

## Psalms 111-112

### Translation with Prosodic Annotations

The translation offered below is designed to enhance appreciation of the poetry and prosody of the underlying Hebrew text. The bulk of the notations provided relate to the operation of the general rule and the length rule of the text model I have developed.

Even if one possesses little or no knowledge of Hebrew, the translations will prove helpful in getting a sense of how ancient Hebrew poetry works. The device of attaching clusters of words in English translation to be given one dominant accent serves to point to underlying prosodic units in the Hebrew. Minimal use of capitalization and the lack of punctuation are intentional. Capitalization serves to mark the onset of a macrounit of prosody, often equivalent to a “stanza” of the text model.

The goal has been to furnish a global approximation of the poetry and prosody of the Hebrew text, even if the results are necessarily piecemeal. The rich texture of the original simply cannot be mapped onto a translation in another language except in fits and starts. I sometimes retain, in imitation of the Hebrew, examples of chiasm, inversion, and ellipsis which perforce result in a less idiomatic rendering.

It is not possible, of course, to reproduce every case of two stresses in a row in the original or to suppress every case of two stresses in a row in translation without analogy in the original. Nevertheless, some attempt has been made to mimic the overall frequency of stress clash in the Hebrew text. Some attempt has been made to represent shorter words in Hebrew with shorter words in English, and longer with longer, but no attempt has been made to avoid dactyls and first class paeons in English, though of course they are non-existent in Hebrew.

Psalm 111:10 is the pivot of the larger composition. It concludes the preceding even as it introduces the following. Its unique function is marked by its unique prosodic shape, 4:(3:3). ‘His acclaim’ in 111:10 may be understood in two different ways. Yahweh’s acclaim of those who fear him might be meant. This is the *lectio difficilior*. Or the fear of Yahweh as acclaim of Yahweh by human beings might be meant. The former possibility accords with the apparent parallelism ‘high regard’ / ‘his acclaim.’ The sense of human acclaim of Yahweh accords with the use of the expression elsewhere. On either construal, the expression appears to form an *inclusio* with ‘I will praise you’ of 111:1.

#### Symbols

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↯	A strophe made up of three lines
↯	1:(1:1) in structure
↯	↯ concludes a strophe; ↯ a sub stanza; ↯ a stanza; ↯ a section
2:(2:2)	A line consisting of three versets, each of which contains two stress units, the last two of which form a pair
40/90/216 17/6/2/1	A poetic composition made up of 40 lines, 90 versets, and 216 stress units, with a total of 17 strophes, 6 stanzas, and 2 sections

## Psalms 111-112

1	☞	I will praise Yahweh with a whole heart	in the council and assembly of the true	3:3
2	☞	the deeds of Yahweh are magnificent	sought after by all who delight in them	<u>3:3</u>
3	☞	His work is splendid and majestic	his beneficence lasts forever	
		he's won renown by his wonders		(3:3):3
5		Yahweh is good and kind	he gives spoils to those who fear him	
	☞	he will remember his covenant for all time		(3:3):3
6		He showed his people the potency of his deeds	bestowing on them the heritage of nations	
7	☞	the deeds of his hands are sure and just		(4:4):4
8	☞	All his orders are sure	well-founded forever and ever	
		performed in surety and truth		(3:3):3
9	☞	He sent redemption to his people	ordained his covenant for all time	
		holy and awesome is his name		(3:3):3
10		The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom	high regard belongs to all who practice them	
	☞	his acclaim lasts forever		<u>(4:3):3</u>
1	☞	Happy the one who fears Yahweh	who greatly delights in his commands	4:3
2	☞	his progeny will be mighty in the land	a blessed generation of the true	<u>4:3</u>
3	☞	Wealth and riches are in his house	his beneficence lasts forever	3:3
4	☞	he shines in the darkness, a light to the true	he is good, kind, and beneficent	<u>4:3</u>
5	☞	It is well with the one who lends generously	who conducts his affairs with equity	4:3
6	☞	for all time he shall not be shaken	remembered for all time is a benefactor	<u>3:4</u>
7	☞	Upon hearing of evil he will not be afraid	his heart is firm, trustful in Yahweh	4:4
8	☞	his heart is steady, he will not fear	till at last he looks down on his foes	<u>4:3</u>
9	☞	Spending freely he gives to the poor	his beneficence lasts forever	
		his horn shall be exalted in honor		(3:3):3
10	☞	The malefactor looks on and is vexed	he gnashes his teeth and melts away	
		the desire of malefactors shall come to nothing		<u>(3:3):3</u>