *parallelisms* in this stanza. *Synthetical parallelism*, *introverted parallelism*, *antithetical parallelism*, and *emblematic parallelism*. The function of parallelism is to assist with the exegesis of the text, in

⁴⁹⁵ The following words are repeated in this stanza: Reference to Aton either rising or setting is found in lines 97, 99, 100, 102 and 103. Reference to the idea that Aton supplies the needs of the land, man and animals; and also that Aton “made” or “created” occurs in lines 97 and 98.

that they add new elements to the line of thought associations of words, to see new connections, and to follow the unfolding of the theme with greater ease (Burden 1986:53).

Synthetic parallelism: In this form of parallelism the thought of the second line supplements and completes the thought of the first line. The two lines are not parallel in thought, they are only parallel in form (Burney 1925:21). There are four examples of *synthetic parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 97 and 98.

Line 97 “The earth came into being by thy hand”.

Line 98 “Just as thou didst make them (i.e. mankind)”.

The following two thoughts are bound: Aton made the earth and everything on it. Line 98 explains that Aton made mankind, while line 97 proclaims that in the same manner, Aton also made the earth.

The second example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 101a and 101b.

Line 101a “For thou art lifetime thyself”.

Line 101b “one lives through thee “.

Everything lives because of Aton. These two lines are bound because they express the same thought in practically the same way, i.e. all life depends on Aton.

The third example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 102a and 102b.

Line 102a “Eyes are upon (thy) beauty”.

Line 102b “until thou dost set”.

All of creation sees Aton’s beauty, while he is shining. Line 102b describes that once Aton has set, his beauty cannot be seen anymore, while line 102a explains how everyone can see his beauty, meaning that while he is shining Aton can be seen. The idea that “Aton can only be seen”, together with the idea of “while he is shining” binds these two ideas together.

The fourth example of *synthetic parallelism* is formed by lines 103a and 103b.

Line 103a “All labour is put aside”.

Line 103b “when thou dost set in the west”.

Line 103b explains that once Aton has set (gone under) it is dark, and that is why in line 103a no one is doing any work any more. When Aton disappears in the west and it is dark, all the creatures stop working. Thus lines 103a and 103b are also bound together.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is cohesion (the binding together of components of the stanza) (Watson 1995:34).

Introverted parallelism. There is one example of *introverted parallelism* in this stanza, and it is formed by lines 99-102.

The first part of this *introverted parallelism* is formed by lines 99 and 102.

Line 99 “When thou hast risen, they live”,

The second part of this example is formed by lines 100 and 101.

Line 100 “When thou dost set, they die”,

Line 101 “For thou art lifetime thyself; one lives through thee”.

Lines 100 and 101 are bound to each other because they both agree that Aton keeps his creation alive. Line 101 depicts that Aton gives the people life, while line 100 exposes that the people die when Aton sets. When Aton goes away, all his creatures die. They only live while he is present.

Line 102 “Eyes are upon (thy) beauty until thou dost set”.

Lines 99 and 102 are bound to each other because line 99 explains that the people live when he (Aton) has risen, while line 102 describes that while the people live they are looking at Aton until he sets (goes away). All of Aton’s creatures are alive while he is present. And they are looking at Aton’s beauty.

The function of *introverted parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Antithetical parallelism is when one line gives the obverse of the other line (Guthrie et al 1970:45).

There is one example of *antithetical parallelism* in this stanza, and it is formed by lines 99 and 100.

Line 99 “When thou hast risen, they live”.

Line 100 “When thou dost set, they die”.

The creation can only live while Aton is present. When he is not present they die. Lines 99 and 100 are bound together, because life and death belongs to Aton. The

function of *antithetical parallelism* is cohesion (i.e. to bind together components of the stanza) (Watson 1995:34).

Emblematic parallelism is where one line of the couplet has a *simile* or a *metaphor* in it (Burden 1986:50).

There is one example of *emblematic parallelism* in this stanza, and it is formed by lines 97 and 98.

Line 97 “The earth came into being by thy hand”.

Line 98 “Just as thou didst make them (i.e. mankind)”.

Line 98 is a *simile* because of the word *as*. Both lines are referring to creation, but because one of the two lines is a *simile* these two lines together form an *emblematic parallelism*. Line 97 depicts that Aton made the earth, while line 98 describes that just as Aton made the earth, he also made mankind.

The function of an *emblematic parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

Personification. There is one example of *personification* in this stanza, and it is formed by line 103. Line 103 “All labour is put aside when thou dost set in the west”. This line refers to Aton as if it was alive, and that is why it is an example of *personification*. Once Aton has disappeared behind the horizon it is dark, and when it is dark labour ceases. The people only work during the day when Aton is shining. The function of *personification* is that it elevates the impact of the language (Burden 1986:44).

4.3.4.14 Stanza XIV (104-108) Aton and Akhenaton ⁴⁹⁶.

Breasted (1934:281-286)	Hays (2014:357-361)	Williams (1958:145-148)
When thou risest again [Thou] makest \neg every hand \rightarrow to flourish for the king	When you rise you stir [everyone] for the King,	104 When [thou] risest [thou] makest . . . flourish for the king.
And \neg prosperity \rightarrow is in every foot,	Every leg is on the move	105 As for all who hasten on foot,

⁴⁹⁶ The words that are repeated in this stanza are “Aton rises” in lines 104 and 107, and the word “king” in lines 104 and 108.

<p>Since thou didst establish the world,</p> <p>And raise them up for thy son, Who came forth from thy flesh,</p> <p>The king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Living in Truth, Lord of the Two Lands. Nefer-khepru-Re, Wan-Re (Ikhnaton), Son of Re, living in Truth, lord of diadems,</p> <p>Ikhnaton, whose life is long; (And for) the chief royal wife, his beloved, Mistress of the Two Lands, Nefer-nefru-Aton, Nofretete, Living and flourishing for ever and ever.”</p>	<p>Since you founded the earth.</p> <p>You rouse them for your son who came from your body,</p> <p>120 The King who lives by Ma’at, the Lord of the Two Lands,</p> <p>Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of-Re, The Son of Re, who lives by Ma’at, the Lord of crowns, Akhenaten, great in his lifetimes; (And) the great Queen whom he loves, the Lady of the Two Lands:</p> <p>125 Nefer-nefru-Aten Nefertiti, living forever.</p>	<p>106 Ever since thou didst fashion the earth,</p> <p>107 Thou dost raise them up for thy son who came forth from thyself,</p> <p>108 The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Akhenaten.</p>
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Several figures of speech appear in stanza XIV (104-108).

Parallelism, There are two kinds of *parallelisms* in this stanza, and they are *synthetic parallelism* and *synonymous parallelism*. The function of parallelism is that it helps to make an idea or argument clear and easy to remember (Burden 1986:107).

Synthetic parallelism: In this form of parallelism the thought of the second line supplements and completes the thought of the first line (Burney 1925:21). There are two examples of *synthetical parallelism* in this stanza:

The first example is formed by lines 107a and 107b.

Line 107a “Thou dost raise them up for thy son”.

Line 107b “who came forth from thyself”.

In line 107b the poet is sketching that Akhenaton came forth from Aton, i.e. Aton gave birth to Akhenaton. In line 107a Akhenaton explains that Aton “raised them for thy son”, meaning that whatever Aton created, he created for Akhenaton. Saying again that Aton created everything, but here putting in an extra thought, i.e. that everything was created for Akhenaton.

The second example is formed by lines 108a and 108b⁴⁹⁷.

Line 108a “The King of Upper and Lower Egypt”.

Line 108b “Akhenaton”.

Both lines are referring to Pharaoh Akhenaton as the king.

The function of *synthetic parallelism* is to bind together components of the stanza (Watson 1995:34).

4.4 Synthesis

The Hymn to Aton⁴⁹⁸ praises the sun-god Aton, as the creator of the **earth**, line 54 “Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone”. Aton also created all of **mankind**, line 58 “The foreign lands of Hurru and Nubia, the land of Egypt”; all the **animals**, lines 56 and 57 “Everything on earth which walks with its feet, and what are on high, flying with their wings”; and all the **plants**, line 32 “Trees and plants are verdant”.

Woven into the description of creating everything, the hymn also portrays the daily cycle of the sun, as alternating between day time, lines 1-10, 21-40 and also line 89 “When thou art **the Aton of the day** above the earth”, **and night time**⁴⁹⁹, lines 11-20

⁴⁹⁷ Line 108a The king of Upper and Lower Egypt, line 108b Living in Truth, Lord of the two lands. Akhenaton called his capital at Amarna the “seat of truth” (*Ma`at*). His partisans were fully aware of the king’s convictions regarding truth (*Ma`at*), and we frequently find the men of his court glorifying “truth.” Ay says: “I know that Akhenaton rejoices in truth” (Breasted 1934:286). Cf. Williams R J (1958:144). Central to the new faith was the idea of living on *Ma`at*. This important term is variously translated ‘righteousness’, ‘justice’ or ‘truth’. Akhenaton’s use of it emphasised the aspect of truth.

⁴⁹⁸ Lichtheim (1997:45) describes the Great Aton Hymn as an eloquent and beautiful statement of the doctrine of the one god. He alone has created the world and all it contains. He alone gives life to man and beast. He alone watches over his creations. He alone inhabits the sky.

⁴⁹⁹ Hornung (1999:95) explains that the Aton system of thought, which made light its absolute reference point, had great difficulty with the dark side of the world. Night time negated Aton and signified death, as lines 99-100 reads, “When thou hast risen, they live; when thou dost set, they die”.

and also lines 101-102 “For thou art lifetime thyself; one lives through thee; Eyes are upon thy beauty until thou dost set”.

Depicting the **night as times of chaos**, line 103 “All labour is put aside when thou dost set in the west”, and **the day**, line 1 “Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon of heaven”, **as a time of order** and happiness, line 25 “The two Lands are in festive mood”.

Aton also supplies all the needs of his creations, line 59 “Thou dost set each man in his place and supply his needs”; All the **water**, lines 70-73 “For thou hast set a Nile in the sky, That it may descend for them, That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea, To water their fields amongst their towns”, and food that they need, line 60 “Each one has his **food**, and his life is reckoned”.

When Akhenaton became the pharaoh of Egypt, he declared that the sun god, which was part of a pantheon, was to be from then on to be worshipped as the only god. Akhenaton declared the new sun god, Aton, to be the only god in Egypt, meaning that the people had from then on a **monotheistic religion**. They were not to even recognise the existence of any of their former gods. According to Akhenaton, Aton was the god over life and death. Aton had created himself, and he had also created the earth and everything on it.

Lichtheim (1997:45) summarizes the hymn as follows: the Aton rises and sets in lonely majesty in an empty sky, only the earth is peopled by his creatures, and only they adore his rising and setting.

During the times when the Egyptians were worshipping a pantheon of gods, the gods were never in isolation. The Egyptians believed that the sky and the earth were never empty, because there were many gods accompanying the living as well as the deceased. Akhenaton’s god Aton was however never recognized beyond the borders of Akhetaton, that is why Lichtheim writes that Aton was only adored by Aton’s people, meaning the people at Akhetaton. Aton was worshipped, because Akhenaton, who had created Aton was such a fanatic worshipper, and the people at Akhetaton had to do what Akhenaton taught them to do.

CHAPTER 5

PSALM 104 AND THE GREAT ATON HYMN⁵⁰⁰ – A COMPARISON

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn are compared. What are their similarities and what are their differences, and why did they occur? How does it contribute to a dating of Psalm 104?

Israel did not develop in isolation from her cultural environment, independently of it and untouched by it. To the contrary, Israel was throughout her entire history culturally and politically part of the larger world around her, and it would be surprising, indeed, if her religion had not been affected by that fact (Bright 1967:127). Bright further surmises that Israel borrowed only what she could assimilate, and what was borrowed was adapted into Yahwistic faith.

The *line numbering* that is used in this study for the Great Aton Hymn agrees with the *line numbering* used by RJ Williams in the translation of the ‘Great Aton Hymn’, found in D. Winton Thomas (ed) *Documents from Old Testament Times* (1958). The prose introduction to the ‘Great Aton Hymn’ has not been included in this translation.

5.2 Translations

A translation of both Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn will assist in a comparative assessment of the two hymns.

Psalm 104 (New International Version)	Great Aton Hymn (Translation of R J Williams)
¹ Praise the LORD, my soul.	1 Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon

⁵⁰⁰ Dion (2009:59) says that after the enthusiasm of the first discovery of the Great Aton Hymn, beginning with Breasted (1909:371-376), more cautious or even quite negative views of the relationship between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn have come to prevail.

<p>LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.</p> <p>²The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent</p> <p>³and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.</p> <p>⁴He makes winds his messengers, ^[a] flames of fire his servants.</p> <p>⁵He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.</p> <p>⁶You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.</p> <p>⁷But at your rebuke the waters fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;</p> <p>⁸they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys, to the place you assigned for them.</p> <p>⁹You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth.</p> <p>¹⁰He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains.</p>	<p>2 O living Aten, thou who wast the first to live.</p> <p>3 When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon,</p> <p>4 Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty.</p> <p>5 Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land;</p> <p>6 Thy rays encompass the lands to the very limit of all thou hast made.</p> <p>7 Being Re, thou dost reach to their limit</p> <p>8 And curb them [for] thy beloved son;</p> <p>9 Though thou art distant, thy rays are upon the earth;</p> <p>10 Thou art in their faces, yet thy movements are unknown (?).</p> <p>11 When thou dost set on the western horizon,</p> <p>12 The earth is in darkness, resembling death.</p> <p>13 Men sleep in the bed-chamber with- their heads covered,</p> <p>14 Nor does one eye behold the other.</p> <p>15 Were all their goods stolen Which are beneath their heads,</p> <p>16 They would not be aware of it.</p> <p>17 Every lion has come forth from his den,</p> <p>18 All the snakes bite.</p> <p>19 Darkness prevails, and the earth is in silence,</p>
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<p>¹¹ They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.</p> <p>¹² The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches.</p> <p>¹³ He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.</p> <p>¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate— bringing forth food from the earth:</p> <p>¹⁵ wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts.</p> <p>¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.</p> <p>¹⁷ There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers.</p> <p>¹⁸ The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.</p> <p>¹⁹ He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.</p> <p>²⁰ You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl.</p> <p>²¹ The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God.</p>	<p>²⁰ Since he who made them is resting in his horizon.</p> <p>²¹ At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon,</p> <p>²² Dost shine as Aten by day,</p> <p>²³ Thou dost dispel the darkness</p> <p>²⁴ And shed thy rays.</p> <p>²⁵ The Two Lands are in festive mood,</p> <p>²⁶ Awake, and standing on (their) feet,</p> <p>²⁷ For thou hast raised them up;</p> <p>²⁸ They cleanse their bodies and take (their) garments;</p> <p>²⁹ Their arms are (lifted) in adoration at thine appearing;</p> <p>³⁰ The whole land performs its labour.</p> <p>³¹ All beasts are satisfied with their pasture;</p> <p>³² Trees and plants are verdant.</p> <p>³³ The birds which fly from their nests, Their wings are (spread) in adoration to thy soul;</p> <p>³⁴ All flock skip with (their) feet;</p> <p>³⁵ All that fly up and alight</p> <p>³⁶ Live when thou hast risen [for] them.</p> <p>³⁷ Ships sail upstream and downstream alike,</p> <p>³⁸ For every route is open at thine appearing.</p> <p>³⁹ The fish in the river leap before thee,</p>
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<p>²² The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens.</p> <p>²³ Then people go out to their work, to their labor until evening.</p> <p>²⁴ How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.</p> <p>²⁵ There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number— living things both large and small.</p> <p>²⁶ There the ships go to and fro, and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.</p> <p>²⁷ All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.</p> <p>²⁸ When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.</p> <p>²⁹ When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.</p> <p>³⁰ When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.</p>	<p>40 For thy rays are in the midst of the sea.</p> <p>41 Thou creator of issue in woman, who makest semen into mankind,</p> <p>42 And dost sustain the son in his mother's womb,</p> <p>43 Who dost soothe him with that which stills his tears,</p> <p>44 Thou nurse in the very womb, giving breath to sustain all thou dost make!</p> <p>45 When he issues from the womb to breathe on the day of his birth,</p> <p>46 Thou dost open his mouth completely and supply his needs.</p> <p>47 When the chick in the egg cheeps inside the shell,</p> <p>48 Thou givest it breath within it to sustain it.</p> <p>49 Thou hast set it its appointed time in the egg to break it,</p> <p>50 That it may emerge from the egg to cheep at its appointed time;</p> <p>51 That it may walk with its feet when it emerges from it.</p> <p>52 How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view!</p> <p>53 Thou sole god, there is no other like thee</p> <p>54 Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone:</p> <p>55 Mankind, cattle, all flocks,</p> <p>56 Everything on earth which walks with (its) feet,</p> <p>57 And what are on high, flying with</p>
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<p>³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works—</p> <p>³² he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke.</p> <p>³³ I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.</p> <p>³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD.</p> <p>³⁵ But may sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more. Praise the LORD, my soul. Praise the LORD. ^[b]</p>	<p>their wings.</p> <p>58 The foreign lands of Hurru and nubia, the land of Egypt...</p> <p>59 Thou dost set each man in his place and supply his needs;</p> <p>60 Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned.</p> <p>61 Their tongues are diverse in speech and their natures likewise;</p> <p>62 Their skins are varied, for thou vary the foreigners.</p> <p>63 Thou dost make the Nile in the underworld,</p> <p>64 And bringest it forth as thou desirest to sustain the people,</p> <p>65 As thou dost make them for thyself,</p> <p>66 Lord of them all, who dost weary thyself with them,</p> <p>67 Lord of every land, who dost rise for them,</p> <p>68 Thou Aten of the day, great in majesty.</p> <p>69 As for all distant foreign lands, thou makest their life,</p> <p>70 For thou hast set a Nile in the sky,</p> <p>71 That it may descend for them,</p> <p>72 That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea,</p> <p>73 To water their fields amongst their towns.</p> <p>74 How excellent are thy plans, thou lord of eternity!</p>
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	<p>75 The Nile in the sky is for the foreign peoples,</p> <p>76 For the flocks of every foreign land that walk with (their) feet,</p> <p>77 While the (true) Nile comes forth from the underworld for Egypt.</p> <p>78 Thy rays suckel every field;</p> <p>79 When thou dost rise, they live and thrive for thee.</p> <p>80 Thou makest the seasons to nourish all that thou hast made:</p> <p>81 The winter to cool them; the heat that they (?) may taste thee.</p> <p>82 Thou didst make the distant sky to rise in it,</p> <p>83 To see all that thou hast made.</p> <p>84 Being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aten,</p> <p>85 Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near,</p> <p>86 Thou makest millions of forms from thyself alone:</p> <p>87 Cities, towns, fields, road, and river.</p> <p>88 Every eye perceives thee level with them,</p> <p>89 When thou art the Aten of the day above the earth (?)</p> <p>90 When thou didst go away because all men existed,</p> <p>91 Thou didst create their faces that thou mightest not see [thy] self [alone],</p> <p>92 . . one . . . which thou didst make.</p>
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	<p>93 Thou art in my heart;</p> <p>94 There is no other that knows thee,</p> <p>95 Save thy son Akhenaten,</p> <p>96 For thou hast made him skilled in thy plans and thy might.</p> <p>97 The earth came into being by thy hand,</p> <p>98 Just as thou didst make them (i.e. mankind).</p> <p>99 When thou hast risen, they live;</p> <p>100 When thou dost set, they die.</p> <p>101 For thou art lifetime thyself; one lives through thee;</p> <p>102 Eyes are upon (thy) beauty until thou dost set.</p> <p>103 All labour is put aside when thou dost set in the west:</p> <p>104 When [thou] risest [thou] makest . . . flourish for the king.</p> <p>105 As for all who hasten on foot.</p> <p>106 Ever since thou didst fashion the earth,</p> <p>107 Thou dost raise them up for thy son who came forth from thyself,</p> <p>108 The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Akhenaten.</p>
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In the copy of the Great Aton Hymn that was found in Ay's tomb, the lines of the hymn were *not* numbered. Two modern scribes, C B Hays (2014:358-361) and R J Williams (1958:145-148), have numbered the lines, but they differ from one another. The following are two examples to show how the numberings of the two translations differ.

Example 1

Psalm 104	Numbering of the lines of the Great Aton Hymn according to R J Williams (1958:145-148).	Numbering of the lines of the Great Aton Hymn according to C B Hays (2014:357-361).
<p>Verse 28 When you give it to them, they gather it up; When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.</p> <p>Verse 29 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.</p> <p>Verse 30 When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.</p>	<p>Line 97 The earth came into being by thy hand.</p> <p>Line 98 Just as thou didst make them (i.e. mankind).</p> <p>Line 100 When thou dost set, they die.</p> <p>Line 99 When thou hast risen, they live. Line 101 For thou art lifetime; one lives through thee.</p>	<p>Line 111 (Those on) earth come from your hands as you made them.</p> <p>Line 113 When you set they die;</p> <p>Line 112 When you have dawned they live. Line 114 You yourself are lifetime, one lives by you.</p>

Example 2

Psalm 104	Numbering of the lines of the Great Aton Hymn according to R J Williams (1958:145-148).	Numbering of the lines of the Great Aton Hymn according to C B Hays (2014:357-361).
<p>Verse 16 The trees of the Lord are well watered, the</p>	<p>Line 32 Trees and plants are verdant.</p>	<p>Line 35 Trees, herbs are sprouting.</p>

<p>cedars of Lebanon that he planted.</p> <p>Verse 17 There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers.</p> <p>Verse 18 The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.</p>	<p>Line 33 The birds which fly from their nests, their wings are (spread) in adoration of thy soul.</p> <p>Line 34 All flocks skip with (their) feet;</p>	<p>Line 36 Birds fly from their nests,</p> <p>Line 37 Their wings greeting your <i>ka</i>.</p> <p>Line 38 All flocks frisk on their feet.</p>
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The two translations, which lines have been numbered, are shown above, to illustrate why the numbering of both translations could not be followed, but one translation had to be selected to work with.

5.3 Similarities⁵⁰¹

5.3.1 Introduction

Once the psalmist had determined to use solar motifs in Psalm 104, it was inevitable that parallels would occur between the Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104. Both the hymn and the psalm follow similar themes. The following themes have been identified: darkness, lion, daybreak, labour, manifold divine works, ships, provision of food, life and death, and additional themes such as the following: mountains, birds, light, pasture, seasons and hands. In other words the content of both, the Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104, are a celebration of the natural world (Allen 1983:30).

There are many different opinions as to why there are so many similarities between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn. It is possible that Psalm 104 was directly influenced by the Great Aton Hymn. Although these two pieces of literature are separated not only by language and cultural context, but also by more than half a

⁵⁰¹ Westermann (1989:248) explains that there are many striking parallels between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn. Allen (1983:29) agrees that in light of the detailed parallels between the psalm and the hymn, a correspondence of some kind between them cannot be denied. However Simpson (1926:viii) says that parallels are sometimes unduly exaggerated.

millennium of history, the hymn did somehow come to the attention of the biblical poet (Dion 2009:59).

It seems that the greatest concentration of consecutive similarities is found in verses 20 -30. The parallels of the Great Aton Hymn are particularly strong with *Psalm 104:20-30*, where every verse has an equivalent, though not in the same order (Day 1996:42), which compare roughly to *lines 11-12, 17-19, 21-22, 30, 33, 37-40, 52, 59-60, 99-100 of the Great Aton Hymn*.

5.3.2 Darkness

When Aton has set on the Western horizon it becomes night, and some of the beasts prowl around (compare verse 20 with lines 11, 12 and 19).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Verses 20 “You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl”.	Line 11 “When thou dost set on the western horizon”, line 12 “The earth is in darkness, resembling death” and line 19 “Darkness prevails, and the earth is in silence”.

Psalm 104:20 refers to darkness only in connection with beasts prowling at night. The Great Aton Hymn in line 11 has a more poetic approach and sketches what the darkness looks like at night.

5.3.3 Lion

The lions roar, meaning they are *praying* and seeking their meat from Yahweh (verse 21). In line 33 of the Great Aton Hymn, the birds praise Yahweh with their wings unfolded in an attitude of *prayer* (Gressmann 1926:19). Compare verse 21 with lines 17 and 33).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Verse 21 “The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God”.	Line 17 “Every lion has come forth from his den”. Line 33 “The birds which fly from their nests, their wings are (spread) in adoration to thy soul”.

Psalm 104:21 explains that the reason why the lions are roaring is that they are praying to God to give them food. In line 17 of the Great Aton hymn the reason for the lions coming out of their dens is not given. Line 33 refers to birds coming out of their nests, and in doing so they praise God. It is suggested by these lines that the lions are also praising God.

5.3.4 Daybreak

The rising of the sun in *verse 22* is similar to *lines 21-22*. In the psalm the thought is expressed forcibly and concisely, while in the hymn the lines suffer from redundancy, and the main idea, that at sunrise men go to their work, is shoved into the background by the mention of various trivialities, such as their awaking, standing on their feet, washing and putting on their clothes (Buttenwieser 1969:159).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Verse 22 “The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens”.	Line 21 “At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon”, line 22 “Dost shine as Aton by day”.

Psalm 104:22 sketches the action of the lions when the sun rises. Lines 21 and 22 of the Great Aton Hymn describes what happens to the day or the earth when the sun rises.

5.3.5 Labour

“Man goes out to his work” in *verse 23* which is similar to *line 30* “The whole land performs its labour”. In both Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, they make the

identical point that when the sun rises people go out to do their work (Day 2013:214). In these two verses (22 and 23) of the psalm the beasts of the forest work during the night while man sleeps, and when the sun has risen the lions go to sleep in their dens while man goes out to work (Gressmann 1926:19).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Verse 23 “Then man goes out to his work, to his labour until evening”.	Line 30 “The whole land performs its labour”.

Verse 23 of Psalm 104 only describes that man labours, while the Great Aton Hymn in line 30 gives a broader picture, referring to the whole land.

5.3.6 Manifold divine works

Verse 24 “How many are your works” compares well with line 52 “How manifold is that which thou hast made”. In both passages there is a remarkable similarity in wording between the statements of wonder at the large number of things that the deity has made (Day 2013:215). The first part of the thought in the psalm is practically identical with that of the hymn; while the second part is altogether different (Buttenwieser 1969:160). Weigall (1911:155) also compares *lines 52-55 with verse 24*, concentrating in lines 53-54 on the fact that Aton was alone while he was making things, and also praising Aton. Psalm 104:24 forms an even better parallel with the Aton hymn when it is compared to lines 52-54, and not only to line 52.

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Verse 24 “How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures”.	Line 52 “How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view”!

Psalm 104:24 and the Great Aton Hymn line 52 both agree that many things were made. Psalm 104 refers specifically to creatures, meaning live animals, but the Great Aton Hymn does not specify what was made, only that it was made in secret.

5.3.7 Ships

Verses 25-26 are parallel to lines 37-40. Both texts make reference to ships, which appears strange in a creation poem. It is however clear from the context that the reason that ships are mentioned in the hymn, is that they are a sign of the human activity that occurs during the hours of daylight, after the sun has risen (Day 2013:215-216). The appearance of the ships might link with the interweaving of the needs of humanity. Sailors certainly have to look to Yahweh for their food (Goldingay 2008:191-2). While the fish which leap in the river (line39), are compared to verse 25 where the sea that is teeming with creatures; the ships in the Nile (line 37) are compared to the ships in verse 26.

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
<p>Verse 25 “There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number – living things both large and small”.</p> <p>Verse 26 “There the ships go to and fro, and the leviathan, which you formed to frolic there”.</p>	<p>Line 39 “The fish in the river leap before thee”. Line 40 “For thy rays are in the midst of the sea”.</p> <p>Line 37 “Ships sail upstream and downstream alike. Line 38 “ For every route is open at thine appearing</p>

Psalm 104:25 depicts a general picture, while lines 39 and 40 from the Great Aton Hymn are much more specific. While Psalm 104:26 and the Great Aton Hymn in lines 37and 38 are practically identical, except for the leviathan only appearing in Psalm 104.

5.3.8 Provision of food

Verses 27-28 are comparable to lines 59-60. Both passages refer to the deity’s provision of food for all. However, while the hymn relates this specifically to humans, the positioning of the passage in the psalm means that it refers now to living creatures generally, human beings as well as beasts (Day 2013:217). Verse 27 from the psalm is

specifically compared to line 60 from the hymn; while verse 28 from the psalm compares well with line 59 from the hymn (Allen 1983:29).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
<p>Verse 27 “These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time”.</p> <p>Verse 28 “When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things”.</p>	<p>Line 60 “Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned”.</p> <p>Line 59 ‘Thou dost set each man in his place and supply his needs”;</p>

Both Psalm 104:27-28 and the Great Aton Hymn lines 59 and 60 show that their Deity provides food for everyone. Psalm 104 does not specify here who is receiving the food, while the Aton hymn proclaims that man is receiving the food. Psalm 104:28 is very specific on how the food will be given, while the Aton hymn does not mention anything about how the food is to be given.

5.3.9 Life and death

While verses 29-30 are similar to lines 99-100, both passages depict the deity as the source of both the life and death of his creatures. However, whereas in the hymn the sun is the source of life, in the psalm this is replaced by the divine spirit (Day 2013:217). Verse 29 compares well with line 100, and verse 30 compares well with line 99.

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
<p>Verse 29 “When you <i>hide your face</i>, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust”.</p> <p>Verse 30 “When you send your spirit, they are <i>created</i>, and you renew the face of the earth”.</p>	<p>Line 99 “When thou <i>hast risen</i>, they live”; Line 100 “When thou <i>dost set</i>, they die”.</p>

Both sources tell the same story. In Psalm 104:29-30 however there is tension because of the people are terrified, while the Aton hymn is a more gentle rendition.

5.3.10 Additional themes

Apart from the parallels in Psalm 104:20 – 30 with the corresponding lines in the Hymn to Aton, there are also *other minor points of comparison*. These are words or thoughts that are used by both poems, although not always in the same context. Some of the words or thoughts are the following: *mountains, birds, light, pasture, seasons, and hands*.

5.3.10.1 Mountains

Line 72 from the hymn and stichs 6b and 8a from the psalm seem to indicate some kind of literary relationship (Allen 1983:29). In the ancient world, the mountains symbolized the pillars of the earth that stabilized it over the chaotic waters (Broyles 1999:209).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Stich 6b “the waters stood above the mountains”, and stich 8a “they flowed over the mountains”,	Line 72 “That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea”.

Psalm 104:6b exposes that the water is from the deep, but that is still very vague. In the Aton hymn in line 69, specific mention is made of the Nile in the sky providing this water. Which means that it was the rain that was causing the waves on the mountains.

5.3.10.2 Birds

Although Buitendijk (1969:159) does not regard stichs 12ab from the psalm and line 33 from the hymn as parallel, they have been compared in the same table here.

Aton was the joy which caused “the birds to fly from their nests” (line 33) (Weigall 1911:119).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Stichs 12ab “The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches”. Stich 17a “there the birds make their nests”.	Line 33 “The birds which fly from their nests”.

In Psalm 104 as well as in the Aton hymn, birds seem to signify happiness. The birds are either singing, making their nests or just flying around.

5.3.10.3 Light

Both poems begin with the mention of light; the Great Aton Hymn begins with sunrise, and Psalm 104 with Yahweh wrapping himself in light. Day (2013:219) is of the opinion that the light referred to in Psalm 104:2 is not sunlight, but the light from lightning, he refers to this as a dubious parallel, which should probably be rejected.

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Stich 2a “He wraps himself in light as with a garment”,	Line 1 “Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon of heaven”.

Psalm 104:1-4 are about Yahweh himself, the light with which he wraps himself in seems to be a gentle light. While the light of sunrise in the Aton hymn is definitely a gentle light. Both compositions here are therefore referring to light that is still and calm.

5.3.10.4 Pasture

Verses 12-14, 16-18 from the psalm and lines 31-36 from the hymn are to be compared in language and sentiment (Blackman 1926:178-180). Quite apart from the *very general nature* of this parallel, it is abundantly clear that the Hymn to Aton is

praising the role of the sun with regard to nature, whereas the psalm is speaking of Yahweh’s provision of rain. (Wilson J A 1969:370)

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
<p>Verse 12 “The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches”. Verse 17 “There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers”.</p> <p>Verse 13 “he waters the mountains from the upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work. Verse 18 “The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax”.</p> <p>Verse 14 “He makes grass grow for the cattle”, and plants for people to cultivate – bringing forth food from their hearts”.</p> <p>Verse 16 The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted”.</p>	<p>Line 33 “The birds which fly from their nests, their wings are (spread) in adoration to thy soul”.</p> <p>Line 31 “All the beasts are satisfied with their pasture”.</p> <p>Line 32 “Trees and plants are verdant”.</p>

Although Blackman sketches that Psalm 104:12-14, 16-18 form a parallel with the Great Aton Hymn lines 31-36, it is not an obvious parallel. In Psalm 104:12-14, 16-18 Yahweh is being praised for the rain he supplies which gives life to all the plants and animals. While in the Aton hymn, Aton is also praised and a picture is drawn of how pleased all the plants and animals are at Aton’s rising in the morning.

5.3.10.5 Seasons

The sole object of the writer of Psalm 104 in speaking of the moon and the sun are for the purpose of pointing out that, while the wild animals are astir at night, man is engaged in work by day” (Buttenwieser 1969:164).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Verse 19 “He made the moon to mark off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down”.	Line 80 “Thou makest the seasons to nourish all that thou hast made”.

Psalm 104:19 and line 80 in the Great Aton Hymn are saying exactly the same thing. Yahweh made the seasons in Psalm 104 and Aton made the seasons in the Great Aton Hymn. The difference being that in psalm 104 the sun is credited with knowing, hinting that the sun might be alive. In the Aton Hymn there is no hinting at Aton being alive, because Aton is the sun god and according to Akhenaton very much alive.

5.3.10.6 Hands

“Hands” is an interesting idea that the two religions have in common. Compare stich 28b “when you open your *hand*, they are satisfied with good things” with the images on the stone walls at el-Amarna where the sun (Aton) has rays coming down to Akhenaton and Nefertiti, with a *hand* at the end of some of the rays which symbolize the giving of blessings and favour to Akhenaton and Nefertiti (Walton *et al* 2000:549).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Stich 28b “when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things”	Images on the stone walls at Amarna where the sun (Aton) has rays coming down to Akhenaton and Nefertiti, with a hand at the end of some of the rays which bless Akhenaton and Nefertiti.

In both Psalm 104 and in the Great Aton Hymn the hand is depicted as bringing good things. In the Psalm the hand brings good things, also food, while in the Aton hymn the hand blesses Akhenaton and Nefertiti, but no one else. The hand in Psalm 104 is good for all living creatures, while the hand in the Aton hymn only blesses two people, Akhenaton and Nefertiti.

5.3.11 Synthesis

As shown above there are many similarities between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, some similarities of words, and some similarities of ideas. However, the similarity of words are usually not found in the same ideas. For example, the word ‘seasons’ that is used in Psalm 104:19 and also in line 80 of the Great Aton Hymn, are used in different ideas in the two compositions. In Psalm 104:19 “Yahweh made the moon to mark off the seasons”, while in the Aton hymn in line 80 “Aton makes the seasons to nourish all that he has made”.

5.4 Differences

5.4.1 Introduction

Although the two poems seem to be very similar, yet they also differ from each other (Westermann 1989:12). The differences between the two texts are more important than the similarities (Allen 1983:30). The fact that there *are* differences is the proof that they are separate compilations. The dissimilarities between the two poems are far more evident than their similarities (Kroll 1987:302). The differences between the two poems have not so much to do with specific lines as an overall perspective (Mc Cullough 1955:550-557).

Although the most important **differences** have to do with *Yahweh* and *Aton*, Deity’s origin, Deity’s providence, Deity’s love and Deity’s relationship role, the following differences have been identified as well, role of the sun, role of the night, role of the universe, origin of the rain and location of worship.

5.4.2 Role of the sun

Probably the most outstanding difference between the Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104 is where Aton (the sun) is worshipped by the Egyptians, while the Israelites worship the Maker. I.e. the sun is treated as an object in Psalm 104, while it is treated as the subject in the Great Aton Hymn (Kidner 1975:367-368).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
The Israelites worship the maker of the sun. i.e. the sun is treated as an object.	The Egyptians worship the sun itself. i.e. the sun is treated as the subject.

5.4.3 Deity's origin

Line 2 “O living Aton, thou who wast the first to live” i.e. Aton was created; while Yahweh has always been, He was not created.

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Yahweh has always been, he was not created.	Line 2 “O living Aton, thou who wast the first to live” i.e. Aton was created.

5.4.4 Deity's providence

In the psalm Yahweh's providence extends beyond the daylight hours; Israel's God rules over the night as well as the day. While Aton is only present during the day (Gillingham 1994:210).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Yahweh's providence extend beyond the daylight hours; Israel's God rules over the night as well as the day.	Aton is only present during the day

5.4.5 Deity's love

The God of the Israelites loves all people. Aton's love appears to have been destined for Akhenaton alone (Hornung 1983:201).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
The God of the Israelites loves all people; refer to John 3:16a “For God so loved the	Aton's love appears to have been destined for Akhenaton alone. Line 93

world...”.	“Thou art in my heart”; Line 94 “There is no other that knows thee”.
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5.4.6 Deity’s relationship role

Yahweh is directly in contact with all people. Aton requires an intermediary in order to come into contact with mankind, and Akhenaton was the intermediary (Hornung 1983:230).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Yahweh is directly in contact with all people, refer to Proverbs 20:24a “A man’s steps are directed by the Lord.”	Aton requires an intermediary in order to come into contact with mankind, and Akhenaton was the intermediary ⁵⁰²

5.4.7 Role of the night

In the Great Aton Hymn the night is the result of the sun’s going away. When the Aton sets in the West, death, decay, confusion, dread befall the earth. The god is absent. Will he return (Kraus 1989:302)? But in the psalm Yahweh spreads darkness over the earth, while he himself remains unchanged. Stich 19b “The sun knows when to go down.” Stich 20a “You bring darkness, it becomes night.” For the author of Psalm 104 darkness was made by God. Darkness is not because of the absence of the sun (Harrelson 1975:21-22).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Stich 19b “the sun knows when to go down”. Verse 20 “You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the	Line 11 “When thou dost set on the western horizon”, Line 12 “The earth is in darkness, resembling death”.

⁵⁰² Hornung 1983:248) explains that the faithful of the Amarna period prayed at home, in front of an altar that contained a picture of Akhenaton and his family. Akhenaton however, prayed directly to Aton. Akhenaton is the intermediary between the people and Aton. As it is stated in the Amarna-period hymns “there is no god but Aton, and Akhenaton is his sole prophet.”

forest prowl”.	
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5.4.8 Role of the universe

Akhenaton declared that Aton would be the only god in Egypt and in all the “world”. The known world of that time stretched from the Grecian Islands in the West, to the northern part of the Euphrates in the East. While Yahweh is God of the universe including the planet earth (Baikie 1926:304).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Yahweh is God of the universe, which includes the earth. Anderson B W (1983:160) refers to verses 27-30 ⁵⁰³ , and proclaims that the whole order of the cosmos is radically dependent on God, the creator.	Aton is god of the world. The known world at that time stretched from the Grecian Islands in the West, to the northern part of the Euphrates in the East. Line 54 “Thou didst create the earth according to thy will”.

5.4.9 Origin of the rain

In Psalm 104 attention is given to the rugged mountains with their majestic cedars and wildlife; and all this depends on rainfall (vss 13, 16-18). Egypt, with the Great Aton Hymn, never flourished from rain but from the Nile River (Gerstenberger 2001:223).

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Verse 13 “He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.	Line 63 “Thou dost make the Nile in the underworld”. Line 70 “For thou hast set a Nile in the sky”.

⁵⁰³ Verse 27 “These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time”. Verse 28 “When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things”. Verse 29 “When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to dust”. Verse 30 “When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth”.

5.4.10 Location of worship

Aton could only be worshipped inside one of the temples that had been built for him. The God of Psalm 104 can be worshipped anywhere.

Psalm 104	Great Aton Hymn
Yahweh can be worshipped anywhere.	Aton could only be worshipped inside one of the temples that had been built for him.

5.5 Synthesis

There is no consensus among scholars about whether Psalm 104 is dependent on the Great Aton Hymn or not⁵⁰⁴. Even though Psalm 104 might be a much younger composition than the Great Aton Hymn [the two poems are separated by more than half a millennium of history] (Aton was probably composed *circa* 1350 BCE, while Psalm 104 (or parts thereof) could have been composed in king David's time, *circa* 1000 BCE) it is quite possible that the poet of Psalm 104 could have come into contact with the Great Aton Hymn.

With a cursory look at the texts of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, they very much resemble each other⁵⁰⁵, but when looking more closely, there are actually great differences between them (Westermann 1989:12). The fact that there *are* differences is actually the proof that they are separate compositions, for different contexts in different time periods.

Most scholars today doubt any direct relationship between the two texts, ascribing the similarities in language to the similar themes of the two poems (Berlin 2005:75). Their themes have to do with nature, and the caring of Yahweh and Aton for their

⁵⁰⁴ Berlin (2005:75) explains that, although there are many similarities between the two poems, the relationship of the hymn to the psalm is difficult to ascertain.

⁵⁰⁵ Sugden (1928 :159) writes that there are many close parallels, both in thought and expression, between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn.

respective creations. Even if the poet of Psalm 104 did come into contact with the Great Aton Hymn, he might well have been inspired by it. It is quite probable that he wrote an independent poem, inspired by the traditions, motifs and imagery of the Great Aton Hymn.

How do the similarities and the differences between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, contribute to a dating of Psalm 104?

Although it is possible, as Mc Cullough (1955:551) states, that the resemblances between the Aton hymn and Psalm 104 can be accounted for by their common monotheistic approach to the world of nature, this does not assist in determining the possible date for the composition of Psalm 104.

The Great Aton Hymn was composed in Pharaoh Akhenaton's time, who probably ruled from *circa* 1350 to 1334 BCE, while Psalm 104 was composed some time after the Aton hymn already existed. It is not known when Psalm 104 was composed, but we do know that it was not before the songs of Moses (Exod 15:1-18) and Miriam (Exod 15:20-21), during the period 1279-1212 BCE, when Rameses II was reigning in Egypt. Psalm 104 was therefore composed after the songs of Moses and Miriam, by which time the Aton hymn had already seen the light.

If it is possible that king David⁵⁰⁶ was the author of the beginning of Psalm 104, as it is postulated earlier in this dissertation, the composition of Psalm 104 could possibly have been between *circa* 1279 BCE and 1000 BCE.

There are a few verses in Psalm 104, that according to Spieckermann and Köckert, were part of the original form of Psalm 104. And these verses have correspondences with some of the lines of the Great Aton Hymn. It is possible that these lines of the Great Aton Hymn might have inspired the author of Psalm 104 while writing his original poem.

⁵⁰⁶ Mc Cullough (1955:550) expresses that as praise of the Lord often springs from some immediate deliverance in which the divine hand is seen, we cannot rule out the possibility that the psalmist has been moved by some such personal experience to sing.

The following are the verses in Psalm 104, which are mentioned by both Spieckermann and Köckert, that have parallels in the Great Aton Hymn.

Psalm 104:16 is similar to line 32 of the Great Aton Hymn.

Psalm 104	The Great Aton Hymn
Verse 16 The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.	Line 32 Trees and plants are verdant.

Psalm 104 :19-23 corresponds to lines 11-12, 17, 21, 30 of the Great Aton Hymn.

Psalm 104	The Great Aton Hymn
Verses 19 -23	Lines 11-12, 17, 21, 30
:19b the sun knows when to go down	Line 11 When thou dost set on the western horizon.
:20 You bring darkness, it becomes night,	Line 12 The earth is in darkness, resembling death.
:21 The lions roar for their prey	Line 17 Every lion has come forth from his den,
:22 The sun rises, and they steal away	Line 21 At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon,
:23 Then man goes out to his work, to is labour until evening	Line 30 The whole land performs its labour.

There is no conclusive proof that the similarities and the differences between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn could in any way contribute to the possible dating of when Psalm 104 was composed.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn have many ideas and words in common. This however does not mean that either one copied from the other. This study has come to the conclusion that both these poems made use of ideas and images that were in circulation at the time that these poems were composed.

From the available literature that was studied it would seem probable that Psalm 104 as well as the Great Aton Hymn were composed between *circa* 1350-1334 BCE and *circa* 1000-960 BCE. Pharaoh Akhenaton the probable composer of the Great Aton Hymn lived during the years *circa* 1350-1334 BCE, while king David who could have been the composer of part of Psalm 104 lived during the years, *circa* 1000-960 BCE.

6.1.1 Actuality and relevance

The two poems that were chosen for this study are Psalm 104, which is part of the canon of the Hebrew Bible, and the Great Aton Hymn, which is an Egyptian poem, and therefore an extra-biblical text. Both these are poems of praise. Psalm 104 praises Yahweh, while the Great Aton Hymn praises his sun-god, Aton. Psalm 104 opens and closes with praise.

When reading Psalm 104, it is impossible not to praise Yahweh. He created everything and then gave all his living creatures everything they needed. The Great Aton Hymn praises Aton, the sun-god, in Egypt for everything that he 'created' and also for his providing for all of his creatures.

6.1.2 Research problem

After the discovery of the fourteenth-century Great Aton Hymn at Tell el-Amarna, the question arose as to what its influence could have been on Psalm 104, if any. What was the relationship between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn?

In both of these poems there were similar concepts and wordings. They both made use of images that had been in circulation for many centuries in the Ancient Near East. Baikie (1926:321) wrote that it had to be considered that such ideas, which occurred, in both the Great Aton Hymn and in Psalm 104, are natural to men of all lands and times in contemplation of the wonders of nature and life.

Which one, of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, was influenced by the other? As was discussed in the research problems, Psalm 104 was written later than the Great Aton Hymn, Spieckermann and Köckert have explained that Psalm 104 developed gradually, and as seen at the end of chapter five the Great Aton Hymn was not of much help to date Psalm 104. Seybold (1990:207) is of the opinion that the two poems are autonomous constructions, each with its own importance.

6.1.3 Aims and objectives

Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn were chosen as the objects of research for this dissertation. In order to address the research problem the objectives of this research were:

- to do a literature review on Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn;
- to do an analysis and an exegesis of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn;
- to compare Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, and to identify their similarities and differences.
- to provide a synthesis regarding a comparison of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn.

6.1.4 Methodology

This was a literature and an exegetical study of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn. For the exegesis the following methodological aspects were addressed:

For the diachronic analysis their historical and literary context were exposed. The historical elements helped with the dating of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn. The literary context showed where Psalm 104 fits into the *Psalter* as well as into Book IV; and why it fits specifically between Psalms 101 and 106. Tradition historical elements of both poems have been uncovered.

For the synchronic analysis the form and structure of both songs were considered. They are both poems of praise. To discern the structure of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, they were both divided into stanzas, which were analyzed in detail according to grammatical, stylistic and semantic criteria.

Three different translations of Psalm 104 were compared, to show how they differ and how they agree with one another. Five different translations of the Great Aton Hymn were compared to show how they differ and how they agree with one another.

6.1.5 Chapter division

The chapter division was as follows.

Chapter one: Here a roadmap was drawn of the work that would be undertaken in this study. A general introduction to various aspects of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn was briefly discussed. Also problem settings, aims, objectives, methodology, hypothesis, chapter divisions.

Chapter two: The literature that was used in this study was outlined by investigating terminology and orthography at three problem statements. The first research problem has to do with the possible dates when Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn could have been composed. The second research problem has to do with the reciprocating influence that Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, could have had, or could not have had on each other. The third research

problem. Look at the content of Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn, Were they composed in ‘one sitting’ or process, or did they gradually come together? Did the text gradually grow to where we find them today?

Chapter three: A diachronic and synchronic analysis of Psalm 104 is undertaken. For the micro structural study of Psalm 104, it was divided into eight stanzas, and each stanza was discussed in detail.

Chapter four: A diachronic and synchronic analysis of the Great Aton Hymn is given. For the micro structural study of the Great Aton Hymn, it was divided into fourteen stanzas, and each stanza was discussed in detail.

Chapter five: The similarities and differences between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn are discussed, as well as possible reasons for these similarities and differences.

Chapter six: The concluding chapter where a synthesis is given and suggestions are made for further study.

6.2 Research results

In chapter one this study was introduced with a background question of why Psalm 104, which was composed by an Israelite, and the Great Aton Hymn which was composed by an Egyptian, could possibly have come into contact with one another.

The question is asked, whether either of these two compositions had any influence on the other one. It is shown in this study that they did not affect each other, although they probably had access to the same source material that had been in circulation for many centuries.

It can not be concluded from the content of the two poems, which one was written earlier and which one later. It is possible that the Great Aton Hymn could have been written by Pharaoh Akhenaton who reigned from *circa* 1350-1334 BCE. In this study it has been shown that Psalm 104 could have been written partly by king David, who ruled *circa* 1000-960 BCE. From these dates it is possible that the Great Aton Hymn was written first and that Psalm 104 was probably written many hundreds of years later.

In chapter two the literature that was used during this study was discussed. This was done by outlining the research problems that were identified. The first research problem had to do with the possible dates, when Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn could have been composed. In this study it was taken as a possibility that Psalm 104 could have been composed during the pre-exilic period of the Israelite history. This view point agrees with Craigie (1974:19), Day (2000:99) and Buitendijk (1969:165).

The second research problem that was discussed, had to do with which poem influenced the other; or was there any influence in either direction? Was the Great Aton Hymn influenced by Psalm 104, or was Psalm 104 influenced by the Great Aton Hymn; and if there was any influence, was it direct or indirect?

The third research problem that was discussed, was speculating on whether these two poems were composed in one process, or did they come together and grew gradually. As a result of the work of Spieckermann (1989:46-48) and Köckert (2000:275) it was shown that Psalm 104, as we have it today, came together through various stages. According to Weigall (1911:157) and Breasted (1934:281-286) Akhenaton could have written his hymn over a period of two to three years, or even longer.

Chapter three comprises the diachronic and the synchronic analyses of Psalm 104. For the diachronic analysis the historical aspects, namely the social and cultural contexts, and the literary and rhetorical contexts were outlined. For the *historical aspects* the formation of the *Psalter* was delineated. Why was Psalm 104 at one stage a part of Book III of the *Psalter*, and how did it come to be part of Book IV of the *Psalter*. The composition of Book IV was also outlined. According to Hossfeld and Zenger (2011:138) Book IV appears to have been formed in stages. The first stage being when Psalms 101-106 were assembled into three pairs of two each. Being Psalms 101-102, 103-104 and 105-106. Here Psalm 104 was part of the second pair, i.e. Psalms 103-104.

The *social and cultural contexts* were also uncovered as far as possible. Because there are three sources that credit David as the author of Psalm 104, David is discussed in this section. David ruled from *circa* 1000-960 BCE, which means it was in the Iron I

(1200-900 BCE) and Iron IIA (1000-900 BCE) periods. Therefore the people living in this period were also discussed in this section. The *literary contexts* of Psalms 101-106 was examined to find out where and how Psalms 101-106 are arranged next to each other. The *rhetorical context* was examined to explain why Psalm 104 is placed where it is in the *Psalter*.

In the *synchronic analysis*, the *form*, the *structure* and the *development* of Psalm 104 are exposed. Psalm 104 is a Song of Praise, which has been divided into eight stanzas. The criteria used for dividing the psalm into stanzas are the following: First the content of each verse was investigated; then the pronouns were used (singular/plural; 1st or 3rd person), and finally the tenses of the verbs were used. After the eight stanzas had been identified, the figures of speech in each stanza were outlined in detail, as well as the function of each kind of figure of speech. Finally the *development* or the progression of the text through the stanzas (Howard V 1992:176-180) was discussed.

Concluding chapter three, the *traditions* that occur in Psalm 104 were identified, as well as their function or meaning in the psalm. The traditions that were referred to, are the story of Moses and the Israelites, from where they started at the Reed Sea in Egypt, up to where the Israelites enter Canaan under the leadership of Joshua.

In chapter four the *diachronic* and the *synchronic* analysis of the Great Aton Hymn was undertaken. For the diachronic analysis the *historical background*, the *social* and the *cultural aspects*, as well as the *documentation* of the Great Aton Hymn were examined.

For the *historical background* the development of the Great Aton Hymn was unfolded. It is not an original composition (Breasted 1959:319), as previous pharaohs had similar hymns (Baikie 1926:306). Some examples are given of a few of the hymns that were written for the various sun-gods in Egyptian history. These examples are helpful to see where Akhenaton apparently acquired many of the ideas he used, while composing the Great Aton Hymn.

A few of the similarities between the Great Aton Hymn (*circa* 1350-1335 BCE), and the hymns to Atum (early prehistory), the hymns to Ra (*circa* 2895-2680 BCE), the

hymns to Amun (*circa* 1479-1425 BCE), and the hymns to Amun-Ra (*circa* 2680-2540 BCE) are given, to show that the Great Aton Hymn has many similarities with the hymns of the other Egyptian sun-gods.

For the *social* and *cultural perspectives* the pharaoh Akhenaton and his city Akhetaton and the people living at Akhetaton were discussed.

For the *documentation* of the Great Aton Hymn, the only existing copy of this hymn on the western stone wall in the tomb of Ay, at Akhetaton (today known as Tell el-Amarna), was discussed. The Great Aton Hymn is hewn out of the rock in hieroglyphic writing. The study suggests that other courtiers probably also had this hymn hewn out of the rock in their tombs, but that this is the only one that has survived through the ages.

As Akhenaton regarded himself as the only one capable of making contact with his sun-god, Aton, the whole Atonist religion was based on the royal family. The ordinary people living and working at Akhetaton, could only contact their sun-god through Akhenaton.

Having decided that there should be a monotheistic sun-god in the place of the polytheistic pantheon that had been in place for many thousands of years, a hymn had to be composed to proclaim the greatness of the new sun-god, Aton (Breasted 1959:329). The Great Aton Hymn was probably the earliest truly monotheistic hymn that the world had produced (Peet 1931:78).

For the *synchronic analysis*, the form and the structure of the Great Aton Hymn was examined. The Great Aton Hymn is described as a hymn, which can be divided into an introduction, a body and a conclusion.

For the *structure* of the Great Aton Hymn, five translations were compared. They were the following: Breasted (1934:281-286), Davies (1908:29-31), Hays (2014:357-361), Lichtheim (1997:44-46) and Williams R J (1958:145-148). The translation by Williams R J (1958:145-148) was used for dividing the Great Aton Hymn into fourteen stanzas, by using the content of the lines. The original hymn that was found

on the stone wall in the tomb of Ay, had not been divided into stanzas (Breasted 1934:281).

The introduction and the conclusion of the Great Aton Hymn are only found in the translations of Davies (1908:29), Hays (2014:357 and 361) and Lichtheim (1997:45). In analyzing the stanzas, their figures of speech were identified, and then the functions of the different figures of speech were given.

In chapter five the *similarities* and the *differences* between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn were compared. Day (2013:212) explains that there is currently no consensus amongst scholars about how exactly the parallels between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn should be explained. They probably have similarities because Israel was throughout her entire history culturally and politically a part of the larger world around her (Bright 1967:127).

In the original Great Aton Hymn, in Ay's tomb, the lines of the hymn were not numbered. Two modern scholars have numbered the lines in their translations. They are R J Williams and C B Hays. In this study the line numbering by R J Williams have been used.

The greatest concentration of *similarities* between the Great Aton Hymn and Psalm 104, are found between verses 20-30 of Psalm 104, and various lines from the Great Aton Hymn, which compare roughly to lines 11-30, 37-40, 52-60 and 99-100. Day (2013:223) is convinced that Psalm 104 is indeed dependent on the Great Aton Hymn, but that this dependence is confined to verses 20-30.

Both poems write about creation. The sun is the central point of creation, because without sun there can be no life. So in the Great Aton Hymn life without Aton is not possible. In Psalm 104 Yahweh creates everything and all life is dependent on Yahweh. These two poems are most similar in those verses or lines where all of life is dependent on the presence and actions of their deity.

Psalm 104	The Great Aton Hymn
Verse 20	Lines 11, 12, 19 and 20 refer to Aton setting, and the earth becoming dark.
Verse 21	Lines 17 and 33. The lions and the birds are praying.
Verse 22	Lines 21 and 22. Aton rises at daybreak and it becomes light.
Verse 23	Line 30 At daybreak everyone goes to work.
Verse 24	Lines 52 Praising Aton for his creations.
Verse 25	Lines 39 and 40 The fish in the sea.
Verse 26	Lines 37 and 38 Ships sailing up and down.
Verse 27	Line 60 Each one gets his food at the proper time.
Verse 28	Line 59 The deity gives the food.
Verse 29	Line 100 When the deity is not visible, the people die.
Verse 30	Line 99 When the deity is visible the whole world lives.

Allen (1983:30) proclaims that the *differences* between the two poems are more important than their similarities. The main differences between the two poems have to do with Yahweh and the sun-god Aton. Buttenwieser (1969:182-183) is of the opinion that the difference in the *spiritual outlook* between Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn is the greatest reason for their differences.

Chapter six is the conclusion.

6.3 Hypothesis

A comparison between the poems, Psalm 104 and the Great Aton Hymn illustrates that they are both different texts, written in different contexts and time periods, and proclaiming the praise of different deities Yahweh and Aton.

These texts are not dependent on each other in the scriptural written tradition. Similarities and differences have shown their independence, but resemblances could be ascribed to the oral tradition in religious concepts.

At the time when Akhenaton wrote the Great Aton Hymn, Canaan was an Egyptian province and as such was under the direct influence of Egypt. According to Buitenwieser (1969:162-3) Akhenaton broadcasted his hymn throughout his empire, which then automatically included Canaan where Psalm 104 was most probably written.

The source material that was used by the poet of Psalm 104, and also by Akhenaton, was probably freely available to all the poets at that time. There was therefore no need for the poet of Psalm 104 to copy the poem of Akhenaton in any way. Each poem is an independent composition.

6.4 Suggestions for further study

In this study Psalm 104 was compared to the Great Aton Hymn. Despite the fact that the two poems were written many hundreds of years apart from each other, they have many similarities. There is so far no consensus among scholars why this should be so.

It is however possible that many of the ideas and thoughts that are shared in these two poems, were available to the broader poetic population in the Ancient Near East, and during the time of the Old Testament. In order to bring clarity to this thought, it is suggested that further study should be carried out. By comparing other ANE poetry with poems from the Old Testament period, it is possible that their parallels might help to shed light on the common source material circulating in the ANE during the many years during which these poems were written.

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SUMMARY

It is not known who the authors of either of these two poems are. In this dissertation the credit for writing the great Atonhymn is given to Pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton). Although Psalm 104 is untitled in the Hebrew Bible, there are three sources that credit David as the author. These are a manuscript from Qumran, the Septuagint, and Wilson's argument (see page 37).

The Atonhymn worships the sun, while Psalm 104 worships the creator of the sun. Apart from this fundamental difference there are also many other important differences that have been identified. These include Deity's origin, Deity's providence, Deity's love, and Deity's relationship role.

The hymn and the psalm are very similar in structure, phraseology, and style. There are many different opinions as to why there are so many similarities between the hymn and the psalm. Although they are separated by language, cultural context, and by more than half a millennium of history, it seems that the hymn did somehow come to the attention of the biblical poet.

There is no consensus today among scholars about whether Psalm 104 is dependent on the great Atonhymn or not.

For the diachronic analysis of Psalm 104, the following aspects are studied. The historical aspects of the *Psalter*, Book IV, and Psalm 104. The social and cultural contexts of David and the addressees, and the literary and redactional contexts of Psalm 101-106.

During the synchronic analysis of Psalm 104, the psalm is divided into eight stanzas by using their content, pronouns, and verbs. In the content analysis of the stanzas, their different figures of speech are identified.

For the diachronic analysis of the great Atonhymn, the following aspects are studied. The historical background to show that the great Atonhymn is not an original

composition. The social and cultural perspectives surrounding the great Atonhymn, as well as the documentation of the hymn.

During the synchronic analysis of the great Atonhymn, it is divided into fourteen stanzas by using its content. In the content analysis of the stanzas their figures of speech are identified.

In the final chapter suggestions for further study are made.

KEY TERMS

- 1 Aton-Psalm 104
- 2 Akhenaton
- 3 Tell el-Amarna
- 4 Sungod
- 5 Amenhotep IV
- 6 Psalm of praise
- 7 Creation
- 8 Qumran
- 9 Book IV of *Psalter*
- 10 David-Psalm 104