

# Hebrew Whiteboard

**Biblical Hebrew and the Psalms**

**Psalm 104:1–12**

# Objectives

- 1. Identify verse structure by means of major disjunctive accents.**
- 2. Display verse structure by means of logical line diagramming.**
- 3. Interpret verse structure.**
- 4. Identify grammatical elements and poetic devices.**
- 5. Interpret poetic device function(s).**
- 6. Identify the psalm's structure.**

# Psalm 104:1

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

topical *rebia'*

'*oleh-veyored* = primary disjunctive accent in this verse

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

'*atnach* = secondary disjunctive in this verse

*silluq* = end of v. 1

1 בְּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי

גִּדְלָתָּ מַאֲד

הוֹד וְהַדָּר לְבָשֶׁת:

# Psalm 104:1

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Piel imperat. fs + vocative  
of address (noun + 1cs  
pron. suff.) + dir. obj.

1 בְּרַכֵּי נִפְשֵׁי אֶת־יְהוָה

Vocative of address + Qal perf.  
2ms, characteristic present.

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹרִים

Adverb of intensity.

מְאֹד

Compound adverbial  
accusative, manner.

הוֹד וְהַדָּר

Qal perf. 2ms, characteristic present.

לְבַשְׂתָּ:

# Psalm 104:2

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

עֲזָה-אֹר 2

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive in this verse

כִּשְׁלֵמָה

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary disjunctive

נוֹטָה אֲשֶׁמִּים

*silluq* = end of v. 2

כִּירִיעָה:

# Psalm 104:2

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Qal act. ptcp. ms, characteristic.

עֲטֵה - 2

Adverbial accusative, instrument.

אֹר

Adverbial prep. phrase, comparison.

כַּשֵּׁלְמָה

Qal act. ptcp. ms, characteristic  
+ dir. obj.

נוֹרְהָ לְשֵׁמִים

Adverbial prep. phrase, comparison.

כַּבִּירֵעָה:

# Psalm 104:3

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

*rebia'* = secondary disjunctive

3 הַמְקָרָה בַּמַּיִם

*'oleh-veyored* = primary disjunctive in this verse

עַל־אוֹתָיו

*'athnach* = secondary disjunctive in this verse

הַשָּׁם-עֲבִים רְכוּבוֹ

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary disjunctive

הַמְהֵלֵךְ

*silluq* = end of v. 3

עַל-כַּנְפֵי-רוּחַ:

# Psalm 104:3

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Piel ptcp. ms w/art.

הַמְקַרָּה 3

Adverbial prep. phrase, location.

בַּמַּיִם

Accusative of  
specification.

עַל־אֹתָיו

Qal act. ptcp. ms  
w/art. + dir. obj. +  
accus. of  
specification.

הַשָּׁמַיִם-עֹבְרִים רְכוּבוֹ

Piel ptcp. ms w/art.

הַמְהַלֵּךְ

עַל-כַּנְפֵי-רוּחַ:

Adverbial prep. phrase, location.



# Psalm 104:4

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

4 עֲשֵׂה מִלְּאֲכָיו רוּחֹת

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive in this verse

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary disjunctive

*silluq* = end of v. 4

מִשָּׁרְתָיו

אֵשׁ לֵהֵט:

# Psalm 104:4

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Qal act. ptcp. ms +  
dir. obj. w/3ms  
pron. suff. + accus.  
of specification.

רוּחֹת עֲשָׂה מֵאֲפָקָיו 4

Substantival Piel ptcp. mp (< נשרת)  
w/3ms pron. suff.; dir. obj.

בְּנִשְׂרֹתָיו

אֵשׁ לֵהֵט:

Accus. of specification;  
nouns in construct,  
attributive genitive.

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Translation

- 1** Bless YHWH, my soul.  
O YHWH, my God, You are very great;  
With majesty and splendor You are clothed—
- 2** Wrapped up *with* light as a mantle,  
Stretching out the heavens like a tent curtain.
- 3** He Who builds His upper rooms on beams over  
the water;  
Who appoints clouds as His chariot;  
Who walks upon the wings of the wind.
- 4** Making winds His messengers  
And His servants flaming fire.

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Translation

1 Bless YHWH, my soul.

O YHWH, my God, You are very great;  
With majesty and splendor **You are clothed**—

2 **Wrapped up** *with* light **as a mantle,**  
**Stretching out** the heavens **like a tent curtain.**

3 Who **built** **His upper rooms** on beams over the water;  
Who **appointed** clouds as **His chariot**;

Who **walks** upon the wings of the wind—

4 **Making** **His messengers** winds  
And **His servants** flaming fire.

Hymnic participles (red)

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- Verse 1 repeats the inclusio marking off Ps 103:1, 22, linking the two psalms.
- “Bless” (II בָּרַךְ) = acknowledge YHWH in His position of power with all the respect due Him.
- Imperative of immediate desire basically equivalent to a future: “I will bless” (cf. J-M, §114*m*, *p*).
- “Soul” (נַפְשִׁי) in this context refers to the individual’s total being: mind, heart, and will = “I.”

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- Vocative of address (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי) placed first, perhaps to form interior hinge with immediately preceding יְהוָה.
- Personal relationship expressed in אֱלֹהֵי, “my God.”
- Verb (גָּדַלְתָּ) is a static stative (expressing state of being) describing YHWH’s present characteristic state as “great.”
- Adverb מְאֹד (= “very” or “exceedingly”) modifies the preceding verb (גָּדַלְתָּ).

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- Adverbial accusative nouns הוֹד וְהָדָר (“with majesty and splendor”) precede the verb (לְבַשְׁתָּהּ) for emphasis forming internal hinge with preceding emphatic adverb מְאֹד.
- The two nouns could be taken as a hendiadys = “majestic splendor” (cf. *HBI*, §1.8.3a).
- Verse 2 has the first (עֹטֶה) of six hymnic participles expressing either an adjectival characteristic (as this participle) or praiseworthy divine acts.

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- Adverbial accusative of means (אֹר, “with light”)—perhaps a reference to Day 1 (Gen 1:3–5).
- Adverbial prepositional phrase of comparison (כַּעֲשֵׂלְמָה, “as a mantle/garment”) modifying the participle “wrapped.”
- First of hymnic participles to be characteristic divine action (נוֹטֶה, “stretching out”)—potential correlation to concept of expanding universe.



# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- Adverbial prepositional phrase of comparison (כַּיִרְיָעָה, “like a tent curtain”) parallel to the previous.
- Verse 3 begins with articular hymnic participle (הַמְקִרָה, “Who built on beams” or “Who built with wood”), from II קרה (a verb formed from the noun קוֹרָה, “timberwork/beam”)—past by historical reference.
- Obvious imagery or metaphor—a major element in Hebrew poetry.

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- The locative prepositional phrase **בַּמַּיִם** could be translated “on/in” or “over the waters”—perhaps a reference to Day 2 (Gen 1:6–8).
- “His upper rooms” (**עֲלִיּוֹתָיו**)—perhaps a reference to God’s heavenly throne room.
- The fourth hymnic participle is articular like the first in this verse: “Who appointed” (**הַשָּׂם**)—again past by historical reference.

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- “Clouds as His chariot” (עָבִים רְכוּבוֹ) consists of a double accusative: second accusative of the produced thing following the direct object accusative (cf. J-M, §125w)—more poetic imagery.
- The fifth hymnic participle (הַמְהַלֵּךְ, “Who walks”) is also articular, like the other two participles in this verse.
- “Upon the wings of the wind” (עַל-כַּנְפֵי-רוּחַ) uses yet another metaphor for imagery.

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- Verse 4 (like v. 2) starts with עֲשֶׂה (“making”), the final of the six hymnic participles in vv. 2–4.
- Double accusative (מִלְאָכָיו רוּחֹת) presents the accusative of the produced thing (the second accusative).
  - ✓ “Making His messengers winds” may refer to their speed of movement.
  - ✓ Construction does not mean “making winds His messengers”—contra Leupold, 732.

# Psalm 104:1–4 — Observations

- **Second half of verse continues with another double accusative: מְשַׂרְתִּיו אֵשׁ לֵהֵט.**
  - ✓ “Making His servants flaming fire” may also refer to their speed of movement (synonymous parallelism) or their devotion and intensity in serving.
  - ✓ Construction does not mean “making flaming fire His servants.”
  - ✓ Both parallel constructions add to the description of God’s royal splendor.

# Psalm 104:5

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

יִסַּד-אֶרֶץ 5

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

עַל-מְכוּנֶיהָ

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive  
in this verse

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary  
disjunctive

בַּל-תִּמּוֹט

עוֹלָם וָעֶד:

*silluq* = end of v. 5

# Psalm 104:5

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Qal perf. 3ms + noun fs (direct object).

יִסַּד-אָרֶץ 5

Adverbial prepositional phrase,  
location; noun mpl + 3fs pron. suff.

עַל-מְכוּנֶיהָ

Negative (modal) + Niphal imperf.  
3fs (< מוט).

בִּלְתַּמּוֹט

Adverbial temporal phrase.

עוֹלָם וָעֶד:

# Psalm 104:6

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

תְּהוֹם 6

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive in this verse

כִּלְבוֹשׁ כְּסִיתוֹ

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary disjunctive

עַל-הָרִים

*silluq* = end of v. 6

יַעֲמְדוּ-מֵיָם:



# Psalm 104:6

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Adverbial accusative, instrument;  
emphatic word order.

תְּהוֹם

6

Adverbial prepositional phrase,  
manner/comparison.

כְּלִבְיֹשׁ

Piel perf. 2ms (< כִּסֶּה) + 3ms pron. suff.

כִּסִּיתוּ

Adverbial prepositional phrase,  
location; emphatic.

עַל-הַיָּרְדֵּן

Qal imperf. 3mp (עָמַד) + subject.

יַעֲמְדוּ-מֵיָם:

# Psalm 104:7

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive in this verse

מִן־גַּעַרְתָּהּ יְבוֹסֹון 7

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary disjunctive

מִן־קוֹל רַעַמָּה

יִתְפַּזֵּון:

*silluq* = end of v. 7

# Psalm 104:7

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Adverbial prepositional phrase,  
instrument; emphatic.

מִן־גְּעֵרָתָהּ 7

Qal imperf. 3mp (< נוּס) with paragogic *nun*.

יְנוּסֶנּוּ:

Adverbial prepositional phrase,  
instrument; emphatic.

מִן־קוֹל בְּרַעַמָּהּ

Niphal imperf. 3mp (< חִפֵּז) with  
paragogic *nun*.

יִחִפֵּזְנּוּ:

# Psalm 104:8

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

8 יַעֲלוּ הַרִים

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive in this verse

יִרְדּוּ בְּקַעֲוֹת

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary disjunctive

אֶל-מְקוֹם

*silluq* = end of v. 8

זֶהוּ יִסְדָּף לָהֶם:

# Psalm 104:8

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Qal imperf. 3mp (< עלה) + subject.

Qal imperf. 3mp (< ירד) + subject.

Adverbial prepositional phrase,  
location.

Adjectival relative clause:  
demonstrative pronoun +  
Qal perf. 2ms (< יסד).

Adverbial prepositional  
phrase, dative of benefit.

8 יַעֲלוּ הַרִים

יֵרְדוּ בְּקַעֲוֹת

אֶל-מְקוֹם

זֶהוּ יִסְדָּתָּ

לָהֶם:

# Psalm 104:5–8 — Translation

- 5** He established the earth upon its foundations;  
It will not be moved forever and ever.
- 6** *With* the deep like a garment You covered it;  
Over the mountains the waters stood.
- 7** At Your rebuke they fled;  
At the sound of Your thunder they ran away.
- 8** The mountains rose; the valleys descended;  
To the place which You established for them.

# Psalm 104:5–8 — Translation

5 He **established** the earth upon its foundations;

Or, “it will be immovable”

It will not be moved forever and ever.

6 *With* **the deep** like a garment You covered it;  
Over the mountains **the waters** stood.

7 **At Your rebuke** **they fled**;  
At the sound of Your thunder **they ran away**.

8 **The mountains rose**;  
**the valleys descended**—  
To the place which You **established** for them.

# Psalm 104:5–8 — Observations

- The inclusio with **סו'** sets off the second stanza of this psalm (vv. 5, 8).
- “The earth” is the focal point of v. 5 = Day 3 of creation.
- The negative clause (**בַּל-תִּמּוֹט**) can be translated as “immovable”—cf. *HALOT*, 131, 555 and *GKC*, 491 (§156g).
- The temporal clause (**עוֹלָם וָעֶד**) occurs 15x (12x in Pss + *Exod* 15:18; *Mic* 4:5; *Dan* 12:3) = “for all time.”



# Psalm 104:5–8 — Observations

- By placing the adverbial accusative (תְּהוֹם) first in v. 6, attention now focuses once again on the waters (see v. 3)—perhaps indicating introduction of a new event.
- Antecedent for 3ms pron. suffix (כְּסִיתוֹ) can be אֶרֶץ, because the noun takes either fem. or masc. gender (= common).
- This same pronominal suffix prevents taking תְּהוֹם as a nominative absolute as Leupold (*Genesis*, 725, 732) does—no evidence to emend the text as Bratcher and Reyburn do (*Psalms*, 880).

# Psalm 104:5–8 — Observations

- The emphatic adverbial prepositional phrase “above the mountains” (עַל-הַרִים) provides first indication that פְּתוּחַ might be referring to Gen 7:11 rather than 1:2.
- Verse 6b, therefore, most likely refers to Gen 7:20—גִּבְרוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּכְסּוּ הַהָרִים.

# Psalm 104:5–8 — Observations

- Verse 7 offers a stronger implication that the text refers to the Flood by use of “Your rebuke” (גִּעְרָתְךָ).
  - ✓ The strong negative and destructive concept of גער (Liedke, in *TLOT*, 322–23) militates against Creation as the reference.
  - ✓ Creation chaos theories (e.g., Kraus, *Psalms*, 300) misrepresent the biblical account, accommodating it to a pagan worldview.

# Psalm 104:5–8 — Observations

- In both halves of v. 7 the adverbial prepositional phrases take a word order position of emphasis—highlighting the instrumentality of God’s actions.
- Both verbs in v. 7 utilize the paragogic *nun* found 15x in Ps 104 (cp. Deut 56x, Isa 37x, Job 23x); see J-M, 136–37 (§44e).
  - ✓ In pause, usually preferred for fuller emphatic form—or, for antiquity, deliberate archaism, or meter.
  - ✓ Emphasis on fleeing in terror (see Lewis, in *TWOT*, 310), rather than simple obedience.

# Psalm 104:5–8 — Observations

- Verse 8 rounds out the stanza by specifying the formation of mountains and valleys.
- Their respective locations came by divine determination and action.
  - ✓ By context this particular tectonic activity occurs at the time of the Flood, rather than on the 3rd day of creation when the land arises out of the primeval deep.
  - ✓ Verse 9 will present additional evidence.

# Psalm 104:9

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

גְּבוּל־שָׁמַיִת 9

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive  
in this verse

בַּלְיַעֲבָרוֹן

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary  
disjunctive

בַּלְיַשׁוּבוֹן

לְכַסּוֹת הָאָרֶץ:

*silluq* = end of v. 9

# Psalm 104:9

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Emphatic direct obj. by word order +  
Qal perf. 2ms (< שׂים).

Negative (modal) result  
clauses both with Qal  
imperf. 3mp (< עבר and  
שוב) with paragogic *nun*.

9 גְּבוּל־שָׁמַיִת

בִּלְעֵבֶר וְנִ

בִּלְיִשׁוּב וְנִ

לְכִסּוֹת הָאָרֶץ:

Direct object of infinitive.

*Lamed* + Piel infin.  
constr. (< כסה) =  
adverbial prep.  
phrase, purpose.

# Psalm 104:10

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

10 הַמַּשְׁלַח מֵעֵינַיִם

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive in this verse

בַּנְּחָלָיִם

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary disjunctive

בְּיַד הָרַיִם

יְהִלְכוּן:

*silluq* = end of v. 10



# Psalm 104:10

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Hymnic articular Piel ptcp. ms  
(< שלח) + direct object

10 הַמְשַׁלַּח מֵעֵינַיִם

Adverbial prepositional  
phrase, location.

בְּנֹחַלַיִם

Adverbial prepositional  
phrase, location.

בְּיַד הָרִים

Piel imperf. 3mp (< הלך)  
with paragogic *nun*.

יֵהַלְכֵן:

# Psalm 104:11

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

יִשְׁקוּ 11

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive  
in this verse

כָּל-חַיְתוֹ שָׁדִי

יִשְׁבְּרוּ

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

פָּרְאִים צְמָאִם:

*silluq* = end of v. 11

# Psalm 104:11

Adjust to display grammatical and parallel relationships.

Hiphil imperf. 3mp (< שָׁקַח)

Accusative phrase = indirect object; תִּיתּוֹ is old construct form for תִּית.

Qal imperf. 3mp (< שָׁבַר)

Subject + direct obj. with 3mp pron. suff.

יִשְׁקֹוּ 11

כָּל-תִּיתּוֹ שָׁדָי

יִשְׁבְּרוּ

פָּרְאִים צְמָאִים:

# Psalm 104:12

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

עֲלֵיהֶם 12

*tipchah* = secondary disjunctive

*'atnach* = primary disjunctive  
in this verse

עוֹף-הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכֹּן

*rebia' mugrash* = secondary  
disjunctive

מִבְּרִין עֲפָאִים

יִתְנוּ-קוֹל:

*silluq* = end of v. 12

# Psalm 104:12

Adjust to display  
grammatical and  
parallel relationships.

Emphatic adverbial  
prepositional phrase,  
location.

עַל־יָהֵם

12

Emphatic subject + Qal  
imperf. 3ms (< שָׁכַן)

עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכֹּן

Emphatic adverbial  
prepositional phrase,  
location.

מִבְּרִין עֲפָאִים

Qal imperf. 3mp (< נָתַן) +  
dir. Obj.

יִתְּנוּ־קוֹל:

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Translation

- 9** You set a boundary so that they might not  
pass over,  
So that they might not return to cover the  
earth.
- 10** Who sends away springs into the valleys—  
Between the mountains they flow.
- 11** They provide drink to every wild  
creature—  
Wild asses quench their thirst.
- 12** Beside them the birds of the sky dwell;  
From the midst of thick foliage they sing.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Translation

**9** You set a boundary  
so that they might not pass over,  
So that they might not return  
to cover the earth.

**a 10** Who sends away springs

**b** into the valleys—

**b'** Between the mountains

**a'** they flow.

**11** They provide drink to every wild creature—

Wild asses quench their thirst.

**12** Beside them the birds of the sky dwell;

From the midst of thick foliage they sing.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- “You set a boundary” (גְּבֹלָה, v. 9) places the indefinite (no definite article) direct object first in word order for emphasis.
- With the perfect (*qatal*) verb form (שִׁמְרָה) the focus falls on the simple fact of the action itself.
- The 2ms perfect verb indicates divine action—God is the antecedent.



# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- Two negative result clauses in draw the attention of the readers/hearers with the two לֹא negatives + imperfects.
  - ✓ The negatives occur primarily in poetry, tend to be modal with imperfects, and convey the concept “without.”
  - ✓ The imperfect verbs take the paragogic *nun* to express a degree of emphasis—see Observations on v. 7 above.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- The infinitive construct (לְכַסּוֹת) with the לְ-prefix in the last phrase of v. 9 identifies the purpose for the returning of the waters—“to cover the earth.”
  - ✓ Piel for this root (כַּסּוּ) does not indicate any intensity or emphasis, since this root occurs in Qal only 3x and Niphal 1x.
  - ✓ This root appears in Piel, Pual, and Hithpael stems over 145x.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- In v. 10 הַמְשִׁילָהּ resumes the hymnic participles expressing divine activity (see vv. 2–4 Observations above).
  - ✓ The Piel of שָׁלַח occurs 267x as compared to the Qal’s 564x; therefore, it may indicate a certain degree of emphasis: (1) causation (“cause to flow”; *HALOT*, 1514), or (2) the sense of “send away,” “dismiss,” or “expel” (*HALOT*, 1515).
  - ✓ Context of vv. 7–9 seem to indicate the second of these two possible meanings.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- “Springs” (מַעְיָנוֹת) refers to the sources for streams/rivers of water—the headwaters—narrowing and redirecting the focus from “the waters” and “the deep” of vv. 3–9.
- Two adverbial phrases form the focal point of a chiasm (see second Translation slide).
- “Flow” (יִהְיֶה לְכוֹן) continues the use of imperfects with paragogic *nun* (see v. 9 and Observations on v. 7).
- Thus, the paragogic *nuns* provide a poetic triplet of forms in vv. 9–10.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- The Hebrew for “valleys” (נְהָלִים) in v. 10 differs from that in v. 8 (בְּקַעֲוֹת); the former refers to narrow valleys or wadis as watercourses for either permanent or perennial streams, while the latter refers to broad valleys or plains, with or without watercourses.
  - ✓ V. 8’s vocabulary fits better with the uplift of mountains and sinking of valleys.
  - ✓ V. 10’s grammar specifies the springs as subject of the verb “flow” as compared with mountains and valleys as subjects in v. 8.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- In v. 11 “springs” (v. 10) continues as the subject of the first verb.
- The Hiphil of שָׁקַח (יִשְׁקֹחַ) is the root’s normal stem (it occurs only 1x in both Niphal and Pual).
  - ✓ In such cases the Hiphil usually equates with the Qal, not expressing any causation.
  - ✓ For שָׁקַח, however, an inherent causative sense occurs: “give drink,” “provide drink.”

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- The imperfect verbs in vv. 10–11a following the participle beginning v. 10 express continuous action.
- The accusative phrase (כָּל-תְּיָתוֹ שִׁדָּי) identifies the indirect object.
- Before the indefinite singular כָּל, תְּיָתוֹ often means “every”; see *IBHS*, 289 (§15.6.c).
- An old construct form of תְּיָה in place of תְּיָת appears in תְּיָתוֹ; see J-M, 284 (§93*r*).

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- The genitive of species (חַיֵּיתוֹ שְׂדֵי; *HBI*, 19 [§1.8.1c(6)]) limits the “living creatures” to those that are wild (cf. Kidner, *Psalms*, TOTC, 370) as opposed to domestic livestock.
- The plural “wild asses” (פָּרָאִים) follows the singular “every wild creature” as an example of the greater classification.
- As the first of three verbs with different animals as subject, יִשְׁבְּרוּ (Qal imperf. 3ms) sets the stage for a triplet of imperfects indicating characteristic action (vv. 11b–12).



# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- Literally, **יִשְׁבְּרוּ פְּרָאִים צְמָאָם** reads “wild asses break their thirst” = “wild asses quench their thirst.”
- In v. 12 **עַל־יְהֵם** (adverbial prepositional phrase of location) placed first emphasizes it and brings the reader’s attention back to the “springs” of v. 10.
  - ✓ Poetic connecting vowel on the preposition + 3mp pronominal suffix with **מֵעַיְנֵים** as antecedent; J-M, 287 (§94dN2), 345 (§103m).

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- Continuing the inverted word order the psalmist focuses on the “springs” and their relationship to the wild animals (see v. 11).
- The construct phrase with a collective singular, עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם = “birds of the sky” refers to the aggregate; *IBHS*, 111 (§7.1.a).
- By grammatical attraction to the form of the collective singular, the verb (יִשְׁכּוֹן) is also a collective singular.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- The second half of v. 12 follows the word order set by the first half, by placing the adverbial prepositional phrase of location first: מִבֵּין עֲפָאִים.
  - ✓ The compound preposition literally reads “from between” = “from the midst of” or “out of the midst of.”
  - ✓ The noun עֲפָאִים (“thick foliage”) occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible.

# Psalm 104:9–12 — Observations

- V. 12 concludes with יִתְנוּ-קוֹל, literally “they give voice” or “they raise *their* voice” = “they sing.”
- For brief, but exegetically sound, interpretations of vv. 11–12, see VanGemeren, “Psalms,” in *EBC*, 5:661; Kirkpatrick, *Psalms*, 609.
- For brief discussion of potential translation issues for vv. 11–12, see Bratcher and Reyburn, *Psalms*, 882.