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## A Study Relating Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon to Chiasmus in the Old Testament, Ugaritic Epics, Homer, and Selected Greek and Latin Authors

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**Abstract:** In 1967, John W. Welch recognized a phenomenon in the Book of Mormon which has stimulated a new consideration of the Book of Mormon as ancient literature and raised new questions relevant to several other ancient literary traditions. This phenomenon is the presence of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. This study of chiasmus is an attempt to apply formal analysis – or the analysis of form – to the Book of Mormon. This analysis is concerned with the forms in which written passages occur and the relationship which those forms have with the passage's content.

The Book of Mormon provides a rich – albeit limited – field for such a study. The 1830 edition is a translation, and any translator is aware of the difficulties of transmitting a message from one language to another. The translation of poetry intensifies these difficulties, for it is virtually impossible to retain in a translation all elements as they were in the original. It is demonstrated here that certain types of chiasmus pass the translation barrier relatively easily, and this fact provides us access to the study of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon.

A STUDY RELATING CHIASMUS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON TO  
CHIASMUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, UGARITIC EPICS,  
HOMER, AND SELECTED GREEK AND LATIN AUTHORS

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

Since 1830, when the Book of Mormon was published, those who have believed in the book have asserted that it reads like a Hebrew text.<sup>1</sup> Those who have not been so credulous have insisted that its style is "stilted, complicated, diffuse, meaningless or even brutal"<sup>2</sup> and that any resemblance between the style of the Book of Mormon and Hebrew is due solely to the passages in the Book of Mormon which have been "plagiarized from the Bible."<sup>3</sup> Despite all the claims and 140 years of consideration, the literary qualities of the Book of Mormon have not yet been adequately studied,<sup>4</sup> and even among its literary critics "the Book of Mormon has not been universally considered as one of those books that must be read in order to have an opinion on it."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Parley P. Pratt, A Voice of Warning (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1920), p. 105. The first edition of this book was published in 1837.

<sup>2</sup>Bruce Kinney, Mormonism, the Islam of America (New York: F. H. Revell Company, 1912), p. 60.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Douglas Wilson, "The Book of Mormon as Literature," Dialogue, III (1968), 30.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas F. O'Dea, The Mormons (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 26.

Recently, however, this author has recognized a phenomenon in the Book of Mormon which has stimulated a new consideration of the Book of Mormon as ancient literature and has raised new questions relevant to several other ancient literary traditions. This phenomenon is the presence of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon.

This study of chiasmus is an attempt to apply one principle of Formgeschichte, or formal analysis, to the Book of Mormon. Formal analysis is the analysis of form; it is concerned with the forms in which written passages occur and with the relationship which those forms have with the passages' content. The Book of Mormon provides a rich, although limited, field for such a study. The 1830 edition is a translation, and anyone who has done much translating is aware of the difficulties involved in going from one language to another. The translation of poetry intensifies these difficulties, for it is virtually impossible to retain in a translation all the elements of euphony, alliteration, rhyme, meter, and meaning, as they were in the original. We will see, however, that certain types of chiasmus whether in poetry or prose pass the translation barrier relatively easily.<sup>6</sup> This fact gives

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<sup>6</sup>In fact, the author first noticed evidences of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon while studying it in a German translation. Although the German does not retain every chiasmus in perfect order (cf. Alma 41:14 in which Rechtschaffenes is wrongly substituted for Gerechtigkeit at a crucial moment), most of the others are in flawless condition (cf. Mosiah 5:10-12). This should caution all modern translators not to nurture unconditionally predisposed aversions to repetitions and seemingly awkward word orders.

us access to the study of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon.

In order to understand the significance of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon it is necessary to know which literatures used chiasmus and how these usages differ one from another. In Chapter II three universal types of chiasmus will be defined and some general purposes for the use of chiasmus will be briefly discussed. The first four examples of chiasmus in Chapter II come from Gray's Forms of Hebrew Poetry and the last two are from Lund's Chiasmus in the New Testament. In Chapter III chiasmus in the Hebrew Old Testament is studied and, following the precedent set by Lund, the Hebrew text will not always appear beside the translation. Unless otherwise indicated, all of the translations in Chapter III are from Nils Lund. In Chapter IV chiasmus in Homer is examined and compared with chiasmus in the Old Testament. Chiasmus was used differently in Greek than it was in Hebrew. Since the simple Greek type of chiasmus is difficult to render into acceptable English and for the sake of comparison, two translations of the Iliad, Bryant's and Lattimore's represented (B) and (L) respectively, and two translations of the Odyssey, Bryant's (B) and Rees' (R), will be cited. Some of these translations preserve the chiastic figures of speech, but others do not. In Chapter V chiasmus in the Ugaritic Epics will be investigated. Ugaritic is a Semitic language of the second millennium before Christ. As will be seen, the use



of chiasmus in Ugaritic manifests a number of similarities with the use of chiasmus in the Old Testament, and at the same time, the influence of Ugaritic bears strongly upon the Mycenaean and Ionic civilizations. As such Ugaritic is to be considered an ancient cultural bridge between the Semitic and Hellenic worlds, as Cyrus Gordon has suggested and as the study of chiasmus in Hebrew, Ugaritic, and Homeric literature substantiates. In this chapter all translations are those of Cyrus Gordon. Chapter VI deals with chiasmus in later Greek and Latin authors. For the Greek passages, each translator is recognized in the text. For convenience the Loeb Library has been used in translating the Latin passages as is also indicated for each case in the text. Throughout this chapter and throughout the entire thesis, the translations of quotations from secondary sources, which have not been translated into English, are those of this author. In Chapter VII the nineteenth century rediscovery of chiasmus in the New Testament is surveyed in preparation for the material in the last chapter, Chapter VIII, which treats the presence of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon.

Near the end of Chapter V a diagram is introduced which is subsequently expanded at the end of each successive chapter thereafter. This diagram is designed to illustrate the similarity between chiasmus in one language with chiasmus in another. This diagram applies only to chiasmus. It is based on the results of each chapter, and the terms

used in this diagram have been chosen to reflect the titles of the chapters in this thesis. When it is completed at the end of Chapter VIII, it reflects the analogous nature of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon and chiasmus in the Old Testament and the different nature of chiasmus in Western literature.

## CHAPTER II

### SIMPLE, COMPOUND, AND COMPLEX CHIASMUS

Defining chiasmus accurately is difficult because it appears in such a variety of forms. It is defined in one handbook as:

A passage in which the second part is inverted and balanced against the first. Chiasmus is thus a type of antithesis.

A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits. (Pope)

Flowers are lovely, love is flowerlike. (Coleridge)<sup>1</sup>

Although some chiastic passages involve only the minimum of four elements, others incorporate eighteen or more in a chiastic arrangement (see illustration of Psalm 58 below). Since the number of terms or ideas that can be employed in chiastic passages is not limited, it is appropriate that this definition has not excluded the possibility of longer chiastic passages. For the purposes of this thesis, two types and three degrees of chiasmus will be defined: grammatical and structural; simple, compound, and complex. Other variations and additions will be defined and explained as specific cases arise.

The term chiasmus is descriptive of simple chiasmus. The name was derived from chi ( $\chi$ ), the twenty-second letter in the Greek

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<sup>1</sup>H. L. Yelland, S. C. Jones, and K. S. W. Easton, A Handbook of Literary Terms (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), p. 32.

alphabet, and from the Greek chiazien (to mark with a chi). In its simplest form, chiasmus is the only variation which is possible from the simplest form of parallelism. In a rudimentary form, a simple parallelism follows the scheme a - b - a' - b', of which Genesis 49:7 is an example:

· אהלקם b ביעקב a  
 א' ואפיצם b' בישראל  
 a I-will-divide-them b in-Jacob  
 a' And-I-will-scatter-them b' in-Israel.

If the second line of a simple parallelism is inverted by placing its last element first and its first, last, then a simple chiasmus is created.

Chiastically, Genesis 49:7 would read:

a I-will-divide-them b in-Jacob  
 b' in-Israel a' I-will-scatter-them.

Formulated empirically, simple chiasmus assumes the form of a chi:

a b  
 b' a'

Of this Proverbs 2:4 is an example:

אם a תבקשנה b ננסף  
 b' ונכשמים a' תחפשנה  
 a If-thou-see-her b as-silver,  
 b' And-as-for-hidden-treasures a' search-for-her.

The chiasmus here is obtained by the crossing arrangement of the terms conveying the ideas of seeking and treasure respectively.

As Bishop Lowth and his students have stated, parallelism is the fundamental structural element in Hebrew composition.<sup>2</sup> These scholars have shown that parallel lines are often expanded arrangements of the form

$$\begin{array}{l} a - b - c - d \\ a' - b' - c' - d' \end{array}$$

as in Proverbs 15:1

כענה נר ישיב זמנה  
דבר עשב יעלה אף

A-soft answer turneth-away wrath  
But-a-grievous word stirreth-up anger.

When a parallel line of this length contains a simple chiasmus among several, but not all, of its members, the passage shall be called a compound chiasmus, e. g.

$$\begin{array}{l} a - b \quad c \\ a' - c \quad b' \end{array}$$

as in Proverbs 2:2

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<sup>2</sup>See the works of Robert Lowth, Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews (Boston: Joseph T. Buckingham, 1815) and George B. Gray, The Forms of Hebrew Poetry (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915).

להקשיב להכנמה אונך  
 חמה לבך לחבונח

So-that-thou-incline unto-wisdom thine-ear  
 And-apply thine-heart to-understanding.

A second type of compound chiasmus, which is rare in Hebrew yet frequent in Latin, occurs in passages which contain an alternation between two terms in the form

a - b - b - a - a - b

as in Pliny the Younger, 4, 25, 4

Poposcit tabellam, stilum accepit, demisit caput  
 He called for the tablets, took up the pen, bent his head<sup>3</sup>

Compound chiasmus is not very different from simple chiasmus. In both the inversion is linear, for, as in the example above, the chiasmus itself involves no more than the four terms b-c and c'-b', even though other terms (a and a') appear in the passage. The type of compound chiasmus exemplified by the passage from Pliny in the preceding paragraph is also merely a linear extension of simple chiasmus.

Complex chiasmus is three dimensional. It involves three or more words which appear initially in one order and then secondly in the reverse order. Complex chiasmus may be represented as follows:

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<sup>3</sup>Melmoth's translation. William Melmoth, Pliny Letters (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), I, 345.

a-b-c-d- . . . -x-x- . . . -d-c-b-a.

Such structures may be several verses, lines, chapters, or books in length. An illustration of complex chiasmus, which contains five elements in inverted parallelism, is found in Psalms 3:7-8:

- a Save me
- b O my God,
- c For thou hast smitten
- d All my enemies
- e On the cheek-bone
- e' The teeth
- d' Of the wicked
- c' Thou hast broken
- b' To Yahweh
- a' The salvation.

Complex chiasmus is carefully employed in this passage. Not only do the words correspond one to another from the first to the last, but the ideas serve as complements to each other. "My enemies" in d is intensified to "the wicked" in d'. Whereas c only speaks of "smiting," c' shows the wicked "broken." A second example of complex chiasmus, which is even longer, is found in Isaiah 60:1-3

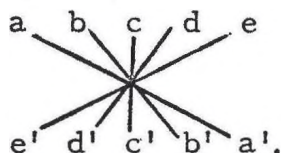
- a Arise,
- b Shine,
- c For thy light is come,
- d And the glory
- e Of Yahweh
- f Upon thee is risen
  
- g For behold, dimness shall cover the earth
- g' And gross darkness the peoples.

f' But upon thee will arise  
 e' Yahweh  
 d' And his glory shall upon thee be seen  
 c' And nations shall come to thy light  
 b' And kings to the brightness  
 a' Of thy rising.

Nils W. Lund gives the following explanation of this passage:

In the first two and last two lines, as well as in the two central lines, we have a parallelism of ideas, but not of words. In all the other lines of the system, however, there exists, not only a parallelism of ideas, but also a parallelism of words. And yet the most striking feature is that the system opens with a beautiful description of the future light and glory of Israel, that the scene suddenly shifts from light and glory to darkness and gross darkness when the centre is reached, and that finally the note of hope and joy is heard once more, amplified now to include all the nations. One who is thinking merely in terms of parallelismus membrorum and rhythm, would proceed to arrange such a passage in a strophe of four couplets, or eight lines. However acceptable such an arrangement might be, it is clear that we have in this passage something more than ordinary parallelism and rhythm; here there is a thought-pattern, which is chiasmic in form and obeys the laws of such constructions.<sup>4</sup>

Complex chiasmus is considerably different from simple chiasmus. Since simple chiasmus is properly described as an X, complex chiasmus must be represented by an asterisk:

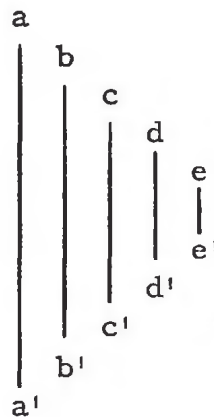



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<sup>4</sup>Nils W. Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), p. 44.



This type of expansion gives complex chiasmus a range of applicability far wider than that of simple chiasmus. Complex chiasmus can be represented in a second fashion, for in practice, the complex chiasmus loses most of its criss-cross effects and becomes predominantly a collating device, as the next model diagrams:



Here the first element is associated with the last, the second, with the next to the last, and so forth into the center. The crossing itself is obvious only at the center of complex chiasmus, where  $d-e \times e'-d'$  are close to each other. Thus, theory shows that complex chiasmus is more intricate and complicated than the forms of simple and compound chiasmus. The following chapters will demonstrate that this is true of complex chiasmus in practice as well.

Each of these three degrees of chiasmus may appear in either of two forms. The first will be called grammatical chiasmus, and the second, structural. A chiasmus is grammatical if it is created solely

by grammatical elements, such as parts of speech, case, number, or gender, and not by meaning or content. For example, an arrangement of the form noun-verb--verb-noun is chiasmic, but it is only grammatically chiasmic if the nouns and the verbs are not related to each other in meaning. If, however, such words are related in meaning, then the chiasmus which they create forms a structural framework for thoughts and ideas, and in such cases it will be called structural chiasmus. An example of this is given above in Isaiah 60:1-3. Structural chiasmus depends on meaning and content, although its elements can be grammatically chiasmic too.

A few more items are fundamental to the entire scope of this thesis. First, is chiasmus a technique employed in writing prose or poetry? Even though chiasmus in prose is usually studied separately from chiasmus in poetry,<sup>5</sup> it appears consistently in both. In prose, chiasmus usually operates as a rhetorical device;<sup>6</sup> in poetry, it functions as a literary device.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Hans Kosmala, "Ancient Hebrew Poetry," Vetus Testamentum, XIV, pp. 423-45 deals with poetic passages and shows how metrically shaped lines appear in inverted parallel orders, while Nils W. Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, considers prosaic passages.

<sup>6</sup>Karl Friedrich von Nägelsbach, Lateinische Stilistik (Nürnberg: Konrad Geiger, 1905), p. 683.

<sup>7</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, Handbuch der Altertums Wissenschaft (München: C. H. Beck, 1965), II, Pt. 2, No. 2, p. 723.

Second, is chiasmus a feature of ancient Hebrew or of classical Greek and Latin? Although simple chiasmus is present in many languages, especially in proverbs,<sup>8</sup> neither complex chiasmus nor the artistic usage of simple chiasmus is characteristic of all languages and literatures.<sup>9</sup> Lund states that complex chiasmus is found almost exclusively in Hebrew,<sup>10</sup> and classicists are aware of the artistic role which simple chiasmus played in the writing styles of certain classical authors.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, the study of chiasmus in Hebrew scriptures is not often united with the study of chiasmus in Greek and Latin,<sup>12</sup> because the function of chiasmus in the Hebrew scriptures is different from its functions in Greek and Latin. One of the purposes of this

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<sup>8</sup>In English we can say, "when the going gets tough, the tough get going." This shows the natural charm which chiasmus possesses.

<sup>9</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 33.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, Handbuch der Altertums Wissenschaft, p. 698.

<sup>12</sup>Only two authors, to my knowledge, make the connection. Samuel A. Bassett, The Poetry of Homer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938), p. 126f., speculates that some connection exists between the Homeric hysteron proteron and Hebrew chiasmus. Bassett acknowledges his indebtedness to a student who drew his attention to one of Lund's articles and began him thinking along these lines. Shortly thereafter, Bassett's work was cut short by his death. John Jebb, Sacred Literature (London: 1820), cites examples of simple chiasmus in Homer, Hesiod, Theognis, Juvenal, Sallust, and Lucian in an extended footnote, pp. 70-74.

thesis will be to describe the differences between the usages of chiasmus in these two literary traditions.

Thirdly, why would a rigid literary form such as complex chiasmus be attractive to the ancient mind? This question inquires primarily concerning the role of literature in the ancient world. Literature, especially poetry, served different functions in ancient society than it does in our modern world. Poetry and literature were not reserved for leisure moments but were practical didactic, mnemonic, ritualistic, and aesthetic parts of daily life.<sup>13</sup> Chiasmus, as a form of prose and poetry, functioned in all areas. First, chiasmus possesses an inherent characteristic which makes it an effective teaching method: its repetitive nature reiterates and reinforces the ideas which the author is trying to convey.<sup>14</sup> Second, association is a helpful tool in memorization, and since ordering and relating of terms is also inherent in chiasmus, "it is a poetic form which is impressive, which will last, and will be easily remembered and literally remembered."<sup>15</sup> This point was of special significance in the ancient world, since a great part of literature

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<sup>13</sup>Werner Jaeger, Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, I (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 35.

<sup>14</sup>Paul Gaechter, Die Literarische Kunst im Matthäus-Evangelium (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1965), p. 7. "Es war die traditionelle, höhere Lehrform."

<sup>15</sup>Hans Kosmala, "Ancient Hebrew Poetry," Vetus Testamentum, XIV, October, 1964, p. 425.

was transmitted orally.<sup>16</sup> Thirdly, from Hebrew Scripture to Greek drama, literature was a part of religious celebrations, and the structure of chiasmus made it suitable for use in rituals too.<sup>17</sup> Finally, chiasmus was aesthetically pleasing. It was through conformity to literary forms that ancient authors were able to create results that were considered beautiful by the people who read them or heard them recited.<sup>18</sup> These qualities, and probably many others, made chiasmus a pleasing and practical literary form in antiquity.

Whereas the study of chiasmus has not appealed to many scholars in classical research, several scholars in Semitic studies have recently considered it. During the last seven years, at least five articles have appeared in major Bible journals and have heralded the rediscovery of chiasmus as the key to understanding difficult passages of Hebrew.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Gaechter, Ibid., p. 6. "Aus der Gedächtniskultur stammen auch seine literarischen Kunstformen."

<sup>17</sup>Cf. Cyrus H. Gordon, "Homer and Bible," Hebrew Union College Annual, XXVI (1955), 65ff. See also the use of chiasmus in the fertility rite, "The Birth of the Gods," in Chapter V below. Also John Jebb, Sacred Literature (London: 1820), p. 60. "Distichs, it is well known, were usually constructed with a view to alternate recitation, or chanting (sic), by the opposite divisions of the choir in Jewish worship."

<sup>18</sup>Lund, Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>19</sup>Raphael Weiss, "De Chiasmo in Scriptura," Beth Mikra, XIII (1962), 46-57; Hans Kosmala, "Ancient Hebrew Poetry," Vetus Testamentum, XIV (1964), 423-445; Raday, "Chiasmus," Beth Mikra (1964), 48-72; Mitchell J. Dahood, "Vocative Lamedh in the Psalter," Vetus Testamentum, XVI (1966), 299-311. William L. Holladay, "Chiasmus Key to Hosea XII 3-6," Vetus Testamentum, XVI (1966), 53-64.

Two of these articles were published in a Jewish journal, Beth Mikra.  
The following chapter will discuss the results of these articles as it  
considers the study of chiasmus in the Old Testament in general.

### CHAPTER III

#### CHIASMUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Chiasmus in the Old Testament may be either grammatical or structural, simple, compound or complex. It appears throughout the Old Testament in a variety of literary situations. Since examples of grammatical chiasmus in Hebraic passages have already been given above, and since chiasmus is primarily structural in the Old Testament, this chapter will consider only some of the passages in which structural chiasmus appears in the Old Testament.

Chiasmus manifests itself on at least four structural levels in the Old Testament: 1) Words are set individually in chiastic arrangements; 2) Thoughts are put together in chiastic sequences; 3) Events are related in chiastic orders; and 4) Metric lines are positioned according to chiastic notions. Chiasmus occurs frequently in the Old Testament, and a careful consideration of this recurrent phenomenon in the Old Testament substantiates the claim that chiasmus here is not accidental or incidental.<sup>1</sup> The prevalence of chiasmus in the Old Testament provides evidence that chiasmus was a significant literary

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<sup>1</sup>M. J. Dahood, "Vocative Lamedh in the Psalter," Vetus Testamentum, XVI (July, 1966), 302.



form in antiquity.<sup>2</sup>

When chiasmus in the Old Testament is discussed, the name Nils Lund is one of the first to be mentioned. Between 1930 and 1942, Mr. Lund published at least eight articles or books dealing with chiasmus in the Old and New Testaments<sup>3</sup> and received wide recognition and acclaim for his work. Though all scholars have not been convinced by Lund's arguments and illustrations, they have been unanimous in their praises of the monumental effort which he put forth. The reviews of Lund's last publication, Chiasmus in the New Testament, range from

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<sup>2</sup>Duncan MacDonald, The Hebrew Literary Genius (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1933), and others expect to find no intentional forms in Hebrew poetry at all. From the time of Josephus, however, the ancient Hebrew poets have been said to have sung according to given orders and forms. See Antiquities 2, 14, 4 and 4, 8, 44. The expectation of finding no calculated forms of poetic or prosaic order in ancient Hebrew writings is disappointed simply by the alphabetic arrangements of the acrostic Psalms and Lamentations. See Lamentations 1, 2, 4, 5 with an interesting variation in Lamentations 3:1-66.

<sup>3</sup>His works include: "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, XLVI (January, 1930); "The Presence of Chiasmus in the New Testament," Journal of Religion, X (January, 1930); "The Influence of Chiasmus upon the Structure of the Gospels," Anglican Theological Review, XIII (January, 1931); "The Influence of Chiasmus upon the Structure of the Gospel according to Matthew," Anglican Theological Review, XIII (October, 1931); "The Literary Structure of Paul's Hymn to Love," Journal of Biblical Literature, L (December, 1933); "Chiasmus in the Psalms," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, XLIX (July, 1933); Outline Studies in the Book of Revelation (Chicago, 1935); Chiasmus in the New Testament (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942).



being fundamentally critical of Lund's approach<sup>4</sup> to lauding his valuable contribution to the study of Formgeschichte in the Bible.<sup>5</sup>

In one of his early articles, Lund described the necessity of proceeding cautiously with the study of chiasmus and even criticized his predecessors for "working the principle to death,"<sup>6</sup> but in his last works, Lund too overworks the principle, perhaps because of the pressure of making exciting discoveries and because of "the notorious difficulty of recognizing chiasmus when it is present."<sup>7</sup> Relying heavily on the few isolated ideas of his precursors, Lund is essentially concerned with chiastic orders of 1) words, 2) thoughts and 3) events. A few of his own diagrammed passages will be considered in that order to reveal the end which he was pursuing.

Beside the examples of complex structural chiasmus in the Psalms and in Isaiah given in the preceding chapter, Lund discusses numerous passages which involve chiastic word orders. In Hebrew,

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<sup>4</sup>F. V. Filson, Journal of Near Eastern Studies (1943), 93, says: "His sweeping claims are unjustifiable."

<sup>5</sup>H. J. Cadbury, Journal of Religion, XXIII (1943), 62-63. Also Christian Century, LIX (May 20, 1942), 664. "The work is convincing, effective, and will not be surpassed . . . A marvel of patience and completeness."

<sup>6</sup>Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," p. 106.

<sup>7</sup>William L. Holladay, "Chiasmus, the Key to Hosea XII 3-6," Vetus Testamentum, XVI (January, 1966), 58.

and sometimes in the LXX, but rarely in English translations, these passages display a remarkable arrangement of terms, e. g. Amos 5:4-6:

Seek ye me, and ye shall live.  
 But seek not after Bethel,  
 Nor enter into Gilgal,  
 And pass not to Beer-sheba:  
 For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,  
 And Bethel shall come to naught.  
Seek Yahweh, and ye shall live.

Not only does this passage contain a seven-term chiasmus but it demonstrates a shift of the underscored terms from the end of the initial lines to the beginning of the inverted lines. It also introduces a new idea after the center, shifting from the admonition against seeking other than Yahweh to prophesying the destruction of Gilgal and Bethel. Such a shift at the center occurs in many chiastic passages.<sup>8</sup>

The following passage shows that a near mathematical precision underlies the basic principles of Hebrew composition present in Numbers 15:35-36:

And Yahweh said unto Moses:  
 He shall surely be put to death, the man,  
 They shall stone him with stones,  
 All the congregation without the camp.  
 And they brought him,  
 All the congregation without the camp,  
 And stoned him with stones,  
 To death,  
 As Yahweh commanded Moses.

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<sup>8</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 41.

Thought for thought, this is an example of complex structural chiasmus. Aside from commenting on the fact that the first half of this chiasmus is devoted to the command and the last half to the execution of the command, Lund remarks:

The present writer is convinced from his observation of a great number of passages that the Hebrew writers have certain numerical designs woven into their writings. These are found not only when numerical adjectives, like three, seven, etc., are expressed, but also where conspicuous words are grouped in clusters in an artistic fashion so as to express designs.<sup>9</sup>

Thus what might be considered an ordinary catalogue of Abraham's wealth in Genesis 12:15 is also a piece of literary symmetry:

And he had sheep and oxen,  
 And he asses,  
 And men servants,  
 And maid servants,  
 And she asses,  
 And camels.

This passage of prose shows that structural chiasmus is used to order thoughts and words even on a level as simple as this.

One of the more extensive examples of complex structural chiasmus involving individual words is found in the Flood Story in Genesis 7:21-23.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

And all flesh died that moved upon the earth,  
 Both birds,  
 And cattle,  
 And beasts,  
 And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth,  
 And every man:

All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of  
life, of all that was on the dry land

Died;  
 And was destroyed

Every living thing that was upon the face of the  
ground,

Both man,  
 And creeping things,  
 (And beasts)<sup>10</sup>  
 And cattle,  
 And birds of the heavens,  
 And they were destroyed from the earth.

The precise structure of Genesis 7:21-23 makes the statement powerful that asserts: "It is inescapable; minds of Biblical writers tend to invert when they repeat."<sup>11</sup>

There is more to complex chiasmus in the Old Testament than a simple tendency to invert. Complex chiasmus entails a highly developed sense of literary order and beauty, as the following example of Psalm

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<sup>10</sup>"Beasts" does not appear a second time in any manuscript. Lund has inserted it here because of the obvious pattern that is established by the contiguous terms. He assumes a deletion of the word occurred long ago, perhaps due to the resemblance of the word "beasts" to "creeping things."

<sup>11</sup>Cadbury, Journal of Religion, XXIII (1943), 63.

58 shows.

- A Do ye indeed, O gods, speak righteousness?  
Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?
- B Nay, in the heart ye work wickedness  
Ye weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth.
- C The wicked are estranged from the womb  
They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.
- D Their poison is like the poison of a serpent  
Like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear,  
Which hearkeneth not to the voice of charmers,  
The most cunning binder of spells.
- O God,  
Break  
E Their teeth in their mouth;  
The great teeth of the young lions  
Break out  
O Yahweh.
- D' They shall melt away like waters,  
They shall go away for them,  
Like tender grass which wilts away.  
Like a snail will melt as it goes along.
- C' Abortions of a woman  
That not have beheld the sun!
- B' The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance  
He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.
- A' And men shall say, surely there is a reward for the righteous,  
Surely there is a God that judgeth the earth.

As in Psalm 58, some of the most interesting examples of chiasmus which Lund provides contain a complex chiastic order of ideas. More than any other aspect of chiasmus, this one has made it a valuable tool

in the exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures. In Psalm 58 each of the paired strophes in the first half of this poem are carefully matched with a corresponding pair of lines in the second section of the psalm. The thoughts of the second section either affirm or reverse those of the first, e. g. the questions about righteousness and judgment, asked in the first lines of the psalm (A), are answered emphatically by the certitude of the last lines (A'). The violence of the wicked in B is not completely described until the violent punishment of the wicked appears in B'. The powers of the wicked (D) are put in proper perspective when they fade away in D'. Each idea in D'-A' complements the ideas in A-D. The vocatives and imperatives of the prayer appear in the climactic center, E.

After words and ideas, chiasmus is a factor in determining the order of narrated events. Among the many predisposing factors which determined the way a Hebrew story was told, inverted order and balance are operative in several instances. This is visible in the chiastic arrangement of events in Genesis 6:9-9:19, portrayed by the following outline.

- A The three sons of Noah (6:9-12)
- B God's covenant with Noah (6:13-22)
- C Yahweh declares he will destroy everything (7:1-5)
- D Noah enters the ark (7:6-9)
- E The flood continues to rise (7:10-20)
- F The central panel: results of the flood (7:21-23)

- E The flood continues to fall (7:23b-8:12)
- D Noah leaves the ark (8:13-19)
- C Yahweh declares he will not curse the ground anymore (8:20-22)
- B God's covenant with Noah (9:1-17)
- A The three sons of Noah (9:18-19).

In this passage a chiastic pattern has been created. Just as the central panel is precise (see above for detailed structure), the opening and closing statements precisely frame the entire passage:

No one can miss the contrast between the earth filled with violence before the flood in 6:10 and the statement after the flood in 9:19, "These were the sons of Noah: and of these was the whole earth overspread." The contrast between the old wicked race that was to be destroyed and the new race, the descendants of the righteous Noah who walked with God, properly opens and closes the story of the flood.<sup>12</sup>

Passages such as Genesis 6:9-9:19 are, however, subject to considerable textual criticism. In his study, Lund approached the problem of source criticism as follows:

The distribution of the passages dealing with Noah's age (cf. 7:6; 8:13), the seven days (cf. 7:10; 8:10, 12), and the forty days (cf. 7:12, 17; 8:6) seems also to follow a chiastic order of arrangement, though the work of the redactor may have somewhat obscured their original position. Our purpose is not to discuss the problem of source criticism. It is generally agreed that the sources of the Pentateuch have been edited because of a liturgical necessity. Our interest is to point out how this

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<sup>12</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 62.



liturgical interest has been satisfied by casting the material in a chiastic mould.<sup>13</sup>

Lund is not particularly concerned with determining whence chiasmus came, but simply with establishing that it is present in the Bible.

As a part of his studies, Lund formulated what he termed the seven laws of chiasmus. Although these "laws" are modern in origin and are merely inductions taken from a sampling of patterns which Lund saw emerging, they are descriptive of many chiastic passages in the Old Testament and should be mentioned here. They read:

- 1) The centre is always the turning point.
- 2) At the centre there is often a change in the trend of thought and an antithetic idea is introduced.
- 3) Identical ideas are often distributed in such a fashion that they occur in the extremes and at the centre of their respective systems and nowhere else in the system.
- 4) Ideas occurring at the centre of one system will often recur in the extremes of a corresponding system.
- 5) Certain terms have a definite tendency to gravitate toward certain positions within a given system.
- 6) Larger units are frequently introduced and concluded by frame-passages.
- 7) There is frequently a mixture of chiastic and alternating lines within one and the same unit.<sup>14</sup>

These observations reflect the truly complex nature of structural chiasmus in the Old Testament, a phenomenon which occurs again and

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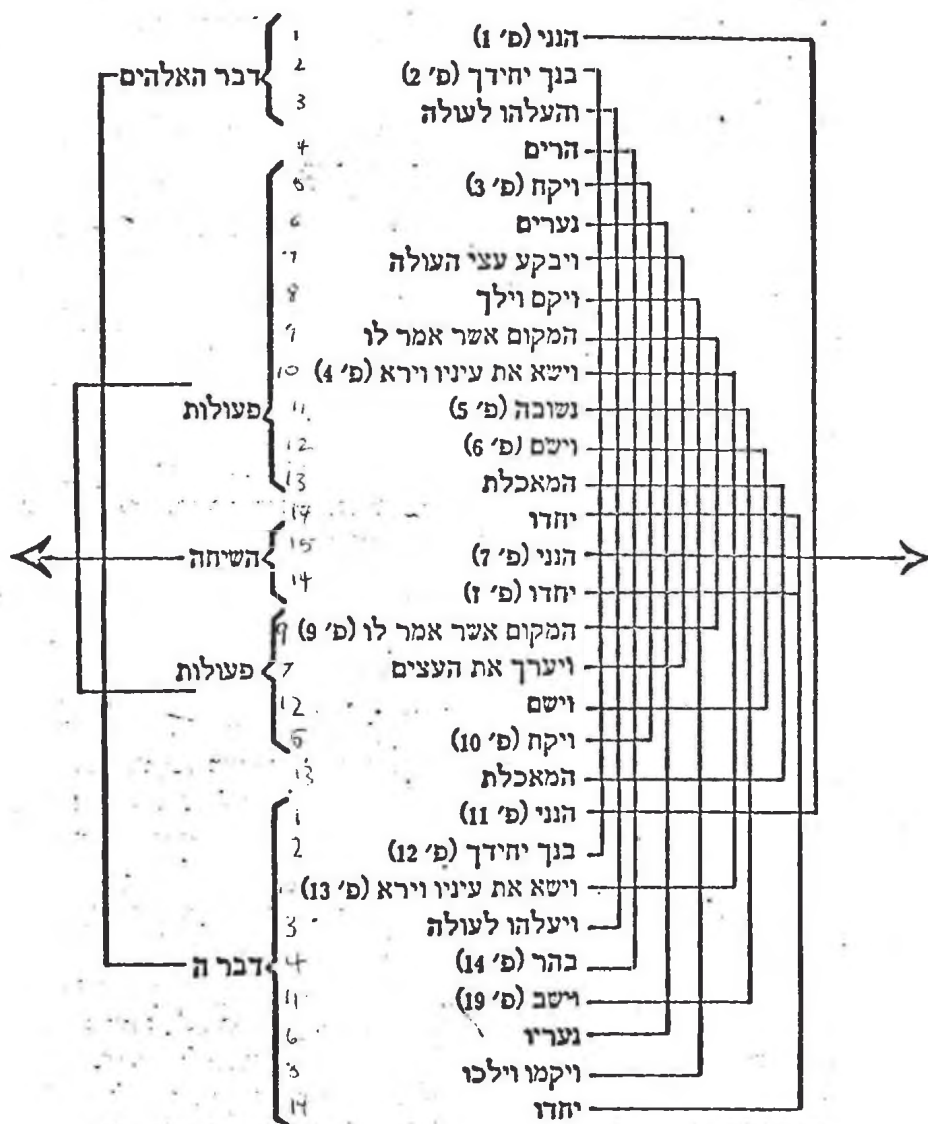
<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 41.



again in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Recently other scholars have begun to write about chiasmus in the Old Testament. Judah T. Raday's analysis<sup>15</sup> of many Old Testament passages shows his interest in chiasmus as a structural device. His illustration of Genesis 22:1-19 is copied and translated below.



<sup>15</sup> Judah T. Raday, "Chiasmus," Beth Mikra, XV (1964), 48-72.

The Chiastic Construction of the  
Sacrifice Chapter

Genesis 22  
(After Raday)

Words of Elohim	Here am I (1)	a
	Your son, your only one (2)	b
	And offer him for an offering	c
	The mountains	d
	And he took (3)	e
	His young men	f
	And he cut offering wood	g
	And he arose and went	h
Acts	To the place which he had said to him	i
	And lifted up his eyes and saw (4)	j
	Let us return (5)	k
	And he put (6)	l
	The knife	m
	Together	n
Conversation	Here am I (7)	a
	Together (8)	n
	The place which he had said to him (9)	i
	And he arranged the wood	g
Acts	And he put	l
	And he took (10)	e
	The knife	m
	Here am I (11)	a
	Your son, your only one (12)	b
	And he lifted up his eyes and saw (13)	j
Words of Jehovah	And offered it up as a burnt offering	c
	On the mountains (14)	d
	And he returned (19)	k
	His young men	f
	And they arose and they went	h
	Together.	n

Raday has given 23 examples of chiasmus in his article; two years later, Raphael Weiss added 72 more, primarily examples of simple and compound chiasmus, in his article<sup>16</sup> which also appeared in the Jewish journal Beth Mikra. These two Hebrew scholars have accepted the principle of chiasmus with full confidence in its legitimacy. According to Raday's evaluation, chiasmus was not a "restraint on the ancient writer," but it "freed him from an anarchy of formlessness." Chiasmus, he says, "was consecrated and sent forth from us Hebrews to the rest of the world."<sup>17</sup>

Although chiastic word, thought, and event sequences have been studied by several scholars, only recently was a chiastic ordering of metric lines observed in Hebrew. In fact, as long as scholars accepted the nineteenth century methods of examining Hebrew meter, the presence of chiasmus in metrical arrangements was completely obscured. Hans Kosmala, writing in his article "Form and Structure of Ancient Hebrew Poetry,"<sup>18</sup> first explains a more viable scheme for counting metric feet in Hebrew and then finds through this scheme that the number of metric units in some lines has been determined by a type of

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<sup>16</sup>Raphael Weiss, "De Chiasmo in Scriptura," Beth Mikra, XIII (1962), 46-57.

<sup>17</sup>Raday, p. 72.

<sup>18</sup>Hans Kosmala, "Ancient Hebrew Poetry," Vetus Testamentum, XIV (October, 1964), 420-445.

structural chiasmus. Moreover, the German-trained Kosmala uncovers in the chiastic arrangement of poetic lines a phenomenon which often unites a passage's form with its content in perfect harmony. Thus, Kosmala adopts the two following axioms of analysis:

We should study Hebrew poetry first by counting words and stresses, not syllables and long or short vowels, and second observing that one line within a composition corresponds to another line of equal length also with regard to its content.<sup>19</sup>

Most of Kosmala's samples show how strophes were arranged in pairs metrically parallel to each other, but three of his final examples show particularly how this parallelism can be inverted. Kosmala concludes that chiasmus enhances the beauty and meaning of poetic passages in the Old Testament by focusing all attention on the middle line and by creating a complete agreement between form and content.

Kosmala gives the following scheme for Isaiah 7:7-9, which is constructed out of five lines with the following metric lengths:

a		תהיה	ולא	תקום	לא	4	
b	כי	ראש	ארם	דמשק	וראש	דמשק רצין	7
c	ובעוד	ששים	וחמש	שנה	יחת	אפרים מעם	7
b	וראש	אפרים	שמרון	וראש	שמרון	בן רמליהו	7
a	אם	לא	תאמינו	כי	לא	תאמנו	4

The King James translation of this passage reads:

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<sup>19</sup>Kosmala, p. 425.

- a It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass  
 b For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus  
 is Rezin  
 c And within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be  
 broken, that it be not a people.  
 b And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria  
 is Remaliah's son.  
 a If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

These five lines in a sense revolve around the middle line, which is not only flanked by lines with corresponding metric lengths but contains the crux of the prophecy, i. e. that within sixty-five years Ephraim shall be broken and not be a people. This type of symmetrical balance around an important centerpiece is characteristic of complex structural chiasmus in the Old Testament, as Lund's first law indicates.

In his next two examples, Kosmala gives a metrical scansion, but no text.<sup>20</sup> Isaiah 40:3-5 is shown to contain six lines in the following arrangement:

a	— — —	3
b	— — — / — — —	6
c	— — — / — — —	5
c'	— — — / — — —	5
b'	— — — / — — —	6
a'	— — —	3.

Note that in this inversion even the position of the caesura in c is altered in c' so that the lines are broken into 2/3 and 3/2 arrangements

<sup>20</sup>Kosmala, p. 444. "We need not write out the Hebrew text here, as it is quite easy to 'scan' it according to this diagram."

respectively. The metrical structure of this passage corresponds directly with its content, for a tells of the voice crying in the wilderness and a' tells that the voice comes from the mouth of Yahweh; b and b' both proclaim that the way must be prepared for God to reveal his glory, and c and c' describe the physical changes which will come upon the valleys and mountains, the crooked and the rough places when the Lord appears. Thus lines with equal metrical length also contain equal or corresponding ideas.

The third example which Kosmala gives he calls "one of the most elegant pieces." It is Isaiah 30:29-31. Kosmala gives the following scheme with his own translation:

a	— — — — / — — — — —	6
b	— — — — / — — — — —	4
c	— — — — / — — — — —	5
d	— — — — / — — — — —	7
c'	— — — — / — — — — —	5
b'	— — — — / — — — — —	4
a'	— — — — / — — — — —	6

- a This song you shall have as in the night when you sanctify yourselves for the feast,  
 b And gladness of the heart, as when one goes with a pipe  
 c To come into the mountain of God, to the rock of Israel.  
 d YHWH shall cause his glorious voice to be heard and the lighting down of his arm to be seen,  
 c' With the indignation of his anger and the flame of a devouring fire,  
 b' Devastation and tempest and stones of hail:  
 a' "Through the voice of YHWH Assyria is shattered, beaten down with the rod."



Kosmala's translation of these verses readily reveals the parallelisms and emphasizes the fact that once again everything purposefully revolves around the middle line. Note also that from a-c the scene is one of joyous festivity, but from c'-a' the scene is one of utter destruction of Israel's enemy.

Through Kosmala's work it becomes apparent that chiasmus is a structural element of ancient Hebrew poetry. Here the meter is a variable; the chiastic arrangement dictates to the meter and not conversely, as is the case in the Homeric poetry examined in the next chapter. Thus we see here that metric lines in Hebrew are arranged to the principles of chiasmus.

Related to the practice of positioning poetic lines chiastically is the tendency to group prosaic and poetic sections according to principles of symmetry. The Book of Job, for example, follows an A-B-A pattern in which the prologue and the epilogue are prose and the main body of the book is poetry.<sup>21</sup> Gordon points out that even though some critics date the sections in Job far apart from each other on stylistic grounds alone, there is no reason to assume that the Book of Job was not meant to be a unit, since the ancient mind was accustomed to the principles of contrast and symmetry.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Cyrus Gordon, Ugaritic Literature (Rome: Pontificum Institutum Biblicum, 1949), p. 132.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

Not only literarily but also exegetically, chiasmus has proven useful in understanding passages in the Old Testament whose meaning is otherwise obscure. Recent articles such as Dahood's "Vocative Lamedh in the Psalter" and Holladay's "Chiasmus, the Key to Hosea XII 3-6" indicate that interest in chiasmus in the Old Testament is neither an archaic remnant of nineteenth century scholasticism nor an unsuccessful tool of dilettante scholars. Dahood uses chiasmus as a crucial tool of literary criticism, necessary in translating and analyzing a passage's structure and meaning. The immediate problem which he is studying in this article is the proper translation of Hebrew and Ugaritic vocatives, and he finds that chiasmus makes the vocatives in verses such as Psalm 3:8-9 and Psalm 31:3 "even more pellucid and convincing."<sup>23</sup> Holladay finds that chiasmus is the key to understanding Hosea's reference to the patriarchal traditions of Jacob. Without chiasmus, "attempts at elucidating the central two verses have continued to be unsatisfactory, since the whole passage presents a variety of interlocking problems."<sup>24</sup> After discussing the relationship of this passage with the Jacob-material in Genesis, Holladay comments on the chiastic structure of the central lines in Hosea 12:4-5:

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<sup>23</sup>Dahood, "Vocative Lamedh in the Psalter," p. 302.

<sup>24</sup>Holladay, p. 53.



It is not far-fetched to find a chiasmus here. This chiasmus has been prepared for by two previous chiasmi in the same passage, one large, one small. In 3a we find "Israel", in 3b "Jacob"; 4a offers the paronomasia on "Jacob", and 4b the one on "Israel". Again, the word-order of 3b is of the form a, b, c c'a'b'. These chiasmi are not forced on Hosea by the contents of his message; the material could easily be rearranged into normal parallelism. Hosea has intended them. Thus the chiasmus we are positing in 4-5a has been prepared for by these earlier ones.<sup>25</sup>

Having posited the existence of chiasmus in Hosea 12:3-6, Holladay produces the following arrangement of ideas in this passage:

- a Yahweh
- b Israel
- c Jacob
- d Jacob and Esau at birth
- e Jacob with the divine being
- e' Jacob with the divine being
- d' Jacob and Esau at their reunion
- c' God and him (Jacob the patriarch) at Bethel
- b' God and us (Israel the nation) at Bethel
- a' Yahweh.

Holladay then comments: "That Hosea is able to accomplish this careful balance of poetic form while reproducing the order of events in Genesis and Exodus is high testimony to his skill."<sup>26</sup> He then proceeds to give an acceptable translation of these difficult verses. This translation will not be given here, for this thesis is not interested in the

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

specific details of Holladay's article, but in the fact that he was able to reach his conclusions only through the use of chiasmus as a general principle of literary criticism.

Thus we have seen that chiasmus forms a structural basis for numerous passages in the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and in the Psalms. Chiasmus in the Old Testament has been seen to appear in both passages of prose and poetry and to be either simple, compound, or complex. We have seen that it operates on four levels of literary composition, ordering words, thoughts, events and metric lines, and creating an enduring and impressive literary tradition whose beauty is something a conscientious reader of the Old Testament should be well aware of.<sup>27</sup> In the Old Testament, the chiastic forms are fully developed, and they seem to have been perfected from the very beginning of Hebrew writing, for as Gevirtz observes:

Even the earliest examples of Hebrew poetry betray no signs of hesitation or experimentation with form, but, rather, a sophistication and an ease of poetic expression that bespeak long and intimate familiarity with the medium.<sup>28</sup>

The expressiveness and charm of the Old Testament has inspired and intrigued Western thinkers for centuries, yet only recently have

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<sup>27</sup> Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 30f.

<sup>28</sup> B. C. S. Gevirtz, Journal of Near Eastern Studies, XX (1961), p. 41.

scholars rediscovered this subtle structural basis of much of its eloquence. Although chiasmus does not underlie every verse in the Old Testament, it is sufficiently prevalent that, along with the forms of direct parallelism, it is to be considered an essential element of the literary structure of the Old Testament.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Dahood, "Vocative Lamedh in the Psalter," p. 305f.

CHAPTER IV  
CHIASMUS IN HOMER

In the Old Testament, parallelism is one of the primary structural elements of literary style. In the Homeric epics, however, a different structural device is fundamental: the meter determines the basic structure of each of the 27, 803 lines of the Iliad and the Odyssey; dactylic hexameter makes each line a structural unit.<sup>1</sup> Since meter is of primary importance to Homer, chiasmus becomes secondary, and like all else, it conforms to the demands of the metrical scheme. Thus the basis of the style of the Old Testament is opposite that of the Homeric epics: in Hebrew, parallelism is primary and meter is secondary, but in Homer the forms of parallelism are ornamental and optional and it is the meter that is essential.

Nevertheless, chiasmus functions both grammatically and structurally in Homer. Due to the large number of short syllables in Ionic Greek, dactylic hexameter did not drastically restrict the flexibility of word order, and thus grammatical chiasmus occurs frequently in Homer. It is normally contained within the structure of individual lines, although isolated cases exist in which complicated chiastic figures extend over a number of lines. When chiasmus is structural in

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<sup>1</sup>Alan J. B. Wace and Frank H. Stubbings, A Companion to Homer (New York: Macmillan, 1963), p. 19.

Homer, grammarians refer to it as hysteron proteron, i. e. "the latter first." Hysteron proteron describes figures which extend over many lines under the following type of circumstances: when a passage is constructed such that its first thought refers to the latter thought of the preceding passage, and its latter thought, to the preceding passage's former, the figure is called hysteron proteron. Even though Cicero was aware of this Homeric technique<sup>2</sup> and even though scholars such as Wilamowitz-Moellendorff<sup>3</sup> and Cedric Whitman<sup>4</sup> have concerned themselves with Homeric symmetry in general, modern scholars have begun to realize the structural effects and nature of hysteron proteron only recently.<sup>5</sup> Thus we see that Homer uses both grammatical and structural types of chiasmus in his epic style. For clarity, the grammatical type simply will be called chiasmus in this chapter, while the structural type will be referred to as hysteron proteron.

When Homer uses chiasmus in arranging the order of his words, it is usually short and simple. Chiasmus in Homer seldom exceeds

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<sup>2</sup>Cicero, Atticus 1, 16, 1.

<sup>3</sup>Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Griechische Literatur, 17 quoted in Samuel A. Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, XXXI (1920), 42.

<sup>4</sup>Cedric H. Whitman, Homer and the Heroic Tradition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 97.

<sup>5</sup>Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," p. 47.

one line in length or overlaps from one line to the next, since it is subordinate to the metric structure of the individual lines themselves. Moreover, chiasmus in Homer rarely introduces antithetical ideas in its inverted second half. Homeric chiasmus embodies no turning point nor escalation of thought, as chiasmus often does in Hebrew. Here it is strictly grammatical, simple chiasmus. This is substantiated by the fact that one of the clues which often betrays the presence of chiasmus in a Homeric line is the presence of τε . . . τε in that verse. The simple addition which is connoted by the usage of τε . . . τε<sup>6</sup> typifies the simple nature of chiasmus in Homer, as is illustrated by the following examples:

Iliad 3, 179 ἀμφοτέρων βασιλεύς τ' ἀγαθὸς κρατερός τ' αἰχμητής

Speaking of Agamemnon this line says he was "at the same time a good king and a strong spearfighter" (L). Bryant renders the line "and is both a gracious king and a most dreaded warrior." Literally it reads, "both a king noble and a strong spearman." Notice that this is a single line of hexameter, and that it uses the τέ . . . τέ construction.

Iliad 9, 443 μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμεναι πρηκτιῆρά τε ἔργων

A speaker of words and one who is accomplished in action (L).  
In words an orator, in warlike deeds an actor (B).

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<sup>6</sup>H. W. Smyth, Greek Grammar (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 666f. Like the Latin et . . . et, or the English both . . . and, this expression links two equivalent classes of objects or types of actions to each other. The particle τέ is usually used with a correlative conjunction, and although τέ . . . τέ most often connects clauses, it may be used to collate single words, especially in poetry.



Iliad 16, 224 χλαινάων τ' ἀνεμοσκεπέων οὔλων τε ταπήτων

And mantles to hold the wind from a man, and with fleecy blankets (L).

Cloaks well lined and fleecy carpets (B).

Iliad 16, 857 ὄν πότμον γοῶσα, λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτήτα καὶ ἦβην

Mourning her destiny, leaving youth and manhood behind her (L).  
Sorrowing for its sad lot, to part from life in youth and prime of strength (B).

Iliad 24, 730 . . . ἀλόχους κεδνᾶς καὶ νήπια τέκνα

And the grave wives and the innocent children (L).

Its noble matrons and its speechless babes (B).

Odyssey 3, 310 μητρῆς τε στυγερῆς καὶ ἀνάλκιδος Αἰγίσθοιο

Over his despicable mother and the coward Aegisthus (R).

Of his bad mother and the craven wretch Aegisthus (B).

Odyssey 10, 235 οἴνω Πραμνεΐῳ ἐκύκα, ἀνέμισγε δὲ σίτῳ

And fixed them a potion of Pramnian wine, in which she mixed grated cheese, barely meal, yellow honey (R).

Mingling for them Pramnian wine with cheese, meal and honey (B).

Odyssey 24, 340 ὄγχνας μοι δῶκας τρισκαίδεκα καὶ δέκα μηλέας

And you gave me some trees of my own--thirteen pear and ten apple (R).

Of the pear thirteen and of the apple ten thou gavest me (B).

These are examples of simple grammatical chiasmus. Of these eight examples, five are noun-adjective--adjective-noun patterns, two are noun-participle--participle-noun figures, and the remaining chiastic line (Iliad 9, 443) depends on cases, namely genitive-accusative--



accusative - genitive. All these examples of chiasmus are contained within single lines, and with the exception of Iliad 16, 224, they are all found in speeches.

In a few passages, Homer uses a complex grammatical chiasmus which involves several terms and resembles complex chiasmus as defined and studied in the preceding chapters. Although it is very difficult to isolate a rhetorical style from a poetic style in Homer (since the whole poem was spoken and all its speeches are poetical), chiasmus still seems to be predominantly a rhetorical device. It was observed above that simple chiasmus occurred frequently in speeches; below is an example of an elaborate creation of complex chiasmus found in Phoenix's speech (Iliad 9, 434-606). This speech appears in the ninth book of the Iliad, which has been described as the book of the Iliad which contains more oratio recta than any other part of the Iliad.<sup>7</sup> Coming from the hero's own tutor, this speech, of all speeches in the Iliad, should represent the paragon of Homeric rhetoric. In his speech, Phoenix presents a concise description of the heroic ideal: the hero should be a speaker (rhētēr) of words and also a doer of great deeds.<sup>8</sup> This description is

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<sup>7</sup>George W. Elderkin, Aspects of the Speech in the Later Greek Epic (Baltimore: J. H. Parst Company, 1906), p. 6.

<sup>8</sup>Iliad 9, 443. See example above.

monumental in the Iliad.<sup>9</sup> It is the turning point of Achilles' decision to stay in Troy, which in effect is the turning point of the Trojan War. When we understand that these nine lines of Phoenix's speech chiastically revolve around a central turning point, we will better understand the impact which this speech had on the heroic decision of Achilles, for in Phoenix's speech the focal point is the heroic ideal itself.

Iliad 9, 437-445 reads as follows:

a	437	πῶς ἂν ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ σεῖο, φίλον τέκος, αὐθι λιποίμην
	438	οἶος; . . .
b	440	νήπιον οὐ πω εἶδ' ὄθ' ὁμοίου πολέμοιο,
c-d	441	οὐδ' ἀγορέων, ἵνα τ' ἄνδρες ἀριπρεπέες τελέθουσι.
	442	τοῦνεκά με προέηκε διδασκόμεναι τάδε πάντα,
c-b	443	μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμεναι πρηκτιῆρά τε ἔργων.
a	444	ὥς ἂν ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ σεῖο, φίλον τέκος, οὐκ ἐθέλοιμι
	445	λείπεσθ', . . .

Bryant's translation renders the passage as follows:

- (a) How shall I,  
Dear child, remain without thee? When at first  
Peleus, the aged knight, from Phthia sent  
Thee, yet a boy, to Agamemnon's aid,
- (b) Unskilled as then thou wert in cruel war
- (c) And martial councils, --where men also gain
- (d) A great renown, --he sent me with thee, charged  
To teach thee both, that so thou mightst become

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<sup>9</sup>Adam Parry, "The Language of Achilles," Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, LXXXVII, 4.

- (c) In words an orator, (b) in warlike deeds  
An actor. (a) Therefore, my beloved child,  
Not willingly shall I remain behind;

Lattimore's rendition reads:

- (a) How then shall I, dear child, be left in this place behind you all alone? Peleus the aged horseman sent me forth with you on that day when he sent you from Phthia to Agamemnon a mere child, who knew nothing yet (b) of the joining of battle nor (c) of debate (d) where men are made pre-eminent. Therefore he sent me along with you to teach you of all these matters, (c) to make you a speaker of words and (b) one who is accomplished in action.
- (a) Therefore apart from you, dear child, I would not be willing to be left behind.

Iliad 9, 437-445 is a stylistically unique passage in the Iliad.

Very little of it is formulaic, and its important words appear nowhere else in the Iliad. A brief study shows that this passage is stylistically original, created especially for the purpose of embodying the description of the heroic ideal.

1. ῥητιῖρ' is unique to this passage.
2. πρηκτιῖρά is also unique to this passage.
3. The use of φίλον τέκος or a metrical equivalent of the formula is frequent in the Iliad, but nevertheless, its usage in 9, 437 and 9, 444 is different and significant.
  - a. This formula appears 27 times in the Iliad, 24 of which fall on the third and fourth feet of the line:

— ∪ ∪ — ∪ ∪ — ∪ Δίος τέκος  
 φιλον τέκος — ∪ ∪ — χ  
 εμον τέκος

- b. While the formula often appears in pairs (e.g. 3, 162 and 3, 192; 10, 278 and 10, 284; 22, 38 and 22, 56), only on one other occasion does it occur twice in the same speech (22, 38 and 22, 56 in Priam's speech to Hector.)
- c. The formula normally appears in the first line of a speech; this is the case 20 times out of 24. Besides appearing twice here in the middle of Phoenix's speech, it appears in the middle of Priam's speech to Hector once (22, 56) and once in the middle of Andromache's speech to Hector's funeral pyre (24, 732).
- d. The epithet is usually reserved for the gods. It refers to Athena 10 times; to Aphrodite, Dawn, Leto, Apollo, Hermes and Scamander, once each. It never refers to mortals except for Hector (three times), Helen (twice) and Achilles (1, 202; 9, 437; 9, 444).
4. ὁμοίου πολεμοίου is a formula which appears six times in the Iliad.
5. ἀγορέων is not formulaic. It is unique to this passage.
6. τελέσθουσι appears here and three other times in Homer.

Before leaving the discussion of Phoenix's speech it should be pointed out that the symmetry here is not perfect. Where there are two and a half lines (438-440a) between (a) and (b), there is no space between (b') and (a'). Where some of the thoughts, and indeed the important ones, fall into place, other ideas do not, e.g. a definite antithesis exists between Achilles' ignorance as a child (440) and Phoenix's knowledge as an old tutor (442) but this does not become a

part of the chiasmus. This shows that Homer was not preoccupied with creating chiasmus; although symmetry and inversion influence the structure of this passage, Homer was mainly concerned with his meter and his story. As difficult as it is to notice chiasmus in Homer,<sup>10</sup> it must have been even more difficult to compose it and still maintain the desired meter.

All of the examples given thus far of chiasmus in Homer conform first to the hexameter and secondarily to chiasmus, and they all have been grammatical. Even the complex chiasmus in 9, 437-445 depends on meter and parts of speech to make the chiasmus effective. For example, line 437 parallels line 444, both being fully dactylic lines. At the end of line 437, αὐτὶ λιποῖμην, and οὐκ ἐθέλοιμι, at the end of line 444, are equivalent in metric length, number, person and mood. οἶος in line 438 is metrically equivalent to λείπεσθ' in line 445, and line 443 is grammatically chiastic within itself. Thus we can see a difference between Homeric and Hebraic chiasmus. In the Old Testament chiasmus determines the meter, in that the metric length of lines conforms to the chiastic design and the meter occurs within

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<sup>10</sup>Julia Haig Gaisser, in her "Structural Analysis of the Digressions in the Iliad and the Odyssey," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, LXXIII, 1969, does notice that lines 437-438 and 444-445 repeat the main idea introducing Phoenix's speech, but she does not notice that the reason for such a repetition is to form a chiastic frame around the heart of that digression.

the framework of parallelism, but in Homer the meter creates the chiasmus, in that metric equivalents balance each other chiastically and the chiasmus occurs within the framework of the dactylic hexameter.

When an inversion in the structural order of events is found in Homer, the figure is referred to as hysteron proteron. Where chiasmus in Homer is grammatical, hysteron proteron is structural. As Samuel E. Bassett has clearly described, hysteron proteron is formally equivalent to chiasmus, yet the two are functionally different.<sup>11</sup> Where chiasmus gives order to words, hysteron proteron gives a structural order to the poet's thoughts. Although the term hysteron proteron has been familiar to scholars since the first century B. C.,<sup>12</sup> until recently there has been little concensus of opinion about its meaning and nature.<sup>13</sup> One of the most salient clues revealing its meaning, however, appears in Cicero. When Atticus asked two questions about the verdict of the trial of Clodius, Cicero answers the second question first and the first, second, and explains his action by citing Homer

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<sup>11</sup>Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," p. 54.

<sup>12</sup>The Roman commentators Servius and Donatus both used the term hysteron proteron, but the Greek grammarians used πρωθυστερον or υστερολογία. See Scholia Euripides Orestes 702; Scholia Euripides Phoenissae 887; and also Choeroboscus Grammaticus Περὶ Τρόπων.

<sup>13</sup>Bassett, Ibid., p. 39.



as his model, (Atticus 1, 16, 1). Homer was fond of this figure of inversion and repetition, but he was by no means bound to it. It was an ornamental, though functional, aspect of his style.<sup>14</sup>

Some of the examples of hysteron proteron which have drawn the attention of Mr. Bassett and also of the ancient scholiasts are volleys of questions which are then answered in the reverse order. For example:

Odyssey 24, 106ff.

Agamemnon asks Amphimedon (a) how the suitors came to die, and (b) whether he does not remember him. Amphimedon replies (b) that he does remember him well, and then he tells (a) of the slaughter of the suitors.

Odyssey 15, 509ff.

Theoclymenus asks Telemachus whether he shall go (a) to the home of a prince in Ithaca or (b) to Penelope. Telemachus answers that (b) it is impossible to see Penelope but (a) that he might become a guest at Eurymachus.

Odyssey 14, 115ff.

Odysseus asks, (a) who was your master? (b) perhaps I can give you tidings of him, for I have wandered far. Eumaeus responds, (b) no wanderer's tidings can have credence with my master's wife and son. (a) my master was Odysseus.

Examples of hysteron proteron also appear in the Iliad:

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<sup>14</sup>Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homenkos," p. 41.



Iliad 19, 139ff.

Agamemnon commands, (a) so rouse thee to battle and (b) I will render the gifts. Achilles replies, (b) as thou wilt about the gifts, now (a) let us think of the battle.

These are examples of a simple structural inversion or crossing, which fall into the category of simple structural chiasmus.

Other examples of hysteron proteron are not just simple, but compound. In the catalogue of the troops in the third book of the Iliad, first the Achaeans are described (A), then the Trojans (T); the Trojans advance first (T), then the Achaeans (A). In the second onslaught it is the Achaeans (A) who move first (Iliad 4, 427 and 433). In a series of five scenes, Iliad 15, 55-322 contains a long chain of such inversions:

(55) When Zeus wakes on Mount Ida, he bids Hera to summon Iris (a) and Apollo (b).

(143f.) She summons Apollo (b) and then Iris (a).

(157, 221) After they report to Zeus, he dispatches Iris (a) and then Apollo (b).

(229-232) The latter is given two commands: to take the aegis (c) and put the Achaeans to flight, and then to go to Hector (d) and rouse his strength.

(308, 322) Then Apollo goes to Hector's aid (d) and finally he takes the aegis (c) and routs the Achaeans.

The pattern here, which is a-b-b-a-a-b-c-d-d-c, exemplifies compound structural chiasmus and clearly lends a concrete element of continuity

to the narrative.

A most marked example of hysteron proteron is one which Aristarchus noted on the Oxyrhynchus Papyri 1086, which is fragment of commentary dated around the middle of the first century B. C. It is observed therein that the conversation between Odysseus and his mother, Anticleia, in the underworld, utilizes the principle of hysteron proteron in a complex structural fashion.

Odyssey 11, 170ff.

Odysseus asks the shade of his mother:

- (a) How she had died,
- (b) Was it by a disease,
- (c) Or by the gentle shafts of Artemis.
- (d) About his father,
- (e) About his son,
- (f) Whether another had assumed his royal power,
- (g) And about his wife, where does she stay.

Anticleia responds in exactly the reverse order:

- (g) She stays in thy halls,
- (f) No man has taken thy honor,
- (e) Telemachus is a peaceful lord,
- (d) Your father remains in the fields,
- (c) Artemis did not slay me,
- (b) Nor did a disease,
- (a) But I died of grief for thee. <sup>15</sup>

Although the poet does not always observe this order, he does use

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<sup>15</sup> For further discussion of this passage see Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," p. 46f.

hysteron proteron on many occasions, and as Aristarchus has said, "the poet's failure to use it is contrary to his wont."<sup>16</sup> Bassett concludes, "this inversion cannot be accidental. The poet must invert intentionally."<sup>17</sup>

Bassett offers four explanations for the use of hysteron proteron in Homer. He states that it was used for variety, for economy of thought, because of the point of view of the second speaker, and due to the need for continuity of ideas. Without flowing continuity, the oral recitation of a poem of this length would be confusing to the listener. With hysteron proteron the poet can direct the audience from one thought to the next, while the last is still fresh in their minds.

It is difficult to say which is more natural: the overlapping and connecting characteristics of an a-b-b-a-a-b pattern, or the alternating and juxtaposing order of a-b-a-b-a-b. Bassett chooses the former as the more natural, meaning the more primitive. He feels that the tendency to return to the last thought is "to be expected in all primitive speech."<sup>18</sup> This is probably true. Children like

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<sup>16</sup>Scholia A on Odyssey 56.

<sup>17</sup>Samuel E. Bassett, The Poetry of Homer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938), p. 122.

<sup>18</sup>Bassett, The Poetry of Homer, p. 128.

chiasmus.<sup>19</sup> From the position of a second speaker, the last thing mentioned will almost automatically receive the first attention. But in Homer's style, hysteron proteron comprises more than the simple tendency to return to the last idea mentioned. It continues on, returning backwards until the first idea is reached again. Bassett insists that this entails more than an innate tendency. Homer's epics, he says, are not "a product of primitive speech, but were written long after the reasoning processes had been well developed."<sup>20</sup> Homer's style was intentional and mature.<sup>21</sup> Certain elements of primitive speech may lie in the distant origins of such an involved style as hysteron proteron, and they may contribute to the audience's natural appreciation of the work, but the whole style in its complexity owes its existence to much more than one inherent human tendency. To say that Homer chose chiasmus and hysteron proteron because of inherent inclinations to invert is to say that he chose dactylic hexameter because man has a natural sense of rhythm. Homer used hysteron proteron as

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<sup>19</sup> Many children's nursery rhymes contain simple chiasmus. "Old King Cole was a merry old soul, and a merry old soul was he." Although chiasmus has a natural charm and appeal, there is a great degree of difference between simple chiasmus in a nursery rhyme and complex chiasmus in epic poetry.

<sup>20</sup> Bassett, Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Gilbert Murray, The Rise of the Greek Epic (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), p. 121.

a purposeful structural device, and understanding it is important "in helping us to understand the secret of the poet's art."<sup>22</sup>

There has been considerable discussion among the scholars about the relationship of hysteron proteron to chiasmus. Among the scholiasts themselves a series of propositions and rebuttals can be studied. Aristarchus of Alexandria treated hysteron proteron with lawlike universality in Homer, applying it as a compelling principle of textual criticism and interpretation.<sup>23</sup> His rival Crates of Pergamum would not allow hysteron proteron to pass as a figure unique to Homer and said: "The Homeric hysteron proteron is nothing but rhetorical chiasmus."<sup>24</sup> Crates and the Stoics of Pergamum considered hysteron proteron to be a rhetorical device which had been devised to give the lesser genre of rhetoric some of the majesty and order of poetry.<sup>25</sup> In the Middle Ages, the Bishop of Thessalonica, Eustathius, disparaged this order of Homeric thought, but still associated it directly with chiasmus:

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<sup>22</sup> Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," p. 51.

<sup>23</sup> Scholia T on Psi 679.

<sup>24</sup> Bassett, The Poetry of Homer, p. 125.

<sup>25</sup> Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," p. 56.

This is a novel order. It is chiasmic. . . . Homer's order results in a lack of clearness: He has arranged four words, not in square order (Eustathius gives a diagram to explain this), but like the letter X. This is artificial and contorted. The poet has imitated the mind of a man whose mind is confused, and one who is not at home in arranging words naturally.<sup>26</sup>

Certainly hysteron proteron is related to chiasmus, but to leave that relationship undefined invites unclarity and controversy.

When the scholiasts used the term chiasmus, they meant simple grammatical chiasmus, an unpretentious criss-crossing of terms.<sup>27</sup> When they used the term hysteron proteron they were referring to a structural order of ideas or events in an inverted arrangement.<sup>28</sup> But they never made this distinction explicitly. They were cognizant that simple chiasmus played only a peripheral role in later Greek and Latin literary art, and thus they attributed little status to it in Homer.<sup>29</sup> But the great poet cannot be judged according to the preferences of first century Greek grammarians. Homer's mind and his world thought differently from theirs. Unlike Hellenistic poetry, ancient literature was written with a rigid framework of geometric precision.<sup>30</sup> As a

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<sup>26</sup> Eustathius, Commentarii ad Homerii Iliadem et Odysseam, Georg Lehnert ed. (Leipzig: 1896), 390, 2 and 496, 14. Bassett's translation.

<sup>27</sup> Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," p. 59.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Bassett, The Poetry of Homer, p. 126.

<sup>30</sup> Whitman, p. 97.



part of this framework, chiasmus was both structurally and grammatically an influential principle of literary form. Had the scholiasts made the distinction between grammatical chiasmus and structural chiasmus, it would have been easy for them to associate their notion of chiasmus with the former and their notion of hysteron proteron with the latter, and thus they could have distinguished chiasmus from hysteron proteron.

By making this distinction, it can be concluded that Homer uses both grammatical and structural chiasmus. Simple and compound chiasmus appear many times and in many situations in the Homeric epics; complex chiasmus, however, appears considerably less frequently.

There is a second approach which has been taken to symmetry in the Homeric epics. Since this approach is not entirely a literary one, it has not been dealt with from the beginning of this chapter. The scholars who use this approach investigate the possible impact which Geometric art had on Homer. Though it is not certain that Homer wrote as late as the period in which Geometric art was flourishing, his works do manifest marked characteristics of geometric planning. Cedric Whitman, in his recent work Homer and the Heroic Tradition, became one of the foremost proponents of this school. His statement,



"the real analogue of Homeric style is geometric art,"<sup>31</sup> characterizes his whole study. "It is the spirit of the Geometric Age," he says, "which is at work here, and the form which it produced would have been all but impossible in any other time."<sup>32</sup> Whatever the reason, literary works from this age reflect a high propensity towards symmetry, as Whitman's schematization of the structure of the Iliad has shown. Whitman expressed his attitude towards symmetry in Homer as follows:

Homer's scenes are, furthermore, placed especially in the Iliad, in balancing positions, echoing each other either through similarity or contrast. The most obvious example, of course, is the balance of the Quarrel in Book I of the Iliad by the Reconciliation in Book XXIV. Thus there is a circular composition also of scenes themselves, scenes framing scenes in concentric rings around centerpieces, exactly as central motifs are heavily framed by borders in Geometric painting. Concentric circles are a universal device in Geometric art, and an especial favorite in Athenian Protogeometric; and the principle of balance around a central point which is implied in concentric circles is far and away the dominating formal principle in the Iliad. The poem as a whole forms one large concentric pattern, within which a vast system of smaller ones, sometimes distinct and sometimes interlocking, gives shape to the several parts.<sup>33</sup>

Whitman then provides the reader with numerous examples and an expanded chart depicting the geometric structure of the Iliad. Most

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<sup>31</sup>Whitman, p. 100.

<sup>32</sup>Whitman, p. 284.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

noticeable are the parallels between Books 9 and 16. Most of the other parallels are not as distinct as these are. Whitman recalls further:

It has been suggested that such "onion skin" design arose from a device originally mnemonic . . . but if this device was originally mnemonic and functional such a purpose is clearly superseded when it becomes the structural basis of a fifteen-thousand-line poem such as the Iliad. It has become an artistic principle.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, Whitman designates Geometric art as the analogue of Homeric style. Certain inconsistencies and uncertainties, however, make this designation unwarranted. Solely on the basis of the similarity of vase paintings and temple friezes with Homeric imagery<sup>35</sup> and structure, scholars have assumed that some relationship existed between Geometric art and Homeric literature. But this assumption overlooks major differences between Geometric art and the structures which appear in the Iliad. In a geometric temple frieze, the center image is the most important one, but in the Iliad, the central books, books 10 through 15, are not climactic and are most asymmetrical, as Whitman admits. As such they comprise a curious centerpiece. Furthermore, the rings bordering the central

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<sup>34</sup>Whitman, p. 98.

<sup>35</sup>R. Hampe, Die Gleichnisse Homers und die Bildkunst seiner Zeit (Tubingen, 1952), p. 38.

motif on geometric vase paintings do not themselves culminate in relative high points. Rather they repeat the same figure over and over again in a linear extension. Thirdly, the rings on the bottom half of most vases do not mirror the top half exactly. From this I conclude that symmetry in Geometric art is not strictly analogous to symmetry in Homer, and therefore, it may be erroneous to expect to find an explanation for all types of Homeric symmetry in Geometric art.

Literary devices, such as chiasmus and hysteron proteron, are not explained by the principles of Geometric art. Lord speaks directly to this point:

I doubt if the artistic pattern is dynamic to this degree and in this way. This is not to deny that such balances of pattern are felt by the singers--we have seen them operative on the level of interlinear connections, where they play a part in determining the positions of words in a line and perhaps even thereby the choice of words. But to suppose that such patterns would be the cause of changes of essential ideas and meaning may be carrying their influence too far.<sup>36</sup>

To explain Homer's use of chiasmus and hysteron proteron we must find another precedent, and as Kosmala suggests, the use of symmetry in composition "is not an invention of the Greeks. Very probably it is

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<sup>36</sup> Albert B. Lord, The Singer of Tales (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 168.

a Semitic inheritance, like the alphabet."<sup>37</sup> When Bassett concluded his chapter on hysteron proteron in Homer, he also suggested that Homer is possibly in debt to Semitic peoples in this regard:

There seem to be but two possible explanations. The first is that Homer and his predecessors were influenced by Asiatic peoples. This does not seem impossible. The Orient is the native soil of the raconteur; Ionia must have had some contact with the peoples of southwestern Asia and Mesopotamia. But until we have more knowledge of the channels by which this influence could have reached the bards before Homer, another explanation commends itself more strongly.<sup>38</sup>

The information which Bassett did not have was discovered only a few years before his death. In 1929 the Ras Shamra inscriptions were discovered in Ugarit.

In the following chapter, chiasmus in the Ugaritic epics will be examined. The use of chiasmus in Ugaritic provides a plausible precedent for the presence of chiasmus, hysteron proteron, and symmetry in the Homeric epics, as Ugaritic culture serves as an important link in the cultural bridge between the early Hellenic and Semitic worlds.

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<sup>37</sup>Kosmala, "Ancient Hebrew Poetry," p. 445.

<sup>38</sup>Bassett, The Poetry of Homer, p. 128.

## CHAPTER V

### CHIASMUS IN THE UGARITIC EPICS

The discovery of the Ras Shamra texts in 1929 began with the uncovering of a Mycenaean type tomb in Syria and literally multiplied the factors involved in Old Testament studies and ancient cultural history. Since that time several definitive works comparing the art, language and theology of the Ugarits with those of the Hebrews, Minoans, and Greeks offer evidence that extensive cultural intercourse must have existed between the nations of the ancient Mediterranean world.<sup>1</sup> Aside from commenting peripherally on the strengths and weaknesses of the hypotheses and conclusions of these works, the attention of this chapter will be directed towards studying the presence of chiasmus in Ugaritic, one of the ancient Semitic languages of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Ugarit, being located on the Syrian coast of the Mediterranean Sea, due east of Cyprus, was geographically as well as culturally a midpoint between Canaan and Ionia.<sup>2</sup> The civilization which flourished

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. John Gray, The Legacy of Canaan (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965); and Cyrus H. Gordon, Evidence for the Minoan Language (Ventnor: Ventnor Publishers, 1966).

<sup>2</sup>Cyrus H. Gordon, "Homer and Bible," Hebrew Union College Annual, XXVI (1955), 72.

there ca. 1400-1200 B. C., judging by the extent of the geographical expanse encompassed by its epics, was a far-venturing occidental maritime culture, anticipating the later rise of Phoenician Sidon and Tyre. According to the most recent syntheses of data, Ugaritic civilization was a cornerstone in the second millennium cultural substratum upon which the Greek and Hebrew cultures rose simultaneously as parallel superstructures.<sup>3</sup> Most noticeably, Ugaritic was an epic society, and as such it possessed cultural traits similar to those of the Greek and Hebraic civilizations which followed.

Beginning with a consideration of the likenesses between Hebraic and Ugaritic cultures, it becomes apparent that it will be tedious and superfluous to list all the common characteristics shared by these two. Among the abundance of cultural similarities are significant linguistic and lexicological equivalents which bear forcefully upon the consideration of the cultural bridge mentioned at the close of the last chapter. While being a cuneiform language when written, Ugaritic was a Semitic tongue.<sup>4</sup> A careful inspection of the Ugaritic and Hebraic alphabets reveals a preliminary linguistic similarity between them which makes further similarities suspect. The Ugaritic alphabet contains 27 letters.

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<sup>3</sup>Gordon, "Homer and Bible," p. 71f.

<sup>4</sup>Mitchell J. Dahood, "Northwest Semitic Philology and Job," The Bible in Current Catholic Thought (Gruenthaner Memorial Volume, New York, 1962), 55-74.



Twenty-two letters are identical with the Hebrew alphabet, and the other five letters reflect the standard sound shifts of Phoenician.<sup>5</sup> Not only are the alphabets of these languages related to each other, but Albright asserts that the Ugaritic dialects of Canaanite differed less from the most archaic Biblical Hebrew than Low German differs from High German or Provençal from French.<sup>6</sup> Stylistically as well as philologically Ugaritic bears the same stamp as Hebrew, as Gordon explicates:

Nowhere does the proximity of Hebrew and Ugaritic manifest itself more plainly than in the pairs of synonyms used parallelistically in both languages, e. g.

ahlm	-	msknt	=	tents	-	tabernacles
ars	-	<sup>c</sup> pr	=	dust	-	earth
bt	-	h zr	=	house	-	court
kšp	-	hrz	=	silver	-	gold
<sup>c</sup> lm	-	drdr	=	eternity	-	everlastingness
yd <sup>c</sup>	-	byn	=	know	-	perceive. <sup>7</sup>

These similarities, along with many others, confirm the assertion that Hebrew literature derived many of its techniques and inclinations,

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<sup>5</sup>Cyrus H. Gordon, The Common Background of Greek and Hebrew Civilizations (New York: Norton and Company, 1965), p. 129f.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted in M. Black and H. H. Rowley, Peake's Commentary on the Bible (London, 1962), p. 62f.

<sup>7</sup>Cyrus H. Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), p. 145f.



and most likely also its tendency to use chiasmus, from her predecessors to the north.<sup>8</sup>

Likewise Ugaritic influence spread extensively to the west. Cyrus Gordon has advanced a number of conclusions which cast light on the obscure origins of the Greek epic and the "miracle of Greece."<sup>9</sup> Epic poetry reached an advanced stage of development early in the history of the Eastern Mediterranean with the Ugaritic Baal, Krt, and Aqht epics, which contain many of the intricate and beautiful qualities present in the later Greek epics.<sup>10</sup> The liberal use of formulaic epithets, e.g. "Prince Sea," "Baal Rider of Clouds," "Judge River," and also the repetition of formulaic lines and speeches are frequent enough in these epics that an attempt to enumerate them all and to compare them with Homer would constitute a study in itself.

Despite much positive evidence, controversy has arisen in the discussion of the influence of Ugaritic on the Greek and Hebrew cultures. Exactly what bearing each culture had on the others, how close

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<sup>8</sup>M. J. Dahood, Ugaritic-Hebrew Philology (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), p. 42. Here Dahood compares the chiasmus in 'nt:III:19-21 with that in Job 12:7-8.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Cyrus H. Gordon, Ugarit and Minoan Crete (New York: Norton, 1966); Gordon, The Common Background of Greek and Hebrew Civilizations.

<sup>10</sup>Gordon, "Homer and Bible," p. 7; John Gray, The KRT Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), p. 5.

in time and travel they were to each other, and how extensively they actually borrowed from each other are questions which have defied final solution. Arvid S. Kapelrud objects to the practice which is becoming fashionable among scholars to unquestionably link Hebrew and Ugaritic, stating that this connection is hasty and premature and therefore should be rejected.<sup>11</sup> Jared J. Jackson states outright, "no direct dependence is thinkable."<sup>12</sup> These objections depend heavily on speculations which assume that great spatial and temporal gulfs existed between the histories of these peoples, but notable finds have recently served to revise any such estimations. M. J. Dahood refers in a current article<sup>13</sup> to the discoveries of inscriptions employing a type of Ugaritic script at Beth Shemesh near Jerusalem and at Mount Tabor and Tell Taanach in central Palestine which lend credence to the claim that Ugaritic was known outside of Ugarit itself. Secondly, studies examining the similarities between Job and Ugaritic poetry yield concrete reasons for asserting that Job and Ugaritic literature are not too far removed from each other in time.<sup>14</sup> Many

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<sup>11</sup>Arvid S. Kapelrud, Ras Shamra Discoveries and the Old Testament (Oklahoma: Norman Press, 1963), p. 84.

<sup>12</sup>Jared J. Jackson, Pittsburg Perspective, VII (1966), p. 31.

<sup>13</sup>Mitchell J. Dahood, "Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography," Biblica, 1968, p. 421.

<sup>14</sup>Cyrus H. Gordon, Ugaritic Literature (Rome: Pontificum Institutum Biblicum, 1949), p. 132.

controversial aspects of this new-found world are still being discussed by leading scholars in the field. Setting out in a new direction of literary analysis may settle, or perhaps only agitate, the fluctuating course of controversial hypotheses now moving in higher academic circles.

The structural principles fundamental to the basic nature of Ugaritic literature include both parallelism and meter. Although meter is not predominant in Ugaritic, it necessitated the use of ballast variants and formulae in epic composition. Ugaritic meter was constructed on approximate metric lengths<sup>15</sup> --a feature which binds the Ugaritic epics with the Homeric. These principles of word- or thought-units operate so that within a group of lines the number of word-units will be equivalent in each respective line. Thus the metric scansion of Text 68:25 is (2||2)|| (2||2):

yprsh . ym.	Yamm sprawls
ygl lars	falls to the earth
tngsm . prith	His joints quake
wydlp . tmnh	and his frame collapses.

This meter is simple, but it becomes more complex.<sup>16</sup> Ugaritic meter was not uniform throughout the entire body of its epic works, as

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<sup>15</sup>Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook, p. 133.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., Texts 77:33, 51:I:26-30, et al.

the hexameter was throughout the Greek. Only blocks of lines, especially those which paralleled each other in content, had to be metrically consistent within themselves. Still, two of the essential elements of epic style had been developed by the twelfth or thirteenth centuries: 1) a meter which could facilitate oral repetition or composition,<sup>17</sup> and 2) epithets allowing unstrained composition of lines of equal lengths.

Parallelism, over meter, was the main factor in the composition of Ugaritic poetry, and had it not been, the chore of deciphering the tablets would have been considerably more toilsome, if not impossible. After translating the body of Ugaritic Texts, Mr. Gordon commented in general upon the structure of Ugaritic poetry:

The essential feature of the poetry is the repetition of meaning in parallel form. Accordingly even a simple utterance like

tpr . wtdu (1 Aqht:134) mayest thou flee and fly

is to be classified as poetry.<sup>18</sup>

Not only are lines and speeches within an epic repeated identically, but groups of two or three lines will appear in strict parallel construction. A good example of this is the four-beat tristich from

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<sup>17</sup>Gordon, "Homer and Bible," p. 63ff.

<sup>18</sup>Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook, p. 131.

<sup>C</sup>nt:III:3:

yd pdry. bt. ar  
 ahbt. tly. bt. rb  
 dd. arsy bt. y<sup>C</sup>bdr

The love of Pdry, girl of light,  
 The affection of Tly, girl of rain,  
 The devotion of Arsy, girl of y<sup>C</sup>bdr.

The similarity of this type of parallelism to Hebrew parallelism is neither obscure nor irrelevant, as Kosmala observes:

Ugaritic poetry observes much the same rules as ancient Hebrew poetry. It obeys the same laws of parallelism within the line and of corresponding lines within the composition as Hebrew poetry. These are distinctive features of Ugaritic poetry as well as in ancient Hebrew poetry down to exilic times.<sup>19</sup>

More indicative than parallelism in Ugaritic literature is the prevalence of chiasmus appearing in both prose and poetic contexts. Although there exists relatively little evidence for a well defined prose style in Ugaritic, for the vast majority of the preserved inscriptions are poetic, Text 102:1-3 contains the following chiasmus in declaritive prose:

lyblt. hbtm  
 ap ksphm  
 lyblt.

I did not bring the hbtm  
 also the silver  
 I did not bring.

This verb-object object-verb chiasmus appears to have been intentionally created, although the reason for the inverted repetition is unclear.

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<sup>19</sup>Kosmala, "Ancient Hebrew Poetry," p. 427.

In poetry the frequency of chiastic stichi is quite high. . Gordon devotes an entire section in his chapter on syntax in the Ugaritic Textbook to a discussion of word orders such that the second stichos parallels the first chiastically. The many examples which he provides and the conclusion which he reaches concerning them confirm a definite correspondence between all the types of parallelism in Hebrew with those in Ugaritic. The following examples contain some very ancient illustrations of chiasmus in formal usage.

- 1003:5-7 a-(b-c)/(b'-c')-a'  
 lšnm, tlhk šmm                      The two tongues lick the heavens;  
 ttrp ym. dnbtm                      Swish in the sea the two tails.
- 2 Aqht:V:31 a-b--c/b'-a'--c'  
 tb<sup>c</sup> ktr lahlh                      Departed Ktr from his tents;  
 hyn, tb<sup>c</sup> lms<sup>v</sup> hnth                      Hyn departed from his tabernacles.
- 1 Aqht:148-50 a-(b-c)/(b-c)-a'  
 knp. nšrm b<sup>c1</sup>. ytbr                      The eagles' wings may Ba<sup>c1</sup> break!  
 b<sup>c1</sup>. ytbr . diy hmt                      May Ba<sup>c1</sup> break their pinions.<sup>20</sup>
- 51:VI:36 a--b-c/a'--c'-b'  
 hty bnt dt . ksp                      My houses I have built of silver,  
 hkly dtm hrs . <sup>c</sup>dbt                      My palaces of gold I have made.
- 2 Aqht:V:12 a--b-c/a'--c'-b'  
 hlk . qšt . ybln                      Behold a bow he brings  
 hl . ysrb<sup>c</sup> . qš<sup>c</sup>t                      Lo he fetches an arc.
- 2 Aqht:V:10 (a-b)-c/c'-(a'-b')  
 hlk ktr ky<sup>c</sup>n                      The walking of Ktr he spies,  
 wy<sup>c</sup>n tdrq. hss                      Yea, he spies the march of Hss.

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<sup>20</sup> Compare this with Psalms 58:6. See page 24 above.



1 Aqht:53 a-b-c/c'-B

st . gpy . dt ksp  
dt yrq . nqbny

Place my trappings of silver  
Of gold my saddlery!

2Aqht:VI:28 (a-b)-c/(b'-a)-c'

assprk . <sup>c</sup>m . b<sup>c</sup>l snt  
<sup>c</sup>m bn il . tspr . yrhm

I shall make thee count years with  
Ba<sup>c</sup>l; With Il's sons shalt thou  
count months.

2Aqht:I:22 a-(b-c)/a-(c'-b')

uzrm. ilm. ylhm  
usrm. ysqy. bn. qds

The gods eat the offerings  
The sons of holiness drink the  
offerings.

49:III:6 a-b-c/a'-c'-b

smm. smn tmtrn  
hhlm . tlk . nbtm

The heavens rain oil  
The wadies run with honey.

These are examples of simple and compound chiasmus. They are compact, which is reminiscent of chiastic lines in Homer and simple grammatical chiastic verses in the Old Testament.<sup>21</sup>

Chiasmus in the Ugaritic epics, however, is not restricted to simple or compound constructions. Multiple structures of complex chiasmus also appear in the religious and epic texts of Ras Shamra. The predominant type of expanded inversion in Ugaritic is an a-b-a construction, not of individual words as in the simple chiasmus but of longer motifs as in complex chiasmus. Accordingly in Religious Text 2:4-35 the pattern observed is a-b-a, where a represents the rituals of the women and b, those of the men. Also Text 52 (The Birth of the Gods) includes a central panel which is constructed with its elements

<sup>21</sup>See above pp. 7, 8, 41, 42.



in an a-b-a arrangement, as Gordon observes.<sup>22</sup> In lines 30-76 of this epic, a triad of speeches is made by the women addressing 'Il: first they speak as his wives but declare him unable to impregnate them, secondly they approach him as his daughters, and thirdly they revert to their appeal to him as his wives, whereupon he does impregnate them. Significant is the central location of the a-b-a structure at the turning point of the Birth of the Gods.

When the myth is fully expanded, revealing its complex chiasmic substructure, the centrality of the a-b-a pattern of speeches becomes even more unique. The symmetry in the myth extends much further than the simple a-b-a at the center, for the myth is in the structural form of a complex chiasmus:

Wilderness, Bread, Wine (4-5)  
 Seven times (11)  
 Goodly Gods, Islanders who suck at the nipples . . . (23-24)  
 Two kindlings (31)  
 Women speak as wives (40-43)  
 Women speak as daughters (44-46)  
 Women speak as wives (47-49)  
 Two sons (52)  
 Goodly Gods, Islanders who suck at the nipples . . . (58-62)  
 Seven years of prosperity (67)  
 Desert, Bread, Wine (68-72).

The myth, being a fertility rite, begins and ends in the wilderness (52:4, 52:68) with a prayer for sufficient bread (52:5, 52:71) and

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<sup>22</sup>Gordon, Ugaritic Literature, p. 58.

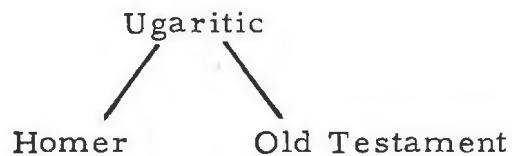
wine (52:5, 52:72). In line 11 the chorus is instructed to recite the invocation seven times, and in a corresponding position in line 67 'Il declares seven years of prosperity upon his people. Furthermore the words of lines 23-24, "I invoke the good gods, Islanders of the sea, who suck at the nipples of the breasts of Asherah," reoccur twice again (lines 58-59, 61-62). The pattern which is emerging here leaves the two kindlings (line 31) to be associated with the two sons who are born to 'Il, Dawn and Dusk in line 52.

Since this is the first time any attempt has been made to analyze a Ugaritic epic according to the principles of complex structural chiasmus, there are no documented statements which can be cited to substantiate these last results. However, in a letter dated December 17, 1969 concerning the plausibility of the chiastic arrangement above, Cyrus H. Gordon of Brandeis University wrote:

I have your valuable letter of December 9 and I feel that you are embarking on a very down-to-earth and productive aspect of Ugaritic literature. . . . All of your statements are not only plausible but are on the right track in a constructive direction that can only produce good results.

The demonstration that Ugaritic possesses the primeval characteristics of both Hebrew and Homeric composition bolsters the contention that Ugaritic civilization formed a cultural substratum in the Eastern Mediterranean area antedating the beginnings of Jerusalem's

and Athens' rise to prominence. For this reason Ugaritic will be positioned at the apex of an "epic triangle" whose other two vertices are Hebrew, represented by the Old Testament, and Ionic, represented by Homer, i. e.:



Thus, Ugaritic is the link mentioned at the close of Chapter IV. In the following chapters, the two branches which are diagrammed here will become even more distinct as they are spread apart by time and tradition.

## CHAPTER VI

### CHIASMUS IN THE GREEK AND LATIN TRADITIONS

In the Western traditions which followed after Homer, chiasmus became a figure of syntax which served many Greek and Latin authors in a variety of ways. In general, this chapter will show that chiasmus was a simpler figure in the later writers than chiasmus and hysteron proteron had been in Homer. It no longer functioned as a prominent element of structure, like hysteron proteron, giving continuity to multi-termed passages. In the later writers, chiasmus became a feature of organization restricted to creating individual sentences into stylistic units,<sup>1</sup> and thus Naglesbach calls chiasmus and anaphora "die den Organismus des lateinischen Satzes beherrschenden Mächte."<sup>2</sup> Since Greek and Latin are highly inflected, they permit flexibility in word order and accommodate the composition of simple chiasmus with relative ease. Nevertheless, chiasmus is not always found to be a natural, intrinsic aspect of classical styles, for in some authors it is

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<sup>1</sup>R. B. Steele, "Anaphora and Chiasmus in Livy," Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, XXXII (1901), 166.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Friedrich von Nägelsbach and Iwan Müller, Lateinische Stilistik (Nürnberg: Konrad Geiger, 1905), p. 728. "The ruling powers of the structure of the Latin sentence."

artificial.<sup>3</sup> While some use it frequently, it appears rarely in others. Therefore, in those authors where it does appear saliently, it can be considered an important part of their stylistic artistry. Bernhard, after accusing Nägelsbach of exaggerating the point, does not exaggerate when he says:

Das Verhältnis eines Autors zu diesen beiden Stellungsprinzipien (i. e. Anaphora and Chiasmus) ist überaus wichtig für die Beurteilung seines Stils, und es bedeutet eine sehr wesentliche Lücke in unserer stilistischen Forschung, dass erst wenige Autoren auf diese Frage hin eingehender untersucht sind.<sup>4</sup>

If neglecting chiasmus constitutes a significant deficiency in our analyses of style, then the deficiency is currently greater in Greek studies than in Latin. Even though "the psychological affect of word order is stronger in Greek than in Latin,"<sup>5</sup> most of the exhaustive studies of chiasmus in classical literature have concentrated on Latin authors and little attention has been paid to chiasmus in Greek authors.

In the classical languages chiasmus served at least seven distinct

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<sup>3</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, Handbuch der Alterums Wissenschaft (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1965), II, Pt. 2, No. 2, 696.

<sup>4</sup>Max Bernhard, Der Stil des Apuleius von Madaura (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1927), p. 31. "The way an author uses these principles of placing words is extremely important in judging his style, and it constitutes a significant deficiency in our stylistic analyses, that really only a few authors have been studied with this approach in mind."

<sup>5</sup>Eduard Norden, Die Antike Kunstprosa (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1958), I, 65.

stylistic purposes. Chiasmus aided in metrical composition, it added variety to expression, placed emphasis on particular words, juxtaposed contrasting terms, brought corresponding thoughts closer together, gave simple prose a rhetorical tinge, and created passages which were aesthetically pleasing. Several commentators expound upon these purposes, illustrating them with examples from various authors. Concerning the first purpose, aiding in metrical composition, Steele observes:

[In the Aeneid] the chiasmic arrangement gives a desirable succession of dactyls and spondees. In some verses this order of the words gives an available succession of long and short syllables.<sup>6</sup>

Havers explains that chiasmus occurs to meet the need for variety, stating, "Variationsbedürfnis führt weiterhin zum Chiasmus."<sup>7</sup> He continues by emphasizing that chiasmus not only can help an author avoid monotony, but it also creates a different rhetorical form through which emphatic statements can be made. He comments on this, saying:

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<sup>6</sup>R. B. Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, Caesar, Tacitus and Justinus (Northfield, Minn.: Press of Independent Publishing Co., 1891), p. 4f.

<sup>7</sup>Wilhelm Havers, Handbuch der Erklärenden Syntax (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1931), p. 180. "Furthermore, the need for variety leads to chiasmus."



Das Streben, der Monotonie aus dem Wege zu gehen, deckt sich aber vielfach mit dem Bedürfnis nach besonders eindringlicher Redeweise.<sup>8</sup>

A style of speaking is forceful (eindringlich) if it places emphasis clearly on central ideas. Chiasmus possesses an inherent characteristic which can juxtapose contrasting terms and draw emphatic attention to them.<sup>9</sup> Hofmann considers emphasis and continuity the two most significant psychological moments of chiasmus. According to his terminology, important concepts are arranged by chiasmus on the Hochtonstellen im Satz (the accentuated portions in the sentence) and the ideas are connected in chiasmus by an Anknüpfung (fastening) of one term to the next.<sup>10</sup> Beside these functional purposes, chiasmus also fulfilled artistic kunstvoller purposes.<sup>11</sup> As an element of style, it was an aspect of literary refinement and polish. Steele describes it as being able to impart even to simple narrative "somewhat of a

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 181. "The endeavor to avoid monotony coincides in many respects with the need for an especially penetrating style of speech."

<sup>9</sup>Steele, "Anaphora and Chiasmus in Livy," p. 185.

<sup>10</sup>J. B. Hofmann, Lateinische Umgangssprache (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1951), p. 123.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., "Die Form des Chiasmus ist ein Kennzeichen kunstvoller rhetorischer Sprache." "The form of chiasmus is a distinguishing feature of artistic rhetoric."



rhetorical tinge."<sup>12</sup> Elsewhere it is described as "stark rhetorisch" and as "ein zusätzlicher Schmuckmittel."<sup>13</sup> Being a "supplementary ornament," chiasmus was often only a non-essential adornment of classical style. Thus, through these seven purposes, chiasmus was available to serve Greek and Latin authors both practically and artistically.

Chiasmus was employed frequently and consciously by many authors. It is observed that "the criss-cross arrangement of words is a common phenomenon in Latin."<sup>14</sup> The literal thousands of examples of chiasmus which are available in commentaries on the classical authors<sup>15</sup> demonstrate the extensiveness of chiasmus throughout classical literature. Furthermore, the concensus of scholastic opinion holds that these chiasmi were consciously created for one or more of the purposes listed above. When the terms forming the chiasmus are near to each other and are not separated by a number of intervening

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<sup>12</sup>Steele, loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, Handbuch der Altertums Wissenschaft, pp. 696, 723. "Strongly rhetorical" and "an additional ornament."

<sup>14</sup>Steele, Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>15</sup>Steele lists 1257 examples of chiasmus in Livy; 211 in Sallust; 365 in Caesar; 1088 in Tacitus; 307 in Justinus; etc. Chiasmus in Sallust, Caesar, Tacitus, and Justinus, p. 61.

terms, it is agreed that the use of the figure is a part of "a conscious rhetorical art."<sup>16</sup> On occasions where many words intervene, chiasmus may simply be an inadvertent result.<sup>17</sup>

Depending on its usage, chiasmus can be either a natural form of speech or an artificial one. When a thought or a short sentence is fully enclosed in a chiasmus, the figure is considered natural and unaffected.<sup>18</sup> Examples of this are found in Cicero, *Rep.* 2, 33:

Matrem habemus, ignoramus patrem.

If we know who this king's mother was, but are ignorant of his father's name.<sup>19</sup>

or in Ennius, *Ann.* 269:

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<sup>16</sup>Steele, "Anaphora and Chiasmus in Livy," p. 154f.

<sup>17</sup>Nägelsbach calls attention to a chiastic arrangement in Caesar's *Gallic Wars* 1, 1, but upon closer examination it becomes apparent that there are 14 words between a-b and a'-b', casting some doubt on the intentionality of this particular chiasmus. Hofmann, *Lateinische Umgangssprache*, p. 123 also comments: "Gewissermassen nur zufällig ergibt sich Chiasmus dort, wo das Verbum dem Parallelschema zuliebe wiederholt wird." "To a certain extent chiasmus occurs only accidentally when the verb is repeated simply for the sake of a parallel scheme."

<sup>18</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, *Handbuch der Altertums Wissenschaft*, p. 696.

<sup>19</sup>Keyes' translation. Clinton W. Keyes, *Cicero De Re Publica* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 140.

Spurnitur orator bonus, horridus miles amatur.

Despised is the good orator, while the uncouth soldier is loved.<sup>20</sup>

Hofmann considers chiasmic disjunction natural and popular because in effect it takes the place of a conditional clause,<sup>21</sup> as in Plautus,

Trin. 250:

Nox datur, ducitur familia tota.

While she grants him a night, moves in on him with her whole household.<sup>22</sup>

The chiasmus here is strictly one of form and not one of content, i. e. the chiasmus is dependent on case and gender, number and person, and some alliteration rather than on actual word meanings. Chiasmus becomes artificial when the impact of its inversion extends no further than to isolated words or groups of words.

Gegenüber diesen mehr oder weniger ungesuchten Formen des Chiasmus ist die entsprechende Gegenüberstellung blosser Worte oder Wortgruppen schon wegen ihrer starken Wirkung kaum recht volkstümlich, z. B. Cic. Att. 14, 12, 3:

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<sup>20</sup>Author's translation. Johannes Vahlen, Ennianae Poesis Reliquiae (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1967), p. 47.

<sup>21</sup>Hofmann, Lateinische Umgangssprache, p. 122. "Echt volkstümlich ist chiasmatisches Asyndeton statt eines Bedingungsgefüges." "Genuinely native is the use of chiasmic contrast instead of a conditional clause."

<sup>22</sup>Nixon's translation. Paul Nixon, Plautus (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), V, 121.

hominem remotum a dialecticis, in arithmetis satis exercitatum.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, chiasmus is contrived when "eine Wiederholung ein und desselben Wortes" is relied upon to form the means of the chiasmus.<sup>24</sup>

This is characteristic of Sallust:<sup>25</sup>

Defensoribus moenium praemia modo, modo formidinem ostentare.

Now offering bribes to the defenders and now threats.<sup>26</sup>

The reason that chiasmus in Latin and Greek is often artificial is that its scope is limited to simple and compound chiasmus. Complex chiasmus is very rare. Steele divides the study of chiasmus into two sections. In the first, which deals with simple chiasmus, he states,

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid. "Compared with this more or less unaffected form of chiasmus, it is hardly natural or native to contrapose bare words or groups of words, for example, Cic. Att. 14, 12, 3:

a man adverse to dialectic thought but in arithmetic he is sufficiently trained."

<sup>24</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, Handbuch der Altertums Wissenschaft, p. 696. "A repetition of one and the same word."

<sup>25</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 16.

<sup>26</sup>J. 23, 1. Rolfe's translation. J. C. Rolfe, Sallust (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

As may be seen from the examples collected, chiasmus is found chiefly with two pairs of words.<sup>27</sup>

Also included under this section of his study are examples of the form (a-b)x(b-a)x(a-b) or of alternating pairs (a-b)x(b-a)x(a-b)x(b-a), e. g.

Caesar, B. Gall. 3, 19, 3:

Opportunitate loci, hostium inscientia, virtute militum, pugnare exercitatione.

Thanks to the favorable position of the camp, the enemy's unskillfulness and exhausted condition, our soldiers' courage and the experience they had gained in previous battles.<sup>28</sup>

Nägelsbach also comments on this type of construction and gives the following example of an interesting chiastic arrangement of the form a-b-b-a--c-d-d-c:

Lael. 15, 52 quis est, qui velit, ut neque diligat quemquam  
nec ipse ab ullo diligatur, circumfluere omnibus  
copiis atque in omnium rerum abundantia vivere.

Man sieht, wie hier die chiastische Gestaltung die ganze Periode durchdrungen hat, und dass man folglich irrt, wenn man den Chiasmus auf kurze koordinierte asyndetisch verbundene Sätze beschränkt.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Steele, "Anaphora and Chiasmus in Livy," p. 185.

<sup>28</sup>Handford's translation. S. A. Handford, Caesar, The Conquest of Gaul (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1965), p. 102.

<sup>29</sup>Nägelsbach, p. 681. "'Whoever he is, who hides, so that he esteems no one and no one esteems him, lives abounding in troops and rich in all things.' One sees here that chiasmus has penetrated the whole sentence and that it is wrong to limit chiasmus to short coordinated disjunctive clauses." Author's translation.

The second portion of Steele's study deals with chiasmi which are composed of three or more pairs or groups of three or more words. These types are rare in Latin and Greek.

Die chiasmatische Gegenüberstellung von zwei Gliedern, die mehr als zwei Worte umfassen, ist selten. . . . Noch seltener ist der Chiasmus bei drei Gliedern.<sup>30</sup>

The conclusion which Steele draws at the end of this second portion of his study is interesting and indicative, since complex chiasmus in a strict sense fails to appear:

Where there is a verb in each, the usual arrangement is 1, 2, 3, 2, 1, 3. Adverbs and pronouns usually remain at the beginnings of the group, 1, 2, 3, 1, 3, 2. The least common arrangements are 1, 2, 3, 3, 1, 2 and 1, 2, 3, 2, 3, 1.<sup>31</sup>

Although complex chiasmus is not mentioned in this summary, in his text Steele gives three examples of chiastic arrangements of the form 1, 2, 3, 3, 2, 1, whose form resembles complex chiasmus, e. g. Sallust, J. 84, 2:

Postulare legionibus supplementum, auxilia a populis et regibus arcessere.

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<sup>30</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, Handbuch der Altertums Wissenschaft, p. 696. "Chiasmus of two members which are longer than two words each are rare. Even rarer is chiasmus involving three members."

<sup>31</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 7.



He asked that the legions should be reinforced, summoned auxiliaries from foreign nations and kings.<sup>32</sup>

and Cicero, Mil. 103:

Ne scelerate dicam in te, quod pro Milone dicam pie.  
I fear lest expressions that are dutiful to Milo's cause may be treasonable to thee.<sup>33</sup>

When Steele, Nägelsbach, and Hofmann speak of a chiasmus which involves three or more pairs, they mean chiasmus in the form (a-b)x(b-a)x(a-b), as in Pliny, Nat. 2, 7, and not complex chiasmus as this paper defines it in Chapter II (see p. 9 ):

Alibi ursi, tauri alibi, alibi plaustrum, alibi litterae.  
In one place the figure of a bear, in another of a bull, in another a wain, in another a letter of the alphabet.<sup>34</sup>

The following chart demonstrates the relative frequencies of the three types of chiasmus as they appear in four authors:<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Rolfe's translation. Rolfe, Sallust, J. 84, 2.

<sup>33</sup>Watts' translation. N. H. Watts, Cicero the Speeches (London: Heinemann, 1928), p. 120.

<sup>34</sup>Rackham's translation. H. Rackham, Pliny, Natural History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944), I, 175.

<sup>35</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 61.



	Sallust	Caesar	Tacitus	Justinus
With two pairs of words:	190	294	887	240
With three or more pairs:	10	55	117	19
With groups of three or more words:	11	16	84	48

Even disregarding the fact that the third line of this chart includes all possible chiastic arrangements which involve two groups of three or more words (regardless of the order of the words in the second half as long as an inversion occurs somewhere among them, and not just those of the form a-b-cxc'-b'-a'), simple chiasmus still appears approximately twelve times more frequently than complex chiasmus.

In Latin when chiasmus does involve more than two terms, it is usually combined with anaphora.<sup>36</sup> Anaphora and chiasmus are often found together, as is stated: "Nicht selten werden Chiasmus und Anapher miteinander verbunden, namentlich bei drei und mehr Gliedern."<sup>37</sup> For example, Cicero, Epist. ad Familiares 7, 3, 3:

Discessi ab eo bello, in quo aut in acie cadendum fuit aut in aliquas insidias incidendum aut deveniendum in victoriis manus aut ad Iubam confugiendum.

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 7. "In some passages there are three or more groups and the usual arrangement is anaphoric."

<sup>37</sup>Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr, Handbuch der Altertums Wissenschaft, p. 697. "Often chiasmus and anaphora are bound to each other, specifically when there are three or more members."

I withdrew from a war where there was nothing left but either to die in battle or fall into some ambush, or pass into the conqueror's hands, or to take refuge with Juba.<sup>38</sup>

It is only when anaphora is combined with chiasmus that anaphora becomes a conscious literary effort.<sup>39</sup> Since it is chiasmus which elevates the mere presence of anaphoric parallelism to the level of a literary effect, chiasmus is the more determining, intentional, and rarer of the two literary forms.<sup>40</sup>

In Latin, parallel statements are usually accompanied by anaphora or chiasmus, but in Greek they are usually accompanied by the presence of certain particles, particularly μέν . . . δέ.<sup>41</sup> These particles, rendered "on the one hand . . . on the other," serve to mark strong or weak contrasts. They may appear in contexts with anaphoric or chiasmic arrangements, as Smyth describes their usage:

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<sup>38</sup>Williams' translation. W. Glynn Williams, Cicero, Letters to his Friends (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1943), p. 17.

<sup>39</sup>Hofmann, Lateinische Umgangssprache, p. 62. "Von Anapher als einem bewussten Kunstmittel kann man hier kaum reden. Bewussten Wirkungen dienstbar gemacht sind diese Funktionsanaphern dort, wo sie den Gegensatz hervorheben und wo durch Chiasmus eine rhetorische Wirkung erzielt werden soll."

<sup>40</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 58.

<sup>41</sup>J. D. Denniston, The Greek Particles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. xliii.

μέν . . . δέ is used in successive clauses which contain either the same word (anaphora) or a synonymous word. . . . A transposition is often designed to produce chiasmic order, as Xenophon, *Ana.* 3, 4, 2:

ἔπαθε μὲν οὐδέν, πολλὰ δὲ κακὰ ἔνομιζε ποιῆσαι  
He suffered no loss, but great harm he thought he had done.<sup>42</sup>

Just as a love for contrast and polarity are marked features of Greek thought and syntax, chiasmus was a natural mode of expression for the Greek author.<sup>43</sup>

The popularity of chiasmus varies greatly from one author to the next. Some authors have a special proclivity for using the form, others seem to ignore it. Each author tends to use chiasmus for promoting special interests or achieving certain literary goals. Heraclitus (fl. 505-500 B. C.) for example used chiasmus to accentuate his notions of eternal flux and opposition. In the three examples which follow, it can be seen that Heraclitean chiasmus is not dependent on form, but on content, e. g. grammatically Fragment 22 is noun-verb--noun-verb but the thought pattern is a-b-b-a:

Fr, 22 τὰ ψυχρὰ θέρεται, θερμὸν ψύχεται  
ὑγρὸν ἀναίνεται, καρθαλέον νοτίζεται

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<sup>42</sup>Smyth's translation. Herbert W. Smyth, Greek Grammar (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 656f.

<sup>43</sup>George G. Loane, A Short Handbook of Literary Terms (New York: Macmillan, n. d.), p. 38. "Gildersleeve says it is 'as natural to the Greek as mother's milk; not to us.'"

Cool things become warm, and the warm grows cool;  
The moist dries, the parched becomes moist.

Fr. 66 ἀθάνατοι θνητοὶ, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι. ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων  
θάνατον, τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεῶτες.  
Immortals become mortal, mortals become immortal.  
They live in each other's death and die in each other's life.

Fr. 98 τὸ ἀντίξουν συμφέρον καὶ ἐκ τῶν διαφερόντων  
καλλίστην ἁρμονίαν.  
Opposition brings concord.  
Out of discord comes the fairest harmony. <sup>44</sup>

Plato uses chiasmus and symmetry "more than any other prose writer,"<sup>45</sup> and since Plato's style is exceedingly free and unaffected by the influence of rhetorical tricks,<sup>46</sup> his frequent use of chiasmus is explained as an attempt at variety or emphasis or economy of thought. Plato, whose meticulously refined style was extremely conscious of word choice and word order,<sup>47</sup> writes the following chiasmi:

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<sup>44</sup>Wheelwright's translations. P. Wheelwright, Heraclitus (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), pp. 29, 68, 90.

<sup>45</sup>Samuel A. Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, XXXI (1960), 60.

<sup>46</sup>Nordon, Kunstprosa, I, 3.

<sup>47</sup>Cf. Dionysius Hal., De Comp. Verb., XXV. "Plato did not cease, when eighty years old, to comb and curl his dialogues and reshape them in every way. Surely every scholar is acquainted with the stories of Plato's passion for taking pains, especially that of the tablet which they say was found after his death, with the beginning of the Republic arranged in elaborately varying orders."

- Republic 494E πᾶν μὲν ἔργον πᾶν δ' ἔπος λέγοντές τε καὶ  
πράττοντες  
Will they not do and say anything . . .
- Phaedo 80A δουλεύειν καὶ ἄρχειν . . . ἄρχειν καὶ δεσπόζειν  
The soul to rule and govern, the body to obey and serve.
- Apology 19CD οὔτε μέγα οὔτε μικρὸν . . . ἢ μικρὸν ἢ μέγα  
Either much or little . . . in few words or many.
- Apology 34CD παῖδια τε καὶ ἄλλους τῶν οἰκείων . . . καὶ  
οἰκεῖοι μοί εἰσι, καὶ υἱεῖς . . . δύο δὲ παῖδιά  
His children with a host of relations and friends . . .  
I have a family, yes and sons . . . who are still young.
- Apology 25D τοσοῦτον σὺ ἐμοῦ σοφώτερος εἶ τηλικούτου  
ὄντος τηλικόσδ' ὢν;  
Now, is that a truth which your superior wisdom has recognized thus early in life, and I, at my age, in such darkness and ignorance as not to know.<sup>48</sup>

Most of these chiasmi are compact units. Some rely on content, others rely on form to create the inversion. They are literary embellishments which serve a structural function, although less rigidly or extensively than either Homeric hysteron proteron or Hebraic complex chiasmus. Bassett queries whether Plato derived his fondness for the inverted order from Homer,<sup>49</sup> but this query has not been answered. Other possibilities are that Plato's fondness for chiasmus is a reaction against Gorgian antithesis; or that it is a smaller scale

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<sup>48</sup>Jowett's translations. B. Jowett, The Dialogues of Plato (New York: Random House, 1937), pp. 755, 464, 403, 417, 409.

<sup>49</sup>Bassett, "Hysteron Proteron Homerikos," p. 62.

production of the cyclic structure of whole passages and dialogues.<sup>50</sup>

Although chiasmus is frequent in Plato, it is rare among the later Greek authors.

In Attic orators and in Greek prose writers in general after the fourth century the occurrences of chiasmus are negligible, except where there is a logical reason for the inversion.<sup>51</sup>

Although chiasmus appears seldom in later Greek writings, the following study will show that it is a frequent occurrence in Roman literature.

In the Golden Age of Latin literature, chiasmus was not only used in poetic, but also in prosaic works. The way Virgil uses chiasmus is one of the more ingenious aspects of his style. In the Aeneid, Virgil uses chiasmus in order to make his poetry smoother and more picturesque, and many lines could be quoted in which a chiasmic order or words was necessary to maintain the dactylic hexameter.<sup>52</sup> "Nearly every page of Virgil furnishes a number of examples of chiasmus."<sup>53</sup> A comparison of Virgilian hexameter to

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<sup>50</sup>See Robert S. Brumbaugh, Plato's Mathematical Imagination (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954), p 167.

<sup>51</sup>Bassett, The Poetry of Homer, p. 126.

<sup>52</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 4f. "His verses are often composed of two half-verses, between which chiasmus is frequent."

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.



Lucretian hexameter reveals further some of the functionings of chiasmus in Virgil. Lucretius' purpose was primarily to formulate his ideas logically rather than picturesquely. This gave his verses a different movement and sequence, and made it impossible for him to use chiasmus as frequently as it was used by Virgil.<sup>54</sup> The fact that Lucretius rarely used chiasmus illuminates the following statement:

The following dactylic hexameters of the Aeneid represent an extraordinary triumph on the part of Virgil over his predecessor Lucretius, whose De Rerum Natura is in dactylic hexameters which seem to be forcibly carved out of the spondaic Latinate rock.<sup>55</sup>

The "spondaic Latinate rock" here refers to the fact that long syllables occur more frequently in Latin than in Greek, making Greek more compatible with dactylic hexameter than Latin. By employing chiasmus, however, Virgil's poetry became more flowing and picturesque than Lucretius' and at the same time more like Homer's, Virgil's epic model.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>55</sup>Charles Rowan Beye, The Illiad, the Odyssey and the Epic Tradition (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p. 10.

<sup>56</sup>This fact further illuminates the role of chiasmus in Homer: since Homer could compose dactylic hexameter fluently without much help from chiasmus, he could create "chiasmus for chiasmus' sake," but Virgil was compelled to create "chiasmus for the hexameter's sake." Cf. A. Wace and F. Stubbings, A Companion to Homer (New York: Macmillan, 1962), p. 23.



Chiasmus was also used as a literary tool in some periods of Latin prose, and this is for a particular reason. Compared with Greek, Latin is not as rich in coordinating particles, and thus, in order to make smooth prosaic transitions, Latin authors use rhetorical devices which do not require many particles. Anaphora and chiasmus were the two devices which several Latin authors chose in order to accentuate contrasts or to draw connections. Just like μέν . . . δέ , "der Chiasmus offenbart das gegensätzliche Verhältnis unmittelbar und ohne weiteres."<sup>57</sup> Since Latin authors were not inclined to write a number of similar sentences or clauses without connecting them in an organized manner,<sup>58</sup> chiasmus became a useful tool for Latin prose writers, because it filled the void which was created by their language's deficiency of particles. Thus when chiasmus is used to show contrast in Latin the figure itself should be translated like the Greek μέν . . . δέ , e. g.:

Unum introitum nobis ad vitam dedit, exitus multos.

Eternal law<sup>59</sup> . . . allows to us one entrance into life, but many exits.

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<sup>57</sup>Nägelsbach, p. 697. "Chiasmus reveals a contrasting relationship immediately and directly."

<sup>58</sup>Nägelsbach, p. 701. "Sehr selten stellt der Lateiner eine Anzahl gleichartiger Sätze oder Satzteile unorganisch und beziehungslos nebeneinander."

<sup>59</sup>Seneca, Epist. 70, 14. Gummere's translation. R. M. Gummere, Seneca Epistulae Morales (London: Heinemann, 1930), II, 64.

Nevertheless, chiasmus does not always show contrasts. In fact, that is only one of its many functions, as is seen by considering the use of chiasmus in the following authors. Sallust (86-34 B. C.), one of Rome's first prominent historians, utilizes chiasmus in his writings for the sake of variety: "He is continually striving after variety in words, constructions and arrangement. He freely uses chiasmus which is a conscious element of his style."<sup>60</sup> In both the Catilina and Jugurtha, chiasmus appears frequently, although it is often contrived and artificial and depends upon the repetition of the same word at the center, e. g.:

Domum alius alius agros cupere.  
One coveted a house, another lands.<sup>61</sup>

Many of Sallust's chiasmi are exclusively grammatical and do not depend upon content nor do they create marked contrasts in meaning, and to this extent they resemble the inversions present in the fragmentary writings of Claudius, the second century B. C. historian, who uses "die doppelte chiastische Umstellung . . . gern und oft."<sup>62</sup> For example:

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<sup>60</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 13.

<sup>61</sup>Rolfe's translation. Rolfe, Sallust, Cat. 11, 4.

<sup>62</sup>Margarete Zimmerer, Der Annalist Qu. Claudius Quadrigarius, (München: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1937), p. 116.

Fr. 58 Quin castra relinquerent atque cederent hosti.  
That they might not leave the camp and yield ground to  
the enemy.<sup>63</sup>

The letters of Cicero reveal that Cicero (106-43 B. C.) used chiasmus when he wrote carefully and deliberately. "In those epistles of Cicero which were most freely and rapidly written chiasmus does not often occur."<sup>64</sup> Chiasmus in Cicero frequently employs adverbs such as umquam, semper (Att. 8, 1, 3) or prius, deinde (ad Fam. 3, 12, 1) or repeat the same word as tranquilla, tranquillissimus (Att. 7, 7, 4) or cogito, cogito (Att. 9, 5, 3). Cicero's wry sarcasm is also served by chiasmus such as Att. 9, 12, 3:

Nos vivimus, et stat urbs.  
Yet we live and Rome is standing.<sup>65</sup>

As Cicero says (although with a different intent), "mihi utile, nec inutile ipsi Caesari," chiasmus was also useful to Caesar (102-44 B. C.). It appears regularly in all his works, being slightly more prevalent in his more popular works, The Gallic Wars and The

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid. Author's translation.

<sup>64</sup>R. B. Steele, "Chiasmus in the Epistles of Cicero, Seneca, Pliny and Fronto," Studies in Honor of B. L. Gildersleeve (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1902), p. 339.

<sup>65</sup>Winstedt's translation. E. O. Winstedt, Cicero, Letters to Atticus (London: Heinemann, 1938), p. 242.

Civil War. In general, Caesar's chiasmi are unoriginal and short:

In the use of chiasmus there are no features which are peculiar to Caesar. . . . Nor do we find, as in Sallust, long sentences in which there is a chiastic arrangement throughout.<sup>66</sup>

In Livy (59 B. C. - 17 A. D.), chiasmus works as a directing force of syntax. Characteristic of Livy is chiasmus which depends primarily upon grammatical constructions.<sup>67</sup> Only a few depend upon content or introduce contrasting ideas; most simply repeat a parallel idea as in 24, 6, 7 and 30, 26, 8 and 7, 4, 7:

Finis regni Syracusani ac Punici imperii.

The boundary of the kingdom of Syracuse and the Carthaginian empire.

Superavit paternos honores, avitos aequavit.

He surpassed the number of magistracies held by his father and equalled those of his grandfather.

Vita agresti et rustico cultu.

In the rustic life and clownish bringing up.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 29.

<sup>67</sup>Steele, "Chiasmus in Livy," divides his study into grammatical sections, i. e. chiasmi often form adjective-noun-noun-adjective, verb-adverb-adverb-verb, etc.

<sup>68</sup>Foster and Moore's translations. B. O. Foster and F. G. Moore, Livy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), VI, 193; VIII, 459; and III, 369.

Concerning chiasmus in Livy, Steele states: "The words in the two members of the chiasmus are opposite in meaning or strongly contrasted in only a small number of the instances."<sup>69</sup> According to Steele, chiasmus occurs 1257 times in Livy. Nevertheless, chiasmus in Livy is little more than a grammatical framework within which the historian was able to arrange his diction and to color his interior sentence design.

Of Seneca (4 B. C. - 65 A. D.), a Silver Age author, it is said, "Chiasmus is not a very prominent feature in the style of Seneca."<sup>70</sup> Tacitus (ca. 55-ca. 117 A. D.) used chiasmus sporadically in his different works.<sup>71</sup> In works such as Germania and Dialogus, which are largely declarative, there are few contrasts and subsequently anaphora predominates over chiasmus. In the Annals and Histories, which show more frequent rhetorical touches, "chiasmus is more freely used."<sup>72</sup> Pliny the Younger (62-113 A. D.) uses chiasmus only in writings which he very carefully prepared.<sup>73</sup> Apuleius, a second century satirist and

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<sup>69</sup>Steele, "Chiasmus in Livy," p. 173.

<sup>70</sup>Steele, "Chiasmus in the Epistles of Cicero, et al.," p. 342.

<sup>71</sup>Steele, Chiasmus in Sallust, et al., p. 38.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>73</sup>Steele, "Chiasmus in the Epistles of Cicero, et al.," p. 346f.

philosopher, used chiasmus in a way such that its form agreed with its content, as Bernhard observes: "Besonders hervorzuheben sind diejenigen Stellen, in denen das Verbum zu einem zweiten Verbum in Antithese tritt."<sup>74</sup> Yet in Apuleius' works other than the Metamorphoses chiasmus is not apparent<sup>75</sup> and he is never obsessed with carrying out "dies oder jenes Stellungstypus."<sup>76</sup>

The study of chiasmus is not an attempt to force a foreign principle of criticism on ancient literature. These figures are self-evident in the ancient texts themselves.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, in order to understand the organization of thought behind these ancient works with the same clarity which was originally intended, modern scholars must familiarize themselves with the ancient forms to the point that

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<sup>74</sup> Bernhard, p. 32. "Especially the cases in which two verbs stand in contrast one to another should be emphasized."

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 38. "this or that type of arrangement."

<sup>77</sup> Nagelsbach, p. 727. "Die Chiasmen, die Anaphoren, die Gruppierungen, die Zahlenverhältnisse der Glieder müssen sich wie von selbst ergeben." "The chiasms, the anaphoras, the groupings, the relationships between numerical schemes among the parts must be apparent in an of themselves."



they seem like their own.<sup>78</sup> Only then, Nägelsbach insists, will formal criticism be profitable:

Wir sind daher der sicheren Überzeugung, dass jede fruchtbare und lehrbare Doktrin von der lateinische Wortstellung in der Periode erst an der Lehre von diesen Figuren einen festen und vernünftigen Halt gewinnt.<sup>79</sup>

Thus, an understanding of chiasmus, as difficult as it is to formulate explicitly, is necessary for a full appreciation of the order of thoughts and the arrangement of words in Greek and Latin sentences.

Despite the differences between authors and the stylistic preferences of each, four conclusions can be reached from the results of this chapter: 1) that chiasmus is present in Greek and Latin, 2) that chiasmus is frequently present in passages and letters which have been carefully written with a conscious effort towards rhetoric and style, 3) that chiasmus in Greek and Latin is primarily simple or compound, being limited to an aspect of sentence design

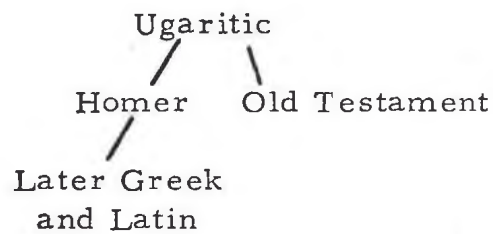
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<sup>78</sup>Ibid. "Aber da wir keine lateinische Luft mehr atmen und den Organisationstrieb der Sprache nicht als angeborenes sondern als erworbenes Eigentum besitzen, so müssen wir die Formen theoretisch kennenlernen, in denen derselbe betätigt." "Since we no longer breathe the air of the Latin world and no longer possess a feeling for its sense of linguistic organization naturally but must acquire such, we must study the forms in theory until they seem like our own."

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 697. "We are of the firm conviction that every profitable and teachable theory of Latin word-order within the sentence must first be well anchored in the principles of these figures (i. e. Anaphora and chiasmus)."



and 4) that it is mostly grammatical rather than structural in nature. Thus, this study of chiasmus in Latin and Greek allows the following addition to the scheme which was introduced at the end of Chapter IV:



The bond is tight between Homer and Virgil and also between the Greek antithesis with particles and the Latin syntax with chiasmus. Yet in its simplicity and its grammatical character in Latin writers, chiasmus has gravitated away from the structural functions which it served in the Old Testament.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE REDISCOVERY OF CHIASMUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Until chiasmus was noticed in the New Testament and it became clear that the presence of certain Hebraisms in the New Testament were important to the analysis and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, Christian scholars found little reason to occupy themselves with the form. While the study of chiasmus in Latin authors did not come until the end of the nineteenth century,<sup>1</sup> Biblical scholars began detecting chiasmus in the Scriptures in the first half of that century. The works of Bishop John Jebb<sup>2</sup> and Reverend Thomas Boys<sup>3</sup> were pioneering efforts in the study of chiasmus in the Scriptures. Although their techniques were unrefined,<sup>4</sup> their conclusions were sound. Yet, it was still many years later before the study of chiasmus in the Bible received widespread recognition from the scholastic world.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Draeger, Syntax and Stil des Tacitus (1882), Peters, Zur Wortstellung den Oden des Horaz (1880), Meyer, Die Wort- und Satz-bildung bei Sallust (1880).

<sup>2</sup>John Jebb, Sacred Literature (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820).

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Boys, Tacita Sacra (London: L. B. Seely, 1824) and Key to the Book of Psalms (London: L. B. Seely, 1825).

<sup>4</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

Two men anticipated Jebb and Boys. D. Johannes Albertus Bengel<sup>6</sup> of the University of Tübingen and Robert Lowth<sup>7</sup> of Oxford preceded Jebb and Boys by a number of years. Bengel is interesting because he was the first to use the term *chiasmus* itself to describe the phenomenon in the Bible, yet his works had little influence on his contemporaries.<sup>8</sup> Lowth is interesting for exactly the opposite reasons: his works were very influential, especially upon the minds of Jebb and Boys, yet he was never aware of the phenomenon of *chiasmus*.

Bengel's Gnomon Novi Testamenti, written entirely in Latin and not translated into English until 1860, mentions *chiasmus* in its glossary of literary devices used in the New Testament. In this glossary Bengel includes 103 entries from Aetiologia to Zeugma; the entry on

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<sup>6</sup>D. Johannes Albertus Bengel, Gnomon Novi Testamenti (Tübingen, 1742), English translation published by C. T. Lewis and M. R. Vincent in Philadelphia, 1860-1862.

<sup>7</sup>Robert Lowth, De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones Academicae (London, 1787), English translation published by Joseph T. Buckingham in Boston, 1815.

<sup>8</sup>Nils Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, XLVI (1930), 105. "I am not in possession of any information that enables me to connect Boys' work with the researches of Jebb or the still earlier observations of Bengel on *chiasmus*." Jebb, the only one to make use of Bengel's comments on *chiasmus*, states: "I gladly acknowledge considerable obligations to Dr. Hammond and also to several valuable remarks dispersed through the Gnomon of Bengel, . . . which have afforded some coincidences, rather than hints, on the subject of *epanodos*." Sacred Literature, p. 70.

chiasmus, being two and a half pages long, is one of the longest sections. Under chiasmus, Bengel discusses two types of parallelism, chiasmus directus and chiasmus inversus. According to his definition, chiasmus directus occurs when the first word in the first part refers to the first word in the second part, and the second word in the first part, to the second in the second part.<sup>9</sup> Today, this is not considered a form of chiasmus at all, for it is simply direct parallelism of the form a-b a'-b'. Chiasmus inversus, on the other hand, occurs when the first of the first refers to the last of the second and the first of the second, to the last of the first.<sup>10</sup> This is a veritable form of chiasmus. Bengel proceeds to give examples. He gives twelve examples of chiasmus, eight of which are direct chiasmus and only four of which are inverse chiasmus (Philemon 5, Matthew 12:22, John 5:21-27 and Romans 9:24). In later entries in the glossary, Bengel discusses Epanodos, which he defines as repetition (repetitio vocum) either of certain sounds or meanings (vel sonum vel quoad sensum). By repetition Bengel means something of the form a-b-b-c, (repeating b), or

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<sup>9</sup>Bengel, Gnomon, p. 758. "Chiasmus directus est, cum vox aut propositio prior in primo pari referri debet ad vocem aut propositionem priorem in secundo pari: et vox aut propositio in primo pari ad vocem aut propositionem posteriorem in secundo pari."

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. "Chiasmus inversus est, cum vox aut propositio prior in primo pari referri debet ad vocem aut propositionem posteriorem in secundo pari: et vox aut propositio posterior in primo pari ad vocem aut propositionem priorem in secundo pari."

an alternating pattern such as a-b-b-a-b (e. g. his example of Gal. 2:16). He also mentions hysteron proteron but he concludes; "In the New Testament hysteron proteron scarcely occurs, because the sacred scriptures 1) either maintain an order of things according to a temporal sequence or 2) use chiasmus inversus."<sup>11</sup> One of Bengel's concluding statements on the subject is: "Chiasmus is not an error but an elegant arrangement of words."<sup>12</sup> Bengel's understanding of chiasmus was sufficient for an initial statement of the phenomenon, yet it obviously lacks clarity, since it considers direct parallelisms a form of chiasmus. Unfortunately Bengel's work was neither continued by German scholars nor adopted by English theologians.

Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, delivered at Oxford, 1753, laid down the basic principles of parallelism as the great principles of general criticism. Lowth divided parallelisms into three categories: synonymous, synthetic and antithetic. Synonymous or synthetic parallelisms are two lines with similar meanings or syntax; by antithetical parallelism, Lowth means two parallel lines in which the second introduces an opposite or contrasting idea but whose form still directly parallels the first, e. g. Proverbs 15:1 (see p. 8). Lowth indicates

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 772.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid. "qui nihil vitii, elegantiae quiddam habet."

no knowledge of chiasmus, and for this he is criticised by Jebb.<sup>13</sup>

To John Jebb, the Bishop of Limerick, belongs the credit for having first discovered and understood chiasmus as a distinct type of parallelism prevalent in the Old and New Testaments. Thanks to the correspondence which Jebb carried on with his friend Alexander Knox, it is possible to follow the development of John Jebb's work. In 1805 Knox put Lowth's lectures into Jebb's hands, and in 1819 Jebb expresses his debt of gratitude to Knox for this. "Without you," he says, "I never might have read Lowth."<sup>14</sup> For Lowth, the study of parallelism had been limited almost exclusively to the Old Testament, but for Knox and Jebb the principles of parallelism and Hebraism were applied to the New Testament as well. Around 1805 their letters became filled with ideas about the structure of passages in the New Testament, and when they realized that some of the passages which they had found could not be explained fully in terms of Lowth's principles, they began to doubt the adequacy of Lowth's definitions. Jebb comments:

Bishop Lowth did not pursue his own system far enough. Lowth's taste confined him, for the most part, to the sublimer order; to

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<sup>13</sup>Jebb, Sacred Literature, p. 55. "His distribution of the clauses into lines is subversive of the order manifestly designed by the prophet." Also, introverted parallelism is "unnoticed as such by Bishop Lowth or by subsequent writers on the subject," p. 53.

<sup>14</sup>Thirty Years of Correspondence between John Jebb and Alexander Knox, ed. Charles Foster (Philadelphia: 1835), Letter CLXXIII.



the ode, the elegy, the idyllium. If he had possessed more philosophy, he would have penetrated deeper into the nature, the uses, and the elegance of the sententious.<sup>105</sup>

To a large extent, this discrepancy with Lowth provided the motivating impulse behind Jebb's work. He set out to correct Lowth's definitions of the species of parallelism.<sup>16</sup> Because of this, Jebb's work met opposition from the outset. Lowth's fame was international, but Jebb's was hardly domestic.<sup>17</sup> As a result Jebb's attempt to criticize Lowth failed for two reasons: partly because of Lowth's established prestige in theological circles and partly because of mistakes which Jebb himself made.<sup>18</sup>

Although Jebb's early opinions were influenced by Knox, Jebb became more independent of his friend as time progressed. Though the two men shared an interest in Hebrew composition, in Letter CLI it is clear that Knox was interested in the thought behind passages, while Jebb was concerned with the structure within the passages. Knox repeatedly raises interpretive and philosophic issues, but

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., Letter LXIII, January 25, 1805.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., Letter CLXXV. "Bishop Lowth's definition of parallelism ought to be corrected."

<sup>17</sup>A German edition of Lowth's Lectures appeared in 1758; an American edition in 1815. For Jebb, see footnote 32 below.

<sup>18</sup>E. g., Jebb was convinced that Hebrew poetry never used meter. See Letter CLXXV.

Jebb is content to stay on the level of philology. And so, for example, Knox was interested in epanodos as a psychological principle of climax; Jebb on the other hand was interested in it solely as a figure of speech. In 1818 Knox asked Jebb to collaborate with him on a theological, philosophical and interpretative application of the principles of parallelism,<sup>19</sup> but Jebb declined, determined to avoid exegesis even at the risk of offending his friend.<sup>20</sup> Knox finally comments to Jebb in 1819, when Jebb was nearing the completion of his book:

I quite agree with you that your philological investigations are not to be embarrassed with theological ideas. If therefore you find the latter mingled in any instance with my suggestions you will be aware that they are by no means intended for your adoption, but solely for your fuller view of what strikes me on the subject.<sup>21</sup>

Jebb's design in his volume Sacred Literature was to be as expository as possible, leaving the interpretative work for someone else at a later date.

Jebb's Sacred Literature is a remarkable volume. Its review of the principles laid down by Robert Lowth is comprehensive, and its observations on the style and structure of a great number of passages

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., Letter CLXXIII.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., Letter CLXXV.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., Letter CLI.

in the New Testament are original. Judging by the number of times Jebb and Knox mention epanodos in their correspondence during 1818 and 1819, Jebb himself considered the addition of "introverted parallelism" the most valuable contribution of his book to Biblical criticism. Some of the examples of "introverted parallelism" which he offers include the following. They are structural, not grammatical; several are complex, not just simple.

My son, if thine heart be wise;  
 My heart also shall rejoice;  
 Yea my reins shall rejoice;  
 When thy lips speak right things.  
 Proverbs 23:15-16

From the hand of hell I will redeem them;  
 From death I will reclaim them  
 Death! I will be thy pestilence;  
 Hell! I will be thy burning plague.  
 Hosea 13:14

The idols of the heathen are silver and gold;  
 The work of men's hand;  
 They have mouths, but they speak not;  
 They have eyes, but they see not;  
 They have ears, but they hear not;  
 Neither is there any breath in their mouths;  
 They who make them, are like unto them;  
 So they are who put their trust in them.  
 Psalm 135:15-18<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>As Jebb describes this parallelism, in the first and eighth lines we have the idolatrous heathen and those who put their trust in idols; in the second and seventh lines, the fabrication and the fabricators; in the third line, mouths without articulation; in the sixth, mouths without breath; in the fourth, eyes without vision; and in the fifth, ears without hearing.

And why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

For God commanded saying:

Honor thy father and thy mother

And he who revileth father or mother, let him die.

But ye say:

Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, be that a gift by which thou mightest have been relieved from me;

Must also not honor his father or his mother;

Thus have ye nullified the commandment of God by your tradition.

Matthew 15:3-6

Behold I send you forth as sheep

In the midst of wolves;

Be ye therefore prudent as the serpents;

And harmless as the doves.

Matthew 10:16

Behold therefore the gentleness,

And the severity of God;

Towards those indeed who have fallen, severity;

But towards thee, gentleness.

Romans 11:22

But ye are sanctified;

But ye are justified;

By the name of the Lord Jesus

And by the spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 6:11

Along with these examples Jebb offers the following explanation of the rationale behind introverted parallelism:

Two pair of terms or propositions, conveying two important but equally important notions, are to be so distributed as to bring out the sense in the strongest and most impressive manner: now, this result will be best attained, by commencing and concluding with the notions to which prominence is to be given, and by placing in the center the less important notion.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Jebb, Sacred Literature, p. 60.

Despite the extensive work he had done, Jebb still says, "I do not wish to recommend theory, but experiment."<sup>24</sup> Jebb felt that even if his theories should not be immediately profitable, they would lay the foundation for future interpretations of Scripture.<sup>25</sup>

At the same time Jebb was preparing Sacred Literature, Reverend Thomas Boys of Trinity College, Cambridge, developed his own theories on parallelism independently of Jebb.<sup>26</sup> In two small volumes<sup>27</sup> Boys discusses the principles of correspondence, his appellation for the notions of parallelism. Boys was well aware of passages containing correspondences which could have been described as chiasitic, yet his work had definite limitations.

While Boys must be given credit for having uncovered many facts concerning chiasitic structures in the Psalms, he failed to make the most of the principle with which he worked. He often observed terms and phrases which recur in a psalm, and rightly concluded that they had something to do with the literary structure of the psalm. He did not, however, subject each psalm to a minute analysis and made no attempt whatsoever to ascertain the principle of the Hebrew strophe. What he found of chiasitic structures is, as the reader may suspect from the brief passages already presented, only a small part of what may be discovered by a

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>In a memoir written by Reverend Sidney Thelwall appearing in Bullinger's edition of Boys we read: "What led to his Boys' discovery of the great principle of Parallelism, or (as he preferred to call it) Correspondence, I know not." p. ix.

<sup>27</sup>Boys, Tacita Sacra (1824) and Key to the Book of Psalms (1825).

minute analysis. The literary artistry of the Psalms is much more minute and intricate than Boys's method reveals.<sup>28</sup>

In 1890 Boys' work was enlarged and to some extent completed. In that year E. W. Bullinger combined the printed works of Boys with the scattered notes written in the margin of Boys' Bible. Where the 1825 volume only discussed sixteen psalms, the 1890 edition contained illustrations from all the psalms and, according to Bullinger, was "the first time that such a work had been laid before the public."<sup>29</sup>

Contrary to what Bullinger thought, Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures<sup>30</sup> had adopted the terminology and formulations of Jebb in 1836. Although the 1836 edition does not mention Boys, it devotes one-third of a page to Jebb. Under the subtitle "Parallel Lines Introverted," Horne quotes Jebb's definitions and chooses three examples from among the ones offered in Sacred Literature.<sup>31</sup> The 1836 edition was published in London and in Philadelphia.

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<sup>28</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 39.

<sup>29</sup>Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," p. 105.

<sup>30</sup>T. H. Horne, An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures (Philadelphia: Desilver Thomas and Company, 1836).

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., I, Pt. II, Bk. II, Chap. II, art. 4, p. 376. Isaiah 27:12-13, Proverbs 23:15-16, and Psalms 135:15-18. Jebb's definition reads: "These are stanzas so constructed, that, whatever be the



Nevertheless, the volumes of Jebb and Boys were received poorly in America and in England. From the evidence which is available to us today, they were not widely circulated,<sup>32</sup> and that, where they were circulated, they met with opposition. The situation was such that in 1854, John Forbes, a Scotch theologian, wrote a book with the stated purpose "to rescue the study of parallelism from the disrepute into which it has fallen."<sup>33</sup> One of the more outspoken critics of the study of parallelisms was an American professor, Joseph Addison Alexander. Professor Alexander accused the study of rarely, if ever, having "been the means of eliciting any new sense in Scripture not known before" and strongly protested against what he called "the fantastic and injurious mode of printing most translations of Isaiah, since the days of Lowth."<sup>34</sup>

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number of lines, the first line shall be parallel with the last; the second with the penultimate, or last but one; and so throughout, in an order that looks inward, or, to borrow a military phrase, from flanks to center. This may be called introverted parallelism."

<sup>32</sup>Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," p. 105. The assertion that Jebb's volume was not widely read or discussed is substantiated by the simple fact that Boys, one of Jebb's own contemporaries working in the same field and publishing in the same city only five years after Jebb, knew nothing of Jebb. Today the world still knows virtually nothing about Boys; copies of his Key to the Book of Psalms and his Tactica Sacra are very rare in this country.

<sup>33</sup>John Forbes, Symmetrical Structure of Scripture (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1854), p. 3. Also "the importance of the study of parallelism . . . has been hitherto but very inadequately apprehended."

<sup>34</sup>From Alexander's Commentary on Isaiah (Glasgow edition), p. 11, quoted in Forbes, Ibid., p. 2.

Forbes' volume answers these objections and promotes the study of parallelism.

The Symmetrical Structure of Scripture is a definitive restatement and reinforcement of the arguments for the presence of parallelisms in the Old and New Testaments. Although only nine of the 345 pages of the book deal with introverted parallelisms and epanodos, this short section is compact. Forbes not only quotes examples from Boys and Jebb, but he improves on them. For example, Jebb had arranged Matthew 6:24 as

No man can serve two masters;  
 Either he will hate the one and love the other,  
 Or he will adhere to the one and neglect the other;  
 Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

Forbes carried the introverted parallelism in this passage even further by exposing the epanodos in the two central lines:

No man can serve two masters;  
 For either he will hate the one  
 And love the other  
 Or he will adhere to the one  
 And neglect the other;  
 Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

Forbes also quotes eight examples from Boys, the most complicated of which is Boys analysis of structure in Paul's epistle to Philemon.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Forbes, Ibid., p. 40; or Boys, Tactica Sacra, p. 61ff.

Forbes considers Jebb's revisions and criticisms of Lowth fitting, and he uses the composite knowledge of both Lowth and Jebb to analyze a great number of passages in the New Testament, paying special attention to the Sermon on the Mount. Forbes' book is significant, if not as the cause of the scholastic acceptance of the principles of introverted parallelism, at least as a reflection of the attention which this study finally received in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

Since Forbes, several Bible studies have appeared which reflect similar interests. Miligan's book, Lectures on the Apocalypse,<sup>37</sup> makes contributions of its own about chiasmus, but never refers directly to any predecessors. Gray's The Forms of Hebrew Poetry<sup>38</sup> builds on Lowth's Lectures, but does not reveal any knowledge of Jebb, Boys or Forbes. From 1930 to 1942, Nils W. Lund published the majority of his work, which focusses on the presence of chiasmus in the New Testament.<sup>39</sup> Only in the last decade interest has turned from the study of chiasmus in the New Testament to that of chiasmus in the Old Testament, since the form has been discovered to be prevalent and significant in the ancient Hebrew scriptures.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in The New Testament, p. viii.

<sup>37</sup>William Miligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse (London, 1892).

<sup>38</sup>George Buchanan Gray, The Forms of Hebrew Poetry (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915).

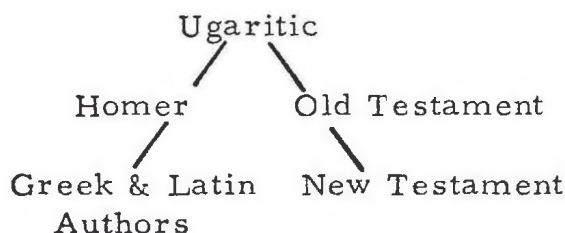
<sup>39</sup>See footnote 3 Chapter III.

<sup>40</sup>See footnote 19 Chapter II.

With this knowledge of chiasmus in the New Testament, it is possible to establish a correlation between chiasmus in the New and Old Testaments. Jebb expressed the relationship as follows:

Some are disposed to maintain that it /chiasmus/ is purely classical; and it does sometimes occur in Greek and Latin authors; but it is so prevalent, and so peculiarly marked in the Sacred Volume, that it may be justly accounted a Hebraism; and, as I am disposed to believe, a feature of Hebrew poetry.<sup>41</sup>

In other words, chiasmus in the New Testament springs from Hebraic, and not Greek, origins.<sup>42</sup> Chiasmus in the New Testament is complex and structural, agreeing with the content of the passage and not just with its syntax or form. These characteristics, typical of chiasmus in the Old Testament, make it natural to add the New Testament to the following scheme:




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<sup>41</sup>Jebb, Sacred Literature, p. 65.

<sup>42</sup>Paul Gaechter, Die Literarische Kunst im Matthäus-Evangelium (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1965), p. 9. "Der Urheber für geschlossene Formen ist kein Grieche, sondern ein Hebräer. . . . Diese Urform muss hebräisch gewesen sein." "The originator of enclosed forms was not a Greek but a Hebrew. . . . This primitive form must have been Hebraic."

## CHAPTER VIII

### CHIASMUS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Joseph Smith published the Book of Mormon in 1830 in western New York. He claimed that he had translated the book from a document written by the prophets of a group of ancient Hebrew diaspora<sup>1</sup> living on the Western Hemisphere ca. 590 B. C. to 421 A. D. In the first chapter of the book, the original text is described as having been written "in the language of the Egyptians" but "according to the learning of the Jews,"<sup>2</sup> which means it was written with Egyptian characters but in Hebraic style. As an aspect of Hebraic style, complex structural chiasmus is found as an integral part of the Book of Mormon's literary style, and knowledge of this helps to interpret and understand the total book's design<sup>3</sup> and content.

When searching for chiasmus in the Book of Mormon, it is

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<sup>1</sup>2 Nephi 33:8; Jacob 7:26; Omni 15.

<sup>2</sup>1 Nephi 1:2.

<sup>3</sup>When studying the structure of longer passages, there is no compulsion requiring that chapter and verse be taken into account. The first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed in standard paragraph form without verses. Arbitrary chapter divisions appear in the 1830 edition (1 Nephi with seven, 2 Nephi with fifteen, etc.). The current chapter divisions and versifications were made by Orson Pratt in 1879.

necessary to be alert to Mormon's work as an editor of the original works of the Book of Mormon prophets. Judging from his own writings, Mormon himself was not inclined to use chiasmus, and his abridgements show no special preference for the preservation of chiasmic passages. Where Mormon has radically changed or paraphrased certain passages, the original form of the passage may not have been kept in the abridged version. In chapters and books, however, which have come down to us intact and unaltered, we can be relatively confident that the forms which are discernable therein are accurate reconstructions of the original intent of the author. Mormon takes pains to tell his readers which records he is abridging and when he has deleted certain sections.<sup>4</sup> The Words of Mormon, Alma 13:31 and Helaman 2:13-14 are passages in which Mormon comments directly about his abridging process.<sup>5</sup> As a rule, whenever Mormon abridges extensively he is careful to make note of this in the record.<sup>6</sup> From this it is

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<sup>4</sup>J. N. Washburn, The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954), p. 93.

<sup>5</sup>Alma 13:31 "And Alma spake many more words unto the people, which are not written in this book."

Helaman 2:13-14 "And behold in the end of this book ye shall see that this Gadianton did prove the overthrow yea almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi. Behold I do not mean the end of the book of Helaman, but I mean the end of the book of Nephi from which I have taken all the account which I have written."

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Mosiah 8:1, 28:20, 29:33; Alma 6:5, 13:31, 16:18, 11:46, 19:27, 22:14, 28:1-6, 43:2, 44:24, 47:1, 53:10, 56:52; Helaman 2:14, 6:40; 3 Nephi 5:11, 17:16, 19:20, Chapters 29-30; 4 Nephi 23.



possible to ascertain which passages in the Book of Mormon have remained untouched by Mormon's hand; the list of such passages includes all of the Small Plates (1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni), King Benjamin's Speech (Mosiah 2:9-5:15), The Record of Zeniff (Mosiah 9-22), The Record of Alma (Mosiah 23-24), Alma's Blessings to his Sons (Alma 36-42), and many other speeches, letters, and histories from which Mormon quotes liberally.

Before discussing inverted parallelism in the Book of Mormon, it is necessary to examine the appearance of direct parallelism in the Book of Mormon, since chiasmus is a variation on parallelism. The Book of Mormon contains many fine examples of parallel verses.<sup>7</sup>

Lehi, in the style of the desert idyll, sings the following lines to his two sons Laman and Lemuel:

O that thou mightest be like unto this river,  
Continually running into the fountain of all righteousness.

O that thou mightest be like unto this valley,  
Firm and steadfast and immovable in keeping the commandments  
of the Lord. (1 Nephi 2:9-10)

The Psalm of Nephi (2 Nephi 4:16-35), contains examples such as the one in verse 28:

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<sup>7</sup>Hugh W. Nibley, An Approach to the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1964), p. 223ff.

Awake, my soul!  
No longer droop in sin.

Rejoice, O my heart!  
And give place no more for the enemy of my soul.

Mosiah 7:30-31 quotes an earlier scripture which reads:

And again he saith:

If my people shall sow filthiness  
They shall reap the chaff thereof in the whirlwind;  
And the effect thereof is poison.

And again he saith:

If my people shall sow filthiness  
They shall reap the east wind,  
Which bringeth immediate destruction.

Alma 34:18-25 is an example of parallelism which is built from eight parallel strophes arranged as a pair of pairs of pairs:

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- A Yea, cry unto him for mercy;  
For he is mighty to save.
- B Yea, humble yourselves,  
And continue in prayer unto him.
- C Cry unto him when ye are in your fields,  
Yea, over all your flocks.
- D Cry unto him in your houses,  
Yea, over all your household,  
both morning, mid-day, and evening.
- E Yea, cry unto him against the power  
of your enemies.
- F Yea, cry unto him against the devil,  
Who is an enemy to all righteousness.
- G Cry unto him over the crops of your fields,  
That ye may prosper in them.
- H Cry over the flocks of your fields,  
That they may increase.

The parallelisms here show that A parallels B, C parallels D, E parallels F, and G parallels H. Moreover, A-B, as a unit, balances C-D, and E-F balances G-H, with A-B parallel to E-F, and C-D parallel to G-H. Thus A-B-C-D in the first half parallels E-F-G-H in the second half, with the line "both morning, mid-day, and evening" dividing the eight strophes evenly in the middle.

Just as direct parallelisms appear in all parts of the Book of Mormon, chiasmus may potentially occur anywhere in the book, although it predominantly typifies the style of the first half of the book.

Those who make the greatest use of the form are Nephi, Benjamin, and Alma the Younger. They use chiasmus in practically every possible context, ranging from passages of straight narration or argumentation to ones of beautiful poetic eloquence. Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon is simple,<sup>8</sup> compound, or complex; it gives order to either lists of words or sequences of ideas. The examples of this speak well for themselves and shall be presented first according to their complexity and then according to their usage.

Simple chiasmus is present in the following passages:

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<sup>8</sup>Simple chiasmus is rarer in the Book of Mormon than complex, because, as was evidenced in the translations in Chapters IV and VI, simple chiasmus is very difficult to render into English. Complex chiasmus, which builds idea upon idea, can be translated thought for thought and is thus retained in translation.

Alma 40:23

The soul shall be restored to the body,  
And the body to the soul.

Mormon 7:9

This is written for the intent that  
Ye may believe that;  
And if ye believe that  
Ye will believe this also.

2 Nephi 29:13

And the Jews  
Shall have the words  
Of the Nephites,  
And the Nephites  
Shall have the words  
Of the Jews.

And the Nephites and the Jews  
Shall have the words  
Of the lost tribes of Israel  
And the lost tribes of Israel  
Shall have the words of  
The Nephites and the Jews.

Two examples of compound chiasmus are:

1 Nephi 13:42

A After he has manifested himself  
B Unto the Jews  
C And also unto the Gentiles,  
  
A' Then he shall manifest himself  
C' Unto the Gentiles  
B' And also unto the Jews.

Mormon 7:8

X The record which shall come  
Y Unto the Gentiles  
Z From the Jews

X' Which record shall come  
 Z' From the Gentiles  
 Y' Unto you.

The parallelism in these two passages can be recognized easily. The inversion of the second and third ideas in each creates the compound chiasmus.

Examples of intricate complex chiasmus in the Book of Mormon are numerous. Early in the book, in the second chapter of 1 Nephi, the following complex chiasmus occurs:

1 Nephi 2:4-5

- A And took nothing with him save it were his family
- B And provisions and departed into the wilderness
- C And came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea
- D And he traveled in the wilderness
- C In the borders which are nearer the Red Sea
- B And he did travel in the wilderness
- A With his family which consisted of my mother and . . .

The words family and Red Sea occur in parts A-C-C-A, associating the two closely. In 1 Nephi 2:9-10, only four verses later, Lehi names the valley and the river after members of his family. The even spacing of the word wilderness in B-D-B follows the fifth of Lund's Rules (see

p. 26 above).

King Benjamin's speech furnishes two additional examples of precise chiastic passages:

Mosiah 5:10-12

And now whosoever shall not take upon them the name of Christ  
 must be called by some other name;  
 therefore he findeth himself on the left hand of God.  
 And I would that ye should remember that this is the name  
 that should never be blotted out  
 except it be through transgression;  
 therefore  
 take heed that ye do not transgress  
 that the name be not blotted out of your hearts.  
 I would that ye should remember to retain this name  
 that ye are not found on the left hand of God,  
 but that ye hear and know the voice by which ye shall be  
called  
 and also the name by which he shall call you.

Mosiah 3:18-19

Men will drink damnation to their souls unless:

They humble themselves  
 and become as little children  
 believing that salvation is in the atonement of Christ;  
 for the natural man  
 is an enemy to God  
 and has been from the fall of Adam  
 and will be forever and ever  
 unless he yieldeth to the Holy Spirit  
 and putteth off the natural man  
 and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ  
 and becometh as a child  
 submissive, meek and humble.



The pronounced structural arrangement of these passages is clear.

King Benjamin uses chiasmus extensively. His speech, which conducts a coronation year-rite,<sup>9</sup> employs a traditional, ceremonious, rhetorical style. Mosiah 2:8-9 records the following statement which leads one to believe that Benjamin carefully prepared his speech and that the version which appears in Mosiah 2:9-5:15 is an accurate replica, and not a paraphrase, of the speech:

He caused that the words which he spake should be written and sent forth among those that were not under the sound of his voice, that they might also receive his words. And these are the words which he spake and caused to be written, saying: . . .

There are two further points which substantiate the fact that the chiasmus in Mosiah 3:18-19 and Mosiah 5:10-12 was written intentionally and purposefully. First, words such as "natural man," "the left hand of God," and "blotted out," appear uniquely in these verses.<sup>10</sup> These phrases are rare in the scriptures, yet they each occur twice within the small compass of these few verses. The repetition of these peculiar phrases was deliberate. Secondly, the purpose behind these chiastic

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<sup>9</sup>Mosiah 2:30.

<sup>10</sup>The phrase "natural man" occurs nowhere else in the Book of Mormon (Alma 41:4, 12 speak of the "natural frame" and the "natural state" only); "left hand of God" is unique to this passage in the Book of Mormon; "blotted out" appears in Mosiah 1:12; Mosiah 26:36; Alma 1:24, 5:57, 6:3 and was revived once by Moroni (Moroni 6:7).

verses is understood when they are seen as parts of the whole design of King Benjamin's speech. This will be discussed below (p. 136).

Complex chiasmus is used in narrative, argumentative, instructive, emphatic, eloquent, and rhetorical passages. In all cases it serves to contrast certain thoughts with each other and to shape the total passage into a stylistic unit.

Nephi's story of the slaying of Laban provides an example of chiasmus used in a narrative passage.

1 Nephi 4:4-27

A The Walls of Jerusalem:

They did follow me up until we came without the walls of Jerusalem,  
They hid themselves without the walls. (v. 4)

B Laban and his house

Went forth towards the house of Laban (v. 7)  
near unto the house of Laban  
a drunk man: it was Laban. (v. 8)

C Sword

I beheld his sword (v. 9)  
hilt was of pure gold and the blade was of precious steel.

D Spirit

I was constrained by the spirit that I should kill Laban  
(v. 10)  
And the Spirit said unto me again (v. 11)

E Delivered

Spirit said: slay him for the Lord hath delivered  
him into thy hands (v. 12)

F Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments,  
they shall prosper in the land of promise

they cannot keep the commandments according to  
the Law  
save they should have the law

E' And again I knew that the Lord had delivered Laban  
into my hands (v. 17)

D' Spirit  
Therefore I did obey the voice of the Spirit (v. 18)

C' Sword  
I smote off his head with his own sword (v. 19)

B' Laban and his house  
I went forth unto the treasury of Laban (v. 20)  
Servant of Laban  
Voice of Laban  
Master Laban (v. 22)

A' The Walls  
To my elder brethren who were without the walls (v. 24)  
I went forth unto my brethren who were without the walls.  
(v. 27)

This arrangement of Nephi's narrative reveals several details about the incident. At first (B) Nephi set out for Laban's house in general, but at the end (B') he heads directly for the treasury of Laban. This arrangement propitiously places the constraining words of the Spirit of the Lord (F) at the turning point of the episode, and it indicates that Nephi was told twice that he should kill Laban (E and E'). Several of the repetitions here are justified and explained only by chiasmus, for example, the word "again" in E' marks an obvious reference to E. No real need exists to describe the sword of Laban in C except as a preparatory remark for C'.

Chiasmus also appears as a logical device, for its form completes a thought and gives it unity. Nephi used this type of reasoning successfully against his rebellious brothers, and as he later recorded the events of the family's twelve-year expedition, he could still recall his clever rebuttal. 1 Nephi 15:9-11 reads:

- A And they said unto me, we have not; for the Lord maketh no such thing known unto us.
- B Behold I said unto them, how is it that ye do not keep the commandments of the Lord?
- C How is it that ye will perish
- D Because of the hardness of your hearts?
- E Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?
- D' If ye will not harden your hearts
- C' And ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive,
- B' With diligence in keeping my commandments,
- A' Surely these things shall be made known unto you.

The turning point of the argument is the question: "Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?" The same thought, concerning that which the Lord has said or will say, appears at the extremes (A and A') as well as in the middle (E) of the chiasmus. The first half of the passage contains the words of Nephi, but the second half is taken from the words of the Lord, which comprises a subtle shift at the

center. The only two terms in the passage which are not identically parallel are perish (C) and faith (C'). The chiastic arrangement suggests that Nephi is contrasting the living strength of faith with the ominous fear of death which accompanied Lehi's family through the wilderness.

Similarly, chiasmus is used in didactic passages. 2 Nephi 25: 24-27 teaches a specific point:

- A 1 And not-withstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses  
 2 And look forward with steadfastness unto Christ  
 3 Until the law shall be fulfilled,  
 4 For for this end was the law given.
- B Wherefore the law hath become dead unto us  
 And we are made alive in Christ because of our faith,  
 Yet we keep the law because of the commandments;
- C And we talk of Christ  
 We rejoice in Christ,  
 We preach of Christ,  
 We prophecy of Christ.
- C' And we write according to our prophecies  
 That our children may know  
 To what source they may look  
 For a remission of their sins.
- B' Wherefore we speak concerning the law  
 That our children may know the deadness of the law  
 And may look forward to that life which is in Christ
- A' 4 And know for what end the law was given,  
 3 And after that the law is fulfilled  
 2 In Christ that they need not harden their hearts against him,  
 1 When the law had ought to be done away.

This passage teaches the relationship between obeying the law of Moses and believing in the atonement of Christ. In the first half Nephi emphasizes the present, describing his generation's understanding of the law of Moses and the mission of Christ. The focus shifts at the center to the future, to the importance of teaching these things to posterity. Most of the parallels are plain. One interesting situation lies in the choice of the words "steadfastness" in A(2) and "harden their hearts" in A'(2); the two make a striking contrast. The use of four elements at the turning point (cf. the four times the word Christ appears in C) occurs frequently in the Book of Mormon.

The entire chapter of Alma 36 illustrates the way in which complex chiasmus can emphasize a central theme. Here Alma recounts his conversion to his son Helaman. Contrary to what one might believe from the report of Alma's conversion in Mosiah 27:10-31, the appearance of the angel was not the important incident in Alma's conversion nor was it the thing he remembered most vividly in his old age. A diagram of the chapter shows that Alma's conversion centered upon Jesus Christ. To emphasize this, Alma placed Christ at the structural focal point of this account.



## Alma 36

My son give ear to my words (v. 1)  
 Keep the commandments ye shall prosper in the land (v. 1)  
 Captivity of our fathers -- bondage (v. 2)  
 He surely did deliver them (v. 2)  
 Trust in God (v. 3)  
 Support in trials, troubles and afflictions (v. 3)  
 I know this not of myself but of God (v. 4)  
 Born of God (v. 5)  
 Limbs paralysed (v. 10)

## The Agony of Conversion

destroyed (v. 11)  
 racked with eternal torment (v. 12)  
 harrowed up to the greatest degree (v. 12)  
 racked with all my sins (v. 12)  
 tormented with the pains of hell (v. 13)  
 inexpressible horror (v. 14)  
 banished and extinct (v. 15)  
 pains of a damned soul (v. 16)

## Called upon Jesus Christ (v. 18)

## The Joy of Conversion

no more pain (v. 19)  
 oh what joy (v. 20)  
 what marvelous light (v. 20)  
 soul filled with joy as exceeding as was my  
 pain (v. 20)  
 exquisite (v. 21)  
 nothing as sweet as was my joy (v. 21)  
 singing and praising God (v. 22)  
 long to be with God (v. 22)

## Use of Limbs returns (v. 23)

## Born of God (v. 26)

## Therefore my knowledge is of God (v. 26)

## Supported under trials and troubles and afflictions (v. 27)

## Trust in him (v. 27)

## He will deliver me (v. 27)

## Egypt -- captivity (v. 28-29)

## Keep the commandments and ye shall prosper in the land (v. 30)

## This according to his word (v. 30)

Beside having practical structural value, chiasmus has a distinct charm and beauty in a passage such as this. The first ten verses and the last eight form an artistic frame around the central motif which contrasts the agony of conversion with the joy of conversion. In the center Alma makes this contrast explicit, when he says in verse 20, "my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain." No literary device could make this contrast more forcefully than chiasmus.

A comparison of Alma's account of his conversion in Alma 36 with his words as a young man in Mosiah 27:24-31 demonstrates the difference between inverted parallelism and direct parallelism. Mosiah 27:24-31, the Psalm of Alma, uses direct parallelisms where the later account, Alma 36, uses chiasmus. Mosiah 27:29-30 reads:

I was in the darkest abyss;  
But now I behold the marvelous light of God.<sup>11</sup>

My soul was racked with eternal torment;<sup>12</sup>  
But I am snatched, and my soul is pained no more.<sup>13</sup>

I rejected my Redeemer and  
Denied that which had been spoken of by our fathers;  
But now that they may foresee that he will come,  
And that he remembereth every creature of his creating.

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<sup>11</sup>Cf. Alma 36:20.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Alma 36:12.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Alma 36:19.

Compared with the chiasmus in Alma 36, these short direct parallelisms are abrupt;<sup>14</sup> they fail to amplify the magnitude of Alma's conversion and the central significance of Jesus Christ in that conversion.

Many of the passages in the Book of Mormon, to which other authors have been attracted, contain intricate chiastic arrangements. Washburn numbers 1 Nephi 17:36-39 among the poetic passages in the Book of Mormon but he describes the form of these verses to be direct parallelisms,<sup>15</sup> whereas it is actually chiastic:

A Behold, the Lord hath created the earth  
 that it should be inhabited,  
 And he hath created his children  
 that they should possess it.

B And he raiseth up  
   a righteous  
   nation,  
 And he destroyeth  
   the nations  
   of the wicked,

B' And he leadeth away  
       the righteous  
   into precious lands,  
       and the wicked  
       he destroyeth  
   and curseth the land unto them.

A' He ruleth high in the heavens  
       for it is his throne,  
 And this earth  
       is his footstool.

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<sup>14</sup>By Lowth's definitions they are antithetic parallelisms.

<sup>15</sup>J. N. Washburn, The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon, p. 105f.

In 1 Nephi 17:36-39 direct parallelism is combined with inverted parallelism. Parts A and A' each contain two directly parallel thoughts: the Lord's creation of the earth and the creation of his children (A), and the Lord's throne and his footstool (A'). The word earth appears at the beginning of A and at the end of A'. Parts B and B' are built out of four poetical lines, each containing three parts. Two of the three parts are inverted when they appear the second time, i. e.

righteous / nations  
nations / of the wicked

he leadeth away / the righteous  
the wicked / he destroyeth.

Furthermore, these inverted parts come at the end of the lines in B but they come at the beginning of the lines in B'. This leaves the words raiseth up and destroyeth at the beginning of B and precious lands and cursed lands at the end of B' in direct parallel form. Thus another chiasmus is formed between the directly parallel portions of B and B' and the inverted portions of B and B', i. e.

B      direct            inverted.

B'   inverted            direct.

Moreover, the first line in B and the first line in B' express the same idea, the blessing of the righteous, while the second line in B and B'

both express the same idea, the evil being punished. Thus in the midst of inverted parallelisms, the direct parallelism is also maintained.

A unique chiastic passage in the Book of Mormon is Alma 41:13-15. Alma has shown in Alma 36 that he is capable of flexibility and fluency within the chiastic principles. In Alma 41:13-15 he is describing the principle of restoration of all things which takes place at the judgment, and in this context chiasmus is an effective figure of speech. After listing four pairs of terms ( $w_1$   $w_2$  through  $z_1$   $z_2$ ), Alma pairs two lists of four terms and reverses their order at the same time ( $z'_1$  through  $w'_1$ , and  $z'_2$  through  $w'_2$ ):

Alma 41:13-15

A My son, the meaning of the word restoration is to bring back

B Evil for evil  
Carnal for carnal  
Devilish for devilish--

$C_{1\&2}$   $w_1$   $w_2$  good for that which is good,  
 $x_1$   $x_2$  righteous for that which is righteous  
 $y_1$   $y_2$  just for that which is just  
 $z_1$   $z_2$  merciful for that which is merciful

Therefore my son see that thou art

$C'_2$   $z'_2$  merciful unto your brethren,  
 $y'_2$  deal justly,  
 $x'_2$  judge righteously,

w'<sub>2</sub> and do good continually;

And if ye do all these things,  
Ye shall have your reward, yea,

C'<sub>1</sub> z'<sub>1</sub> ye shall have mercy restored unto you again

y'<sub>1</sub> ye shall have justice restored unto you again,

x'<sub>1</sub> ye shall have a righteous judgment restored unto you  
again,

w'<sub>1</sub> and ye shall have good rewarded unto you again.

B' For that which ye do send out  
Shall return unto you again  
And be restored;

A' Therefore the word restoration more fully condemneth the sinner  
and justifieth him not at all.

The pair of lists in the second half of this chiasmus has much in common with the list of pairs in the first half. Each of the lines in C<sub>1&2</sub> are composed of two parts. The first is a substantive, the second is an adjective. When y<sub>1</sub> y<sub>2</sub>, for example, reads

just (y<sub>1</sub>) for that which is just (y<sub>2</sub>),

the two usages of the word just are not equivalent. The first refers to the thing which will be restored, the second describes the quality possessed by the recipient. C'<sub>2</sub> and C'<sub>1</sub> reverse this order. C'<sub>2</sub> admonishes Corianton to possess the quality of being just, i. e. dealing justly (y'<sub>2</sub>), and C'<sub>1</sub> concludes that if he is just then justice will be restored unto him (y'<sub>1</sub>). In other words the terms within C<sub>1&2</sub> appear in the



order  $y_1 - y_2 - -y'_2 - -y'_1$ . Whence we see that the corresponding lines in each case appear in such an order in  $C'_2$  and  $C'_1$  that they are chiasmic with their corresponding line in  $C_{1\&2}$ . Thus there are three levels of chiasmus simultaneously operating within this passage: first, there is the general order A-B-C-C'-B'-A', where A and A' introduce and conclude Alma's remarks and B and B' are two tristichs which are associated with the idea of condemnation; second,  $C_{1\&2}$ - $C'_2$ - $C'_1$  describes the blessings of the word restoration; and third, there is the inversion of the order in which the four attributes ( $w_1$   $w_2$  through  $z_1$   $z_2$ ) occur and then reoccur ( $z'_2$  through  $w'_2$  and  $z'_1$  through  $w'_1$ ) in the center. Altogether this is an unusual occurrence of chiasmus.

Thus far it has been demonstrated that chiasmus appears in passages of narration, argumentation, instruction, emphasis, and eloquence. Although many of the examples given above are found in speeches,<sup>16</sup> chiasmus is yet to be considered as a rhetorical device. It was observed in Chapter V that simple chiasmus was capable of giving individual sentences a "rhetorical tinge."<sup>17</sup> In the Book of Mormon, however, chiasmus not only gives simple sentences a rhetorical tinge, but it creates the rhetorical basis for entire speeches. Considered as a whole, King Benjamin's speech is

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<sup>16</sup>Noticeably Alma 36; Alma 41:13-15; 1 Nephi 15:9-11.

<sup>17</sup>See page 77 above.

one elaborate chiastic structure. From one level to another, King Benjamin's words, thoughts, and themes have been structurally arranged with geometric precision.

King Benjamin's speech divides itself into seven thematic sections:

- I. Introduction and Thanksgivings to God (2:9-2:28)
  - God as heavenly King
  - God has created you physically.
    - i. Coronation (2:29-30).
- II. Keeping the commandments brings peace and prosperity (2:31-41)
  - ii. "Again I would call for your attention" (3:1)
- III. The angel's proclamation of Christ (3:2-3:10)
- IV. The state of man (3:11-3:27)
  - The natural man from the fall to the judgment.
    - iii. People fall to the ground and are forgiven (4:1-3)
- V. Benjamin's testimony of Christ (4:4-4:12)
- VI. Do the works of faith and you will be blessed with joy (4:13-4:30).
  - iv. Covenant (5:1-5:5).
- VII. Conclusion and Covenant with God (5:6-5:15)
  - God as heavenly Father
  - God has begotten you spiritually this day.

The correctness of this division is verified by the natural breaks in the speech which occur as a part of the ceremony (i, ii, iii, iv), and also

by the fact that each theme itself is a stylistic unit, i. e. Mosiah 5:10-12 (p. 122 above) is the centerpiece of VII, and Mosiah 3:18-19 (p. 122) is the central motif of IV. The lengths of the themes are consistent; there are three long sections (I, IV, and VI) with 20, 17, and 18 verses respectively, and four short sections (II, III, V, and VII) with 11, 9, 9, and 10 verses each.

By means of this diagram, several distinct points are apparent. First, God's roles as heavenly King and heavenly Father are brought to the audience's attention in I and VII. The contrast between the two is accentuated by the corresponding positions of the coronation of Mosiah and the covenant of the people. Where Mosiah is made king, the people are made subjects. The fact that the people are subjects of God is not incongruous with the coronation of Mosiah, for throughout the speech Benjamin contrasts the King in heaven with the king on earth. Mosiah 2:18-19 is one example of this; another is the balancing of God's proclamation of Christ in III with Benjamin's exhortation concerning belief in Christ in V. In I-III-V-VII in alternating positions, the King in heaven is central in Benjamin's thoughts, e. g. in I, man is to thank God for his infinite blessings to mortals; in III, Christ's mission is described; in V, Benjamin testifies of Christ; and in VII, the people are given the name of God by way of covenant. In the even numbered sections, II-IV-VI, the attention is focused on man, on his state, and on

his need to perform good works. Even the ritual in Mosiah 4:1-3, according to which the people fall to the ground, symbolizes the fallen state of natural man, the theme of part IV. In this manner every portion of this speech interlocks carefully with the others.

Within each theme Benjamin arranges his thoughts in parallel orders. Based on the preceding thematic analysis, the outline of King Benjamin's speech follows:

I. Introduction

- A. Purpose of the Assembly
- B. What is man?
- C. The Laws in Benjamin's Kingdom
- D. Service
- E. Render thanks unto God (4 parallel strophes)
- D' Service
- C' The Laws in God's Kingdom
- B' What is man?
- A' Purpose of the Assembly

II. Works, obedience instead of rebellion

- F. Obedience brings Victory and Prosperity
- G. Punishment for transgression
- H. The prophets lead you
- H' The Spirit of God will guide you
- G' Punishment for disobedience, mental anguish
- F' Obedience brings happiness and blessedness

III. The Angel's Proclamation of Christ

- J. Christ hath judged thy righteousness
- K. The Lord will descend
- L. The Lord's works
- M. Names
- L' The works of men
- K' The Lord will rise
- J' Christ bringeth a righteous judgment

## IV. The State of Man

P Atonement for the Fall of Adam

Q Salvation through Jesus Christ

R Though Christ has not come, it is as though he had come

Q' The Law of Moses efficacious only through Christ

P' Atonement for the Fall of Adam

S Alternating lines - only Christ

T Conditions of Salvation - the natural man

S' Alternating lines - only Christ

W Words as commanded

4 strophes

W Words as commanded

## V. Benjamin's Testimony of Christ

X Trust in the Lord's Goodness

Y Believe in God (8 parallel strophes)

X' Remember his Goodness

## VI. Works of righteousness bring joy

A Live in harmony with each other

B Follow the ways of truth, shun evil

C Give of your substance

D An excuse

E Joy in giving

D' An excuse

C' Give of your substance

B' Do all things in order

A' Reconcile all that you borrow

## VII. Conclusion and Covenant

U The Lord hath spiritually begotten you

V There is no other name

X Excommunication

V' Know the one name

U' The Lord may seal you his.

Each theme is a composite structure of chiasmic and synonymous parallelisms. The development of Benjamin's thoughts and the sequence

of his ideas is regulated by the principles of parallelism. Benjamin's creativity is not stifled, but encouraged, by these principles and by the possible variations on them. Benjamin combines direct and inverted parallelism and alternates freely from one to the other. Indicative of this is the first section of his carefully constructed speech, which will be examined in detail here:

### Benjamin's Speech I (Mosiah 2:9-2:28)

#### I. Introduction and Thanksgiving to God.

##### A. Purpose of the Assembly.

at My brethren, all ye that have assembled yourselves together;  
 ch I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with words,  
     1 but that you should harken unto me  
     2 and open your ears that ye may hear  
     3 and your hearts that ye may understand  
     4 and your minds that mysteries be unfolded to your view,  
 ch I have not commanded you to come up hither that  
     ye should fear me;

##### B. What is man?

M Nor should ye think that I of myself am more than a  
     mortal man,  
 L But I am like as yourselves subject to all manner of  
     infirmities,  
 K Yet I have been chosen that I should be ruler and king  
     over this people, and have been kept and preserved by  
     his matchless power  
 G To serve thee with all the strength which the Lord  
     hath granted me.

##### C. The laws in Benjamin's kingdom.

s I say unto you, that as I have been suffered to serve you



- r And have not sought gold nor silver nor no manner of riches of you
- 1 Neither have I suffered  
That ye should be confined in dungeons
  - 2 Nor that ye should make slaves one of another
    - a Or that ye should murder
    - b Or plunder
    - c Or steal
    - d Or commit adultery
  - 3 Or even have I not suffered  
That ye commit any manner of wickedness
  - 4 And have taught you to keep the commandments of the Lord;
- s And I have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you
- r That ye should not be laden with taxes grievous to be borne, and of these things ye are all witnesses.

D. Service.

- b Yet my brethren, I have not done these things that I might boast;
  - c Neither do I tell you these things that I might accuse you
  - c' But I tell you these things that ye know my conscience is clear.
  - b' I have said, because I had served you, I do not desire to boast,
- s For I have only been in the service of God  
And behold I tell you these things  
That ye may learn wisdom  
That ye may learn that  
When ye are in the service of your fellow beings  
Ye are only in the service of your God.

E. Render thanks to God.

- k Behold ye have called me your king  
And if I, whom ye call your king,
- s Do labor to serve you  
Then had not ye ought to labor to serve one another?

k And behold if I, whom ye call your king  
 Has spent his days in your service and yet hath  
 been in the service of God

t Doth merit any thanks from you  
 O how had you ought to thank your heavenly King!

D'. Service.

I say unto you my brethren that  
 t If you should render all the thanks and praise  
 ws which your whole souls hath power to possess

- 1 Unto that God who hath created you
- 2 And hath kept and preserved you
- 3 And hath caused that ye should rejoice
- 4 And hath granted that ye should live  
 in peace with another,

s I say unto you that if you should serve him

- 1 Who hath created you from the beginning
- 2 And art preserving you from day to day
- 3 By lending you breath that ye may live
- 4 And move and do according to your own will--

s I say if ye should serve him  
 ws with all your whole soul  
 Yet would ye be unprofitable servants.

C'. The laws in God's kingdom.

q And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his  
 commandments  
 cp And he hath promised you that if you keep his command-  
 ments ye should prosper in the land,

q And he never doth vary from that which he hath said,  
 cp Therefore if ye do keep his commandments, he doth  
 bless you and prosper you.

B'. What is man?

G In the first place he hath created you and granted you life,

- i For which ye are indebted unto him.  
 And he doth require  
 cp That ye should do as he hath commanded  
 For which if ye do  
 He doth immediately bless you and therefore he hath  
 paid you,  
 i And ye are still indebted unto him.
- b'' Therefore of what have ye to boast?  
 Can ye say aught of yourselves?  
 I answer ye, Nay.
- d Ye cannot say that thou art as much as the dust of the  
 earth,  
 yet thou wast created  
 of the dust of the earth  
 but behold  
it belongeth to him  
 who created you.

K And I whom ye call your king  
 L Am no better than ye yourselves are  
 dM For I am also of the dust.

A'. Purpose of the assembly.

And thou beholdest that I am old  
 dM And am about to yield up this mortal frame to its mother  
earth.

s Therefore as I said unto you that I had served you,  
 g Walking with a clear conscience before God,

y Even at this time have caused  
 at That ye should assemble yourselves together,

- 1 That I be found blameless
- 2 And that your blood should not come upon me
- 3 When I shall stand to be judged of God of the things
- 4 Whereof he hath commanded me concerning you.

at I say that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves  
together

that I might rid my garments of your blood  
 y At this period of time,  
 dM When I am about to go down to my grave that I might go down  
 in peace  
 t And my immortal spirit may join the choirs above in singing  
 g the praises of a just God.

This outline of the first part of King Benjamin's speech reveals a number of aspects of rhetorical style. First is the balancing effect which is achieved by positioning equal or similar words opposite one another. This occurs within individual sections, e. g. the way in which service and riches (s-r) balance service and taxes (s-r) in C; it also occurs between sections, e. g. the repetition of the ideas represented by M-L-K-G in B and G-K-L-M in B'. Second is the emphatic use of the figures containing two or four parts. Such figures are central in A, C (twice), D' (twice), and A', as they were in 2 Nephi 25:24-27.<sup>18</sup> In general the number four is compatible with all parallel schemes, for it can be split evenly into two pairs. An instance of this is found in C, where one quatrain (1-2--3-4) is divided by a second quatrain (a-b-c-d). The four strophic pairs at the center of the panel (E) are constructed in rigid parallelism, whose grammatical and syntactical parallels are as precise as those of Alma 34:18-25.<sup>19</sup> Third is

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<sup>18</sup>See page 127 above.

<sup>19</sup>See page 117 above.

Benjamin's careful bridging from one thought to the next. After the initial order has been established from A to E, Benjamin retreats one step at a time back to his starting point. Each step is connected with the previous one. In E Benjamin had made two points: 1) man should serve his fellow man (s) and 2) man should thank his heavenly King (t). In D' he uses the same ideas but in reverse order: first he says that the thanks of a man's whole soul is inadequate (t), and second, that the service of a man's whole soul is yet unprofitable (s). The central quatrains of D' describe man's indebtedness to God for life itself, and as such they prepare the audience for the questions of B'. A transition from C' to B' is created when the idea that if one keeps the commandments he shall prosper (cp), which appears throughout C', is repeated again at the beginning of B'. The focus of attention at the end of B' on the dust of the earth and on man's mortal frailty connects B' to A', in which Benjamin's concern for preparing to yield his mortal frame back to the earth is a major part of the purpose of the assembly. Benjamin's ability to make transitions such as these makes it possible for him to use chiasmus without sounding stilted, forced, or awkward.

The chiastic outline of Mosiah 2:9-2:28 reveals the development of Benjamin's thought as well as his style. When Benjamin repeats, he not only inverts, but he intensifies what he has said previously.

Accordingly A' adds a new dimension to A. A tells the purpose of the assembly from the audience's viewpoint by indicating to them what they should expect to do and to receive; A' tells the purpose of the assembly from Benjamin's standpoint by explaining what he expects to accomplish by means of the assembly which he has summoned. Section B is a humble statement to be made by a king, but it is not nearly as abasing as the statements in B'. In B man is simply a mortal, subject to infirmities, but in B' he is unrepayably indebted to God and is even less than the dust of the earth. In C Benjamin discusses the laws in his kingdom, but in C' his thoughts are elevated to the laws in God's kingdom. Where D ennobles the idea of serving God and fellowman, D' adds that no matter how much man might serve God, man is still an unprofitable servant. Each idea contained in A, B, C, or D cannot be considered complete without the addition of the corresponding thoughts in D', C', B', and A'.

The outline of this part of Benjamin's speech accents two parallels which Benjamin is deliberately drawing. The first is a comparison of the king on earth to the King in heaven; the second is the unity of giving thanks and rendering service. The comparison of the king on earth to the King in heaven is implicit in E and is implied in the difference between C and C'. The ideas of thanks (t) and service (s) appear in corresponding positions throughout the passage, e. g. E(s) and E(t),



D'(t) and D'(s), and A'(s) and A'(t).

Although a complete analysis of each theme in Benjamin's speech will not be provided at this point, some attention will be given to the central passage of each. The centerpiece of the first theme (I) is a passage of direct parallelism, as was seen above (E). The turning point of IV, which is Mosiah 3:18-19, and that of VII, which is Mosiah 5:10-12, are chiasmic and have been discussed above. Some of the remaining central motifs, III, V, and VI, will be briefly studied here.

Mosiah 3:5b-9

III. M. The mission of Christ.

- d And he shall cast out devils  
Or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of men
  
- p And lo, he shall suffer temptations  
And pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue
  
- m Even more than man can suffer, except unto death,  
For behold blood cometh from every pore,  
So great shall be his anguish for the wickedness  
o and abominations of his people.
  
- And he shall be called Jesus Christ  
The Son of God
  
- n The Father of Heaven and Earth  
The Creator of all things from the beginning  
And his mother shall be called Mary
  
- o' and lo, he cometh unto his own  
That salvation might come unto the children of men  
Even through faith on his name;
- m' And even after all this they shall consider him a man,
  
- d' And say that he hath a devil,

p' And shall scourge him,  
And shall crucify him.

The names of the Son of God occupy the central position in this passage, corresponding to the central position held by the covenant of accepting the name of Christ in VII. The chiasitic arrangement in these verses accounts for the statement in m', "and even after all this," for m' does not refer to Christ's coming unto his own, but to his suffering which appears in the structurally corresponding sections m and p.

Mosiah 4:8-10

- V. Y. 1 And this is the means whereby salvation cometh,  
And there is none other salvation save this of which  
hath been spoken.
- 2 Neither is there any conditions whereby man can be saved  
Except the conditions which I have told you.
- 3 Believe in God, believe that he is  
And that he created all things both in Heaven and Earth.
- 4 Believe that he hath all wisdom  
And all power both in Heaven and Earth.
- 5 Believe that man doth not comprehend all the things  
Which the Lord can comprehend.
- 6 And again Believe that ye must repent of your sins  
And forsake them
- 7 Humble yourselves before God,  
And ask that he would forgive you.
- 8 And now if you believe all these things  
See that ye do them.

Here the first, second, seventh, and eighth strophes speak of the conditions of salvation, while the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth all begin with the word believe. The third and fourth strophes speak of God, the fifth and sixth, of man. Thus the central passage in V is one of direct parallelisms.

Mosiah 4:18-23

VI. E.

O man, whosoever doeth this hath great cause to repent  
and except he repenteth he perisheth forever.  
For behold are we not all beggars?  
Do we not all depend upon God for all our substance  
Even at this time ye beg for remission of your sins  
And hath he suffered that ye have begged in vain?  
Nay he hath poured out his spirit upon you  
And hath caused that your hearts should be filled with joy  
and hath caused that your mouths should be stopped  
That ye could not find utterance  
So exceeding great was your joy.  
And now if God who hath created you on whom ye depend  
Doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask  
That is right in faith believing that he shall receive  
O then how had you ought to impart of the substance that ye have.  
And if ye judge the man who putteth up his petition  
And repenteth not of the thing which thou hast done  
Wo be unto that man, for his substance shall perish.

The repetitions in this passage create a chiastic centerpiece for part VI.

King Benjamin uses chiasmus and parallelism extensively because, as Hugh Nibley has characterized him,<sup>20</sup> King Benjamin led the great

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<sup>20</sup>Hugh W. Nibley, An Approach to the Book of Mormon, p. 245.

Nephite renaissance which followed the centuries of Dark Ages recorded in the small books of Jacob, Enos, Jarom, and Omni. In this renaissance, interest in classicism revived and a new emphasis was placed on learning Egyptian and Hebrew.<sup>21</sup> The first words in the Book of Mosiah tell us that Benjamin was particularly concerned that his sons learn "all the language of his fathers," and "concerning the records which were engraven on the plates of brass," and "the language of the Egyptians."<sup>22</sup> As a part of Benjamin's classical bent, his great oration repeatedly employs the types of chiastic forms which had been a part of Hebrew literary style before the departure of Lehi in 600 B. C. When this renaissance progressed into the second and third generations after Benjamin, writers such as Alma the Younger innovated new techniques into the formation of chiastic arrangements, producing creative passages such as Alma 36 and Alma 41:13-15. After 73 B. C. the surge of the renaissance declined and the fate of the Nephites was sealed,<sup>23</sup> so that by the time of Mormon there was not nearly as much interest in literature or past records<sup>24</sup> as there had been at the time of Nephi or Benjamin.<sup>25</sup>

At the time of Nephi and Benjamin, chiasmus functioned as a

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<sup>21</sup>Mosiah 1:2

<sup>22</sup>Mosiah 1:2-6

<sup>23</sup>Helaman 11:37, 16:23.

<sup>24</sup>Mormon 1:13-14, 3:3.

<sup>25</sup>2 Nephi 33:3, 25:23.

structuring device for entire books. In 1 Nephi and Mosiah, chiasmus determines the order in which ideas and events appear. The Book of Mosiah, for example, adheres to neither a chronological nor a geographical order, for the story shifts widely and frequently from one time and place to another.<sup>26</sup> The order of this book is chiastic and unless the reader is aware of the structural order in Mosiah, the story is confusing at times. This chiastic order balances the beginning with the end, e. g. the phrase "the name which should never be blotted out," appears only twice in the book (Mosiah 5:11 and 26:36); the twenty-four gold plates are mentioned only in two places in the entire Book of Mormon outside of Ether (Mosiah 8:9 and 21:27, 22:14); and Ammon's departure from Zarahemla to the land of Lehi-Nephi (Mosiah 9:1) juxtaposes Alma's departure from Lehi-Nephi to the land of Zarahemla (Mosiah 24:1). A complete diagram of the Book of Mosiah appears in Appendix A and shows that although Mormon deleted a few words from Mosiah,<sup>27</sup> this did not effect the order of events.

Completely unaltered by Mormon is the structural order of 1 Nephi, which is comparable to that of Mosiah. In 1 Nephi chiasmus is incorporated into Nephi's chronological narrative to draw attention to the most important experience of his life, his great vision of the Spirit of

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<sup>26</sup>Mosiah 9:1, 19:1, 20:1.

<sup>27</sup>Mosiah 8:1, 28:20, 29:33.

the Lord (1 Nephi 11). Everything else in 1 Nephi revolves around this centerpiece, as the outline of the book shows:

1 Nephi

- A Lehi prophesies warnings to the Jews (Chapter 1)
- B The Departure from Jerusalem (Chapter 2)
- C Nephi accomplished a great feat in obtaining the plates  
His brothers are confounded (Chapters 3-5)  
The Brass Plates
- D Sons of Lehi get the daughters of Ishmael (Chapter 7)  
Ishmael joins the group  
Nephi bound in the wilderness
- E The Tree of Life (Chapter 8)
  - F Lehi speaks about the Old World and  
about the coming of the Lamb (Chapter 10)
  - G Nephi and the Spirit of the Lord (Chapter 11)
  - F' Nephi speaks about the New World and  
about the coming of the Lamb (Chapters 12-14)
- E' The Tree of Life interpreted (Chapter 15)
- D' Sons of Lehi marry the daughters of Ishmael (Chapter 16)
- C' Nephi accomplishes a great feat by building a ship (Chapter 17)  
His brothers confounded
- B' The Departure from the Old World (Chapter 18)  
Nephi bound on the ship
- A' Nephi warns the Jews and quotes from the prophecies of Isaiah  
(Chapters 19-22)

The chiastic structure of 1 Nephi explains why Nephi divided his

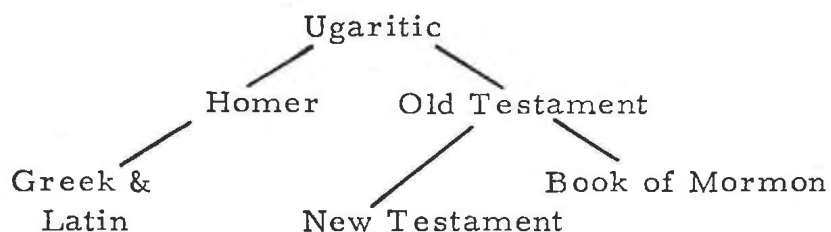


writings into two books, a singular occurrence among the authors of the Book of Mormon. 2 Nephi is not a history but a collection of the separate poetic prophecies of Lehi, Nephi, Jacob, and Isaiah. 1 Nephi, on the other hand, forms a unit welded together by its narrative and structural order. The structural order alone accounts for the division between 1 Nephi and 2 Nephi.

When chiasmus functions as the structural basis for entire books such as 1 Nephi and Mosiah, it has reached its ultimate form as a structuring device. It is by no means grammatical, ornamental, or optional, but essential to and inseparable from the stylistic basis of these books. In this way chiasmus in the Book of Mormon is like chiasmus in Hebrew and unlike chiasmus in Greek and Latin.

Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon is complex like chiasmus in the Old Testament; it is not simple or compound as it appears in Latin authors. Seventy-one examples of complex chiasmus in the Book of Mormon have been found in various literary situations. Based on the examples given throughout this thesis and by a comparison of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon with chiasmus in the other ancient writings, the Book of Mormon contains precise, extensive, and purposeful complex chiastic passages, which closely resemble those of the Old Testament described in Chapter III. Judged according to its complexity, frequency, purposefulness, and grammatical and structural nature, chiasmus in

the Book of Mormon can be placed on the following chart which relates the role of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon to chiasmus in the works of other literary traditions:



When compared with ancient literatures, and not criticized according to nineteenth or twentieth century standards, the literary achievements of the Book of Mormon become conspicuous. Many Book of Mormon authors have great literary qualifications and chiasmus is a powerful artistic tool in their hands. As modern Hebrew scholars in the past decade have realized, so the future students of the Book of Mormon will also find that chiasmus is a necessary exegetical tool and that the study of chiasmus is a rewarding aesthetic endeavor, as Lund promises:

And should he finally become so interested that he is willing to live with these forms, until they become familiar to his mind and experience, he will discover that they are not rigid, but plastic, and that they have a fascination all their own.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, p. 31.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION

This thesis has introduced one type of formal analysis into the study of the Book of Mormon. In order to do this, it was necessary to study the presence of chiasmus in the literatures of other Mediterranean civilizations, thus providing two types and three degrees of chiasmus against which the presence of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon could be evaluated. To a large extent this thesis has been espository, simply exposing the presence of chiasmus in Hebrew, Ugaritic, Greek, Latin and in the Book of Mormon. As such this thesis provides a foundation upon which later interpretations and analyses can be built. Since it is precarious to be overly positivistic in ancient studies when the obscure origins of literary ideas are under discussion, this thesis has avoided making a vast number of subjective judgments, but rather has set some specific standards and definitions according to which the use of chiasmus in one literary tradition might be compared with its usage in another. It has been found that there are two related branches of chiastic tendencies; the Western one used chiasmus quite simply as a grammatical or syntactical device, the Semitic uses it as a complex structuring framework. Accordingly, chiasmus in the Hebrew Old Testament and in the Book of Mormon

resemble each other. This fact adds new dimensions to the internal analysis of the writings of the prophets of the Book of Mormon and also to the scrutinization of the position of the Book of Mormon in comparative literature. Analyzed and criticized in this way, the Book of Mormon manifests an artistic, creative, and purposeful use of chiasmus which is paralleled by the use of chiasmus in several ancient literary styles.

APPENDIX A

ADDITIONAL CHIASTIC PASSAGES  
FROM THE BOOK OF MORMON

## 1 Nephi 1:16

And now I Nephi do not make a full account  
of the things which my father hath written  
for he hath written many things  
which he saw in visions  
and in dreams;  
and he also hath written many things  
which he prophesied and spake unto his children  
of which I shall not make a full account.



## 1 Nephi 3:3-12

- A For behold Laban hath the record of the Jews  
and also a genealogy of my forefathers  
and they are engraven upon plates of brass
- B Wherefore . . . thou and thy brothers should go unto the  
house of Laban, and seek the records and bring them down  
hither into the wilderness.
- C And now, behold thy brothers murmur, saying it is a hard  
thing which I have required of them;  
but behold I have not required it of them  
but it is a commandment of the Lord.
- D Therefore go, my son, and thou shalt be avored of  
the Lord because thou hast not murmured.  
And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father:  
I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded,
- C' For I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the  
children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them  
that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.
- D' And it came to pass that when my father had heard these  
words, he was exceeding glad, for he knew that I had been  
blessed of the Lord.
- B' And I, Nephi, and my brethern took our journey into the  
wilderness . . . and when we had come up to the land of  
Jerusalem we did consult one with another. And we cast  
lots -- who of us should go in unto the house of Laban.  
And it came to pass that the lot fell upon Laman; and  
Laman went in unto the house of Laban and talked with  
him as he sat in his house.
- A' And he desired of Laban the records  
which were engraven upon the plates of brass  
which contained the genealogy of my father.

## 1 Nephi 5:11-16

- A And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses which gave an account of the creation of the world and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents,
- B And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah,  
King of Judah,
- B' And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah,
- A' And also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.
- R And it came to pass that my father Lehi also found upon the plates of brass
- S A genealogy of his fathers, wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph;
- T Yea, even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt,
- U And who was preserved
- V By the hand of the Lord
- U' That he might preserve his father Jacob and all his household from perishing with famine.
- T' And they were also led out of captivity and out of the land of Egypt, by the same God who had preserved them.
- S' And thus my father Lehi did discover the genealogy of his fathers and Laban also was a descendant of Joseph,
- R' Wherefore he and his fathers had kept the records.

## 1 Nephi 5:17-19

And now when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the spirit  
and began to prophesy concerning his seed

that these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations,  
kindreds, tongues, and people

which were of his seed,

Wherefore

he said that these plates of brass should never perish, neither  
should they be dimmed any more by time.

and he prophesied many things concerning his seed.

## 1 Nephi 17:1-22

## A Journey into the wilderness (v. 1-6)

- x We did journey in the wilderness with much affliction  
 And our women did bear children;  
 So great were the blessings of the Lord  
 That our women did give suck for their children,  
 That they did bear their journeyings without murmurings.
- y And thus we see that the commandments of God must be  
 fulfilled.  
 And if the children of men keep the commandments of God  
 He doth nourish them and strengthen them  
 And provide a means whereby they can accomplish  
 The thing which he has commanded them;  
Wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did  
 sojourn in the wilderness.
- z And we did come to the land which we called Bountiful  
 because of its much fruit and wild honey;  
 And all these things were prepared of the Lord  
 that we might not perish.  
 And we beheld the sea  
 Which we called Irreantum  
 Which is many waters  
 And we did pitch our tents by the seashore  
 And notwithstanding many afflictions and much difficulty  
 we rejoiced when we came to the seashore  
 And we called the place Bountiful  
 because of its much fruit.

## B The Voice of the Lord (v. 7-18)

- a After many days the voice of the Lord came unto me saying:  
 Arise and get thee into the mountain  
 And I arose and went up into the mountain
- b And the Lord spake unto me saying:  
 Thou shalt construct a ship after the manner which  
 I shall show thee, that I may carry thy people  
across these waters.

- c And I said: Whither shall I go that I may find ore  
to molten, that I may make tools to construct the  
ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me?  
And the Lord told me whither I should go to find ore  
that I might make tools.
- d I Nephi did make a bellows wherewith to blow the fire  
And I did smite two stones together to make fire  
Hitherto the Lord had not suffered that we make fire  
as we journeyed in the wilderness  
For he said: I will make thy food become sweet, that  
ye cook it not;
- d' I will be your light in the wilderness and prepare  
the way before you  
If ye shall keep my commandments  
1 Ye shall be led towards the promised land  
and ye shall know that it is by me that ye are led.  
2 And after ye have arrived in the promised land  
ye shall know that  
I the Lord  
am God;  
3 that I the Lord  
Did deliver you from destruction  
4 Yea that I did bring you out of the land of Jerusalem  
Wherefore I Nephi did strive to keep the commandments  
And I did exhort my brethren to faithfulness and diligence
- c' And it came to pass that I did make tools of the ore  
which I did molten out of the rock
- b' And when my brethren saw that I was about to build a ship  
They began to murmur against me saying:  
Our brother is a fool, for he thinketh he can build a ship  
Yea he also thinketh that he can cross these great waters,  
for they did not believe I could build a ship,
- a' Neither would they believe that I was instructed of the Lord.

A' Complaints of the brothers in the wilderness (v. 19-22)

n Nephi's sorrow

w Thou art like unto our father, led away by foolishness.

j Yea he hath led us out of the land of Jerusalem  
And we have wandered many years in the wilderness  
And our women have toiled  
x' Being big with child  
And they have borne children  
And suffered all things  
Save it were death, and better that they had died  
j Before they came out of Jerusalem

z' We might have enjoyed our possessions  
And the land of our inheritance  
And we might have been happy.

y' And we know that the people in Jerusalem were  
a righteous people,  
For they kept the statutes and judgments of the  
Lord  
And all his commandments according to the law of  
Moses;  
Wherefore we know that they are a righteous people.

w' And our father hath judged them and hath led us away  
And our brother is like him.

n Nephi's speech.

## 2 Nephi 25:1-6

- A Now I Nephi do speak somewhat concerning the words  
 which I have written  
 which have been spoken  
 by the mouth of Isaiah.
- B For behold, Isaiah spake many things which were hard for  
my people to understand;
- C 1 For they know not concerning the manner of prophesying  
among the Jews  
 2 For I Nephi have not taught them many things concerning  
 the manner of the Jews;
- 3 For their works were works of darkness  
 4 And their doings were doings of abominations.
- B' Wherefore I write unto my people, unto all they that shall  
 receive hereafter these things which I write  
 That they may know the judgments of God, that they come  
 upon all nations
- A' According to the word which he hath spoken
- O my people which are in the House of Israel  
 Harken and give ear unto my words:
- For because that the words of Isaiah  
 Are not plain unto you, nevertheless  
 They are plain unto all they  
 That are filled with the spirit  
 Of prophecy
- Q But I give unto you  
 A prophecy  
 According to that spirit which is in me;  
 Wherefore I prophesy according to the plainness that is  
 with me  
 For my soul delighteth in plainness unto my people  
 My soul delighteth in the words of Isaiah.
- X For I came out from Jerusalem  
 And mine eyes hath beheld the things of the Jews



Y And I know that the Jews do understand the things of the Prophets  
And there is none other people that understand the things which  
were spoken unto the Jews like unto them,

C' 1 Save it be that they are taught after the manner of the  
things of the Jews

2 But behold I Nephi have not taught my children after the  
manner of the Jews;

Y' But I of myself have dwelt at Jerusalem  
Wherefore I know of the regions round about

B'' And I have made mention unto my children concerning the  
judgments of God which hath come to pass among the Jews

A'' According to all Isaiah  
Hath spoken  
And I do not write them.

## 2 Nephi 27:1-5

And all men are alike unto God,

both Jew  
and Gentile

X but behold in the last days  
or in the days of the Gentiles,  
all nations of the Gentiles  
and also the Jews

A yea, all these will be drunken / with iniquity  
when they shall be visited by the Lord,

B And all the nations that fight against Zion  
shall be as a dream of the night

yea it shall be unto them even as

a hungry man  
which dreameth  
and behold he eateth  
but he awaketh  
and his soul is empty,

or like unto a thirsty man  
which dreameth  
and behold he drinketh  
but he awaketh  
and he is faint.

B' Even so shall the multitude of all the nations be  
that fight against mount Zion.

A' For behold all ye that do iniquity / . . . shall be drunken  
The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep,

For ye have closed your eyes

Ye have rejected  
the prophets

Y and your rulers  
and the seers  
hath he covered

Because of your iniquities.

## 2 Nephi 28:29-30

A Wo be unto them that shall say:

We have received  
The Word of God  
We need no more  
Word of God  
For we have enough!

B For behold thus saith the Lord God:

I will give unto the children of men  
Line upon line

Precept upon precept

Here a little and

There a little

Blessed are they who hearken unto my precepts

And lend an ear to my counsel

For they shall learn wisdom.

A' For unto him that receiveth

I shall give more

From them that shall say

We have enough

From them

Shall be taken

Even that which they have.

## 2 Nephi 28:21

A And others will he pacify  
And lull them away into carnal security

That they will say

All is  
Well in  
Zion

B Yea  
Zion  
Prospereth  
All is well.

A' And thus the devil cheateth their souls  
And leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

## 2 Nephi 28:32

A Wo be unto the Gentiles, saith the Lord God of Hosts

B For notwithstanding I shall lengthen out  
Mine arm unto them from day to day

C They will deny me.

D Nevertheless, I will be merciful unto them  
Saith the Lord God (A)  
If they will repent

C' And come unto me

B' For my arm  
is lengthened out all the day long,

A' Saith the Lord God of Hosts.

## The Book of Mosiah

- A King Benjamin exhorts his sons (1:1-8)
- B Mosiah chosen to succeed his father (1:10)
- C Mosiah receives the records (1:16)
- D Benjamin's speech and the words of the angel (2:9-5:15)
- E People enter into a covenant (6:1)
- F Priests consecrated (6:13)
- G Ammon leaves Zarahemla for the land of Lehi-Nephi (7:1-6)
- H People in bondage, Ammon put in prison (7:15)
- I The 24 gold plates (8:9)
- J The record of Zeniff begins as he leaves Zarahemla (9:1)
- K Defense against the Lamanites (9:14-10:20)
- L Noah and his priests (11:1-15)
- M Abinadi persecuted and thrown in prison (11-12)
- N Abinadi reads the old law to the priests (13-14)
- N' Abinadi makes his own prophecies (15-16)
- M' Abinadi persecuted and killed (17:5-20)
- L' Noah and his priests (18:32-20:5)
- K' Lamanites threaten the people of Limhi (20:6-26)
- J' Record of Zeniff ends as he leaves the land of Lehi-Nephi
- I' The 24 gold plates (21:27, 22:14)
- H' People of Alma in bondage (23)
- G' Alma leaves the land of Lehi-Nephi for Zarahemla (24)
- F' The Church organized by Alma (25:14-24)
- E' Unbelievers refuse to enter covenant (26:1-4)
- D' The words of Alma and the words of the angel of the Lord (26-27)
- C' Alma the Younger receives the records (29:20)
- B' Judges chosen instead of a king (29:25-42)
- A' Mosiah exhorts his people (29:5-32)

## Mosiah 28:9-29:3

- A And they took their journey into the wilderness to go up and preach the word among the Lamanites.
- B Now king Mosiah had no one to confer the kingdom upon for there was not any of his sons which would accept the kingdom.
- C Therefore he took the records engraven upon the plates of brass and also the plates of Nephi and all the things which he had kept and preserved according to the commandments of God,
- D and after translating the record found by Limhi, because of the great anxiety of his people for they were desirous beyond measure to know
- concerning those people which had been destroyed.  
And now he translated them by means of those two stones prepared from the beginning  
Handed down from generation to generation  
for the purpose of interpreting languages
- E Kept and preserved by the Lord  
for the purpose of revealing iniquities  
whoever has these things is called seer from olden-times  
After Mosiah had translated these records  
it gave an account of the people which was destroyed
- D' Now this account did cause the people of Mosiah to mourn  
yea they were filled with sorrow  
Nevertheless it gave them much knowledge  
in which they did rejoice.
- C' And now as I said unto you [!] King Mosiah took the plates of brass and all the things which he had kept and conferred them upon Alma commanding him to keep and preserve them and also keep a record of the people.
- B' Now Mosiah sent out throughout all the land among all the people desiring to know their will concerning who should be their king.  
And the voice of the people came saying: We are desirous that Aaron thy son should be king and ruler.
- A' Now Aaron had gone up to the land of Nephi, therefore the king could not confer the kingdom upon him.

## Alma 7:11-13

And he shall go forth suffering pains and afflictions and temptations

And thus the word might be fulfilled which saith:

He will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people

And he will take upon him death

That he may loose the bands of death which binds his people

And he will take upon him their infirmities

That his bowels may be filled with mercy according to  
the flesh

That he may know according to the flesh

How to suffer his people according to their infirmities

Now the spirit knoweth all things

Nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh

That he might take upon him the sins of his people

That he might blot out their transgressions,

According to the power of his deliverance.



## Alma 18:13

The king's servants said unto him Rabbanah  
which is, being interpreted, powerful  
or great king  
considering their kings  
to be powerful  
and thus he said unto him: Rabbanah

## Alma 18:16

Is it because thou hast heard that I defended  
thy servants  
and thy flocks  
and slew seven of their brethren  
with the sling  
and with the sword  
smote off the arms of others  
in order to defend thy flocks  
and thy servants  
Is it this that causeth thy marvelings?

## Alma 29:1-7

- A O that I were an angel and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth . . . (v. 1)
- B But behold I am a man, and do sin in my wish; for I had ought to be content with the things which the Lord hath allotted unto me.
- C1 I had not ought to harrow up in my desires  
 2 the firm decree of a just God  
 3 for I know that he granteth unto men according to their desires  
 4 whether it be unto death / or unto life.
- 1 yea I know that he allotteth unto men  
 2 yea decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable  
 3 according to their wills  
 4 whether it be unto salvation / or unto destruction.
- 1 yea and I know that good and evil hath come before all men  
 2 or he that knoweth not good from evil is blameless;  
 3 but he that knoweth good and evil, to him is given according  
desires  
 4 whether he desireth good or evil, life or / death, joy or  
 remorse.
- B Now seeing that I know these things, why should I desire more than to perform the work to which I have been called?
- A Why should I desire that I was an angel, that I could speak unto all the ends of the earth? (v. 7)

## Alma 29:8-17

A For Behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations and tongues  
to teach his word, all that he seeth fit that they should have;  
Therefore we see that the Lord doth counsel in wisdom  
according to that which is just and true.

B I know that which the Lord hath commanded me  
and I glory in it  
I do not glory in myself  
but I glory in that which the Lord hath commanded me;

Yea, and this is my glory  
that perhaps I may be an instrument in the  
hands of God to bring  
some soul to repentance  
and this is my joy and when I see  
my brethren truly penitent  
and coming to the Lord their God  
then is my soul  
filled with joy.

C Then do I remember what the Lord has done for me,  
yea even that he hath heard my prayer;

Yea then do I remember his merciful arm  
which he extended towards me.

D 1 Yea and I also remember the captivity of my fathers  
2 For I surely do know that the Lord did deliver them out  
of bondage  
3 And by this did establish his church

yea the Lord God  
the God of Abraham  
the God of Isaac  
the God of Jacob  
did deliver them out of bondage

1 Yea I have always remembered the captivity of my fathers  
2 and that same God who delivered them out of bondage  
3 did establish his church among them

C' That same God hath called me by a holy calling  
to preach the word unto this people

And hath given me much success  
in which my joy is full

B' But I do not joy in my own success alone  
but my joy is more full because of the success of my brethren  
who have been up to the land of Nephi.  
Behold they have labored exceedingly  
and have brought forth much fruit  
and how great shall be their reward.  
Now when I think of the success of my brethren my soul is  
carried away so great is my joy.

A' And now may God grant unto these, my brethren,  
that they may sit down in the kingdom of God;  
Yea, and also all those who are the fruit of their labors  
that they may go no more out but praise him forever.  
And may God grant that it may be done according to my words  
even as I have spoken. Amen.

## Alma 49:1-3

And now it came to pass  
in the eleventh month  
of the nineteenth year  
on the tenth day of the month

the armies of the Lamanites were seen approaching towards the land of Ammonihah.

And behold the city had been rebuilt  
and Moroni had stationed an army by the borders of the city

and they had cast up dirt around about to shield them  
from the arrows  
and the stones  
of the Lamanites;  
for behold they fought  
with stones  
and with arrows

Behold, I said that the city of Ammonihah had been rebuilt  
I say unto you that it was in part rebuilt;

and because the Lamanites had destroyed it once because of the iniquity of the people, they supposed that it would again become an easy prey for them.

Alma 49:18-19

Now behold the Lamanites could not get into their forts of security  
by any other way

save by the entrance

because of the highness of the bank  
which had been thrown up  
and the depth of the ditch  
which had been dug round about

save it were by the entrance.

And thus were the Nephites prepared to destroy all such as should  
attempt to climb up to enter the fort  
by any other way.

## Helaman 3:13-15

- A And now there are many records kept of the proceedings of this people by many of this people
- B But behold a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people yea,
  - C The account of the Lamanites and of the Nephites and their wars their contentions and dissensions
  - D Their preachings and their prophecies
    - E And their shipping and building of ships
    - E' Their building of temples, synagogues and sanctuaries
    - D' Their righteousness and wickedness
    - C' Their murders and robbings and plundering and all manner of abominations and whoredoms
  - B' Cannot be contained in this work
- A' But behold there there are many books and many records of every kind and they have been kept chiefly by the Nephites.

## Helaman 3:17-4:2

- Contentions in the land (v. 17)
- Helaman rules with "justice and equity" (v. 20)
- Prosperity in the church (v. 24-26)
- Moral: The Lord is merciful to all (v. 27-30)
- Pride in the church (v. 33-36)
- Nephi the son on Helaman rules with "justice and equity" (v. 37)
- Contentions among the people (v. 1-2)



## Helaman 4:9-19

Moronihah succeeded in obtaining many parts of the land  
and they retained many cities which had fallen to the Lamanites (v. 9)

The sixty and first year of the reign of the judges  
They retained half of all their possessions (v. 10)

Four major areas of sin had brought the great loss:  
pride, oppression of the poor, mocking sacred things and  
political crimes (v. 12)

Many deserted from the land of Nephi  
among the Lamanites  
they boasted of their own strength  
they were left in their own strength  
driven before the Lamanites  
they lost all their lands (v. 13)

Repent used four times (v. 14-16)

They retained one half of their property and lands (v. 17)  
The sixty and first year of the reign of the judges (v. 18)

Moronihah could obtain no more possessions over the Lamanites  
and they maintained those parts which they had taken (v. 19).

## Helaman 4:20-26

The greatness of the number of the Lamanites (v. 20)

The Nephites fear lest they be overpowered

They realize that they have neglected the commandments of God  
(v. 21)

They were wicked like unto the Lamanites (v. 22)

the church began to dwindle

they began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy

and in the spirit of revelation

the judgments of God did stare them in the face (v. 23)

they had become weak like unto the Lamanites (v. 24)

The Lamanites were more exceeding numerous than they (v. 25)

Except they cleave unto the Lord they must unavoidably perish (v. 25)

They had become weak because of their transgression (v. 26)

## Helaman 13:5-13:9

The sword of justice hangeth over this people.

Four hundred years passeth not away before their destruction.

Repent--suffer

And behold an angel of the Lord hath declared it unto me and  
he did bring glad tidings to my soul

And behold I was sent unto you to declare it unto you also  
that ye might have glad tidings

Repent--suffer

Four hundred years shall not pass away before they shall be smitten  
I will visit them with the sword.

## 3 Nephi 29:1-9

- A When the Lord shall see fit, in his wisdom
- B That these sayings shall come unto the Gentiles
- C Then may ye know that the covenant which the Father hath made with the children of Israel, concerning their restoration to the lands of their inheritance, is beginning to be fulfilled
- D And ye may know that the words of the Lord, which have been spoken by the holy prophets, shall all be fulfilled
- E And ye need not say that the Lord delays his coming unto the children of Israel.
- D' Ye need not imagine in your hearts that the words which have been spoken are vain.
- C' For the Lord will remember his covenant which he hath made unto his people of the House of Israel.
- B' And when ye shall see these sayings coming forth among you
- A' Ye need not any longer spurn at the doings of the Lord.

- M For the sword of his justice is in his right hand  
 Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord  
 (cf. A', v. 5)  
 Wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works  
 (cf. E, v. 5)  
 Wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord  
 (cf. D-D', v. 6)  
 Wo unto him that shall say there can be no more miracle  
 (cf. v. 7)  
 For the Lord remembereth his covenant (cf. C-C', v. 8)
- M' Suppose not that ye can turn the right hand of the Lord (cf. v. 9)  
 that he may not execute judgment unto the fulfilling of the covenant.

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A STUDY RELATING CHIASMUS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON TO  
CHIASMUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, UGARITIC EPICS,  
HOMER, AND SELECTED GREEK AND LATIN AUTHORS

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ABSTRACT

Chiasmus is a literary device which appears in Semitic and Western literatures. This thesis defines two types and three degrees of chiasmus: grammatical and structural; simple, compound, and complex. Each chiasmus is of a certain type and degree.

Different literatures use chiasmus differently. In the Old Testament complex structural chiasmus appears extensively. Much compound grammatical and some complex structural chiasmus occurs in the Ugaritic Epics. In Homer simple grammatical chiasmus is a feature of the formation of single poetic lines and structural chiasmus is a feature of narrative called hysteron proteron. In the later Greek and Latin authors, simple and compound grammatical chiasmus is a common aspect of sentence design, while complex structural chiasmus is yet to be found.

Many examples of complex structural chiasmus have been identified in the Book of Mormon. Herein the Book of Mormon resembles the ancient literatures, especially ancient Semitic literature, and is unlike later Western writings.

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