

SOUTH AFRICAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE PARALLEL STRUCTURE OF PROVERBS

**A MASTERS THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF BIBLICAL STUDIES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER'S OF THEOLOGY**

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THE PARALLEL STRUCTURE OF PROVERBS

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SUMMARY

This paper is intended to be a part of a textbook for learning how to communicate in the Biblical fashion of parallelism. The research question was threefold: Can systematic methodologies be developed that equips ministers to better understand the Biblical message by learning Hebrew literary devices such as proverbs and parallelism? In learning this methodology, can the minister become familiar enough with the literary devices Jesus favored in order to use them? Is there an exegetical benefit to recognizing the form as well as the content?

To accomplish this, chapter one offers a summary of scholarly research dealing of the origin and use of proverbs in Ancient Israel, and chapter two defines and explains the many facets of proverbs and the poetic parallelism that sets it apart in scripture.

Chapter three provides step-by-step instructions for discovering parallelism in the Bible. The reader accompanies the author in the analysis of John 1:1-18 in the search of various forms of parallelism, and experiencing the exegetical benefit of understanding the form in which so much Biblical truth is transported. Chapter four highlights the conclusions and contributions this work makes to homiletics and Biblical andragogy. The main reason for attempting to understand and use the forms and literary style of ancient Israel's teachers is simply this: **Jesus did.**

The reader should keep the following things in mind when reading this text. 1) The teaching and writing style are directed at practitioners rather than scholars. 2) This study presupposes that form and content are inseparable. 3) This text concerns itself with the structure and use of poetic parallelism only. The use of parallelism in Biblical prose is not addressed.

It is hoped that a greater awareness and understanding of the literary devices Jesus used will inspire a deeper appreciation for them, as well as a desire to use them.

CHAPTER ONE

PROVERBS AND TEACHING IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a summary of the research on the origin and use of proverbs in ancient Israel. This review of scholarly viewpoints is necessary to build a proper foundation for studying proverbs and its poetic form, parallelism. This summary also reveals some of the difficulties scholars encounter in their search due to lack of archeological evidence.

Questions as to the how, when, where, and why of their origin and purpose have received much attention in the last half of the 20th century, accompanied by much effort to identify the teachers who used them. Although there seems to be a consensus among Bible scholars about use of proverbs in teaching and training, they are divided about where training actually occurred. Were the proverbs used in wisdom schools which were taught by professional sages that catered to the elite, or were there schools for a broader base of social classes in ancient Israel? A third possibility may be all training was done at home. The arguments can be summarized as follows:

1.2 Arguments for Professional Wisdom Teachers and Schools:

Regardless of the origin of proverbs, some scholars suggest that their didactic nature indicates a use by professional wisdom teachers and sages for training the sons of the elite (Shultz 2005: Bratcher 2005: Crenshaw 1998:601-605). However, not all scholars concur. E. W. Heaton (1998) builds a case for a broader category of schools in

ancient Israel. The notion of wisdom schools and wisdom teachers does not have enough support to suit him. What scholars do not agree on is 1) that the schools were only for the elite, and 2) that there were such things as wisdom schools, and 3) whether or not the training was conducted formally in a school, or informally at home.

The actual antecedents and origin of this form of teaching has proven difficult to document. Viewpoints and hypotheses vary among scholars as to who actually taught whom with these proverbs. Several questions have yet to be answered by sufficient evidence: When were the proverbs written and by whom? Did the proverbs originate in an oral tradition prior to being collected and written in the form we now have in the book of Proverbs, or were they written prior to being taught? Were the proverbs used in family settings by the parents to teach their children as may be referred to in Proverbs by the terms Father, Mother, and my son? Or were these used as formal terms for teacher and student, like the Egyptians and various regions of Mesopotamia used in formal schools? If there were schools in Israel, were they primarily schools for the elite training for a career in the courts and palaces, or perhaps as professional scribes? Were the schools actually “wisdom schools” that were taught by sages and “wisdom teachers”? Are the issues of origin and setting of wisdom literature and schools the same things, or are they independent issues? A brief synopsis of the various positions on the subject of proverbs, training, and schools follows.

Even in the face of so many unanswered questions, there are a few commonly held factors that researchers of ancient wisdom literature agree upon. The following summary is an adaptation of information from Michael Fox (2000: 6-12), Roland Murphy (1990: 1-5), James Crenshaw (1981 , 1985, 1990, 1998) Gerhard Von Rad (1978: 3-34),

R. B. Y Scott (1965np), Avid Seen (1995:np), J. E. Smith (1996:np), Claus Waterman (1990:np), F. Golva (1993:4-53) R. N. Whybray (1990:np), Balham Nissan (nd:np), Carl Schultz (2005:np), and John Welsh (1981:1-50).

1.3 The Basic Views

Enough evidence has been unearthed to document the existence of schools in Egypt and Mesopotamia, as well as the subjects taught, the instructional materials used, and the approximate date of existence. Archeologists suggest that these schools existed primarily for the privileged class as early as 1900 BC or before. These schools predate Israel's schools. Even though wisdom literature was one of the many teaching genres, these schools were not exclusively "wisdom" schools. They offered a broad education. Even though it is obvious that scribes were trained in schools such as these, it is difficult to ascertain if the scribes had schools dedicated exclusively for their training. These schools were much earlier than the Hebrew schools and therefore might have had an influence upon Hebrew education systems. This is a strong possibility, but lacks sufficient hard evidence to support it.

That there were wise men in ancient Israel is not debated. Isaiah 29:41 tells us: "And the wisdom of their wise men shall perish and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hid." Ecclesiastes 12:9-12 describes one of these wise men, a teacher.

Besides being wise, the Teacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs. The Teacher sought to find pleasing words, and he wrote words of truth plainly. The sayings of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings that are given by one shepherd. Of anything beyond these, my child, beware. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh (Eccl 12:9-12 NIV).

Most scholars believe, on the basis of the *Book of Wisdom*, otherwise known as *Sirach* or *Ecclesiasticus*, that Ben Sira conducted an “academy” of sorts in his house in Jerusalem in approximately 180 BC. This gives us the best picture of a teacher as well as a school in Ancient Israel. Although the dates post-date the work being studied here, it does provide us with a fully operating school model to consider. Jesus Ben Sira calls to his students:

“Draw near to me, you who are untaught, and lodge in the house of instruction ... Put your neck under the yoke, and let your souls receive instruction . . . See with eyes that I have labored little and found for myself much rest” (Ecclesiasticus 51:31, 33, 35 DRV).

Most scholars acknowledge that there were wise men and sages in ancient Eastern countries such as Egypt and Mesopotamia. There were also formal schools in these countries. They agree that training of some nature occurred in Israel, and that proverbs were used in didactic ways by the teachers. But who the teachers were and where the training took place is a topic of much speculation. Were they parent-teachers, professional teachers, tutors, court sages, or something else?

The reason that the proverb was used as a teaching device in the ancient near east is not questioned due to the overwhelming archeological evidence from Egypt and surrounding countries mentioned earlier. However, how the proverb originated and became the teacher’s choice for imparting knowledge proves to be a challenging question. Whether popular proverbs originated through an oral tradition of the common people and later were adopted by professional teachers, or whether it began its life as a

purely literary device is still debated. The various positions for the origin of Biblical proverbs and their use will be summarized in the following section.

1.4 Individual Viewpoints

This review of different viewpoints of scholars is by no means intended to be exhaustive. Rather, its purpose is to make the reader aware of some of the different approaches to the topic of oral and literary traditions of wisdom schools and literature. The oral tradition view that proposes that proverbs began as popular proverbs from the common people and later became a chosen method for teaching in schools is by far the most widely accepted position. Even the scholars who hold this view, however, are divided among themselves as to whether the oral tradition originated in an agrarian, urban or court setting. Another controversy is whether the oral tradition predates the written one, or if written artistic proverbs and oral tradition occurred simultaneously. The position how education was administered is intertwined with the question of the proverb's origin.

Golka (1993:4-53) and Westerman (1990, 1995:np) each support a pre- exilic date for the small agrarian villages and small farms. They proposed that proverbs grew out of this community of small farmers, wives, slaves, laborers, craftsman, etc. with the earliest proverb tradition budding from the family setting. That is, education for sons and daughters took place at home conducted by their parents.

Crenshaw (1995) agrees that the oral tradition existed before the artistic written proverb, and that it started from within the family to aid instruction and learning. This view of a family origin accepts the terms used in Proverbs of “father, son and mother”

literally, whereas the idea of the proverbs originating in schools depends on the customs of surrounding near eastern countries in which the instructor was called “Father”, and the student was referred to as “Son”. There is no evidence that women were professional instructors, therefore the term “Mother” would have no place in the professional schools. (1995) is at odds with views held by scholars such as E. W. Heaton (1998:np) and G.I. Davies (1991; 1995) who suggest that a network of formal schools existed in ancient Israel. Crenshaw (1995) stresses that the biblical evidence for a network of schools is often nonexistent or ambiguous, and that comparative evidence from Egypt and Mesopotamia can be applied only with great caution due to cultural and socio-political differences in the cultures. Crenshaw (1995) suggests that the case made for formal schooling is made on the basis of Palestinian inscriptions such as possible abecedaries, lists, and writing exercises; but for him the evidence is not persuasive.

Michael Fox (2000:9-10) agrees with the oral traditionalists, but thinks restricting their origin to rural small landholder and rural, village overlooks a lot of references to the urban and court settings in Proverbs. Some passages he cites refer to goldsmiths (17:3 and 27:1), fine jewelry: (25:11, 12), messengers: (10:26, 22:21, and 25:13). He suggests that many of the passages refer to well-to-do land owners rather than small farmers. To support this he cites a proverb addressed to a grain distributor (11:26), slave owners (29:21), royal courts (25:6-7, Prov 28 and 29, and many references throughout chapters 10-29).

Whybray (1990:np) likes the pre-exilic idea for the origin of many of the proverbs, but the post-exilic period for the present literary form. He suggests that the small farmers were more like a middle class; they could possibly be neither rich nor poor.

Whybray 1990) considers wisdom to be related and integrated with the rest of the Old Testament. Whybray (1990) suggests that chapters 1-9 were written for upper-class youths due to the lack of references to manual labor, and because the Biblical author assumes the students to be literate (Lyken 1992). If Whybray (1990) is correct in assuming a specific target audience, then this may imply that at least a portion of the proverbs were for schools as opposed to “home schooling.”

Murphy (1990:4-5) says that proverbs grew out of an oral tradition from parents and tribal leaders because education was the responsibility of the parents. He suggests that even though there is academic support for the existence of sages, there is no evidence that these sages held schools for the elite or other wise. Unlike Fox (2000), he sees so little “coloring” by the courts that the notion of Israel following the same path as the Egyptians and the Mesopotamians with their temple schools is unlikely. While he agrees that scribes received training, he has not seen enough evidence to convince him that the sages who advised the kings were also trainers and schoolmasters.

Hermission (1978) does not agree that the oral tradition preceded the artistic traditions of wisdom poetry. Rather, he asserts that they were at work simultaneously in different settings or communities. One particular community created and collected Biblical proverbs. This view is in keeping with Bentzen’s (1957:np) notion that wisdom poetry could not have originated from popular proverbs. He suggests that popular proverbs were from and for common folk, whereas wisdom poetry was literature written for scholars by scholars. Note: When the artistic nature of the literary forms is studied in chapter five of this paper, the choice of the label, “artistic traditions” will be easily understood.

Von Rad (1978:22-23) saw no evidence that sages and wise men were not the teachers of proverbs, nor did he see conclusive evidence that the schools of ancient Israel were like the court schools in Egypt. Unlike Fox (2000), he acknowledges little reference to the courts in the proverbs. He agrees that there certainly had to be schools, but there is little evidence prior to Ben Sira, a school master circa 180 BC, that identifies the exact nature of the schools. Von Rad (1978:22-26) maintains that it was the parent's responsibility to teach and train the children.

Heaton (1994:np) is neither convinced of the existence of schools in ancient Israel, nor does he subscribe to a hypothetical 'wisdom tradition that reflects an educated literary background. He is not convinced that there ever was what he refers to as "an imagined wisdom movement." He does imply that he has given careful consideration to much of the archaeological evidence that was available.

Although there are little specific factual data about Israel's schools as institutions, a great volume of suggestive evidence has been supplied by archaeologists working in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Syria, and some of this is described; there are also recent finds from two southern military outposts on the edge of the Judean desert that may provide evidence for a Hebrew school in the eighth century BC, and there is incontrovertible evidence for schools in Hebrew kingdoms from the Siloam Tunnel inscription and the Lachish Letters. There are also scattered references to reading and writing, and various bits of evidence suggesting education in the books of the Old Testament itself, not to mention the editorial process that has been revealed by biblical scholarship" (Heaton 1994).

Heaton (1994) suggests that there is evidence for libraries in Israel, as well as its close educational, literary and cultural relationship with Egypt, as well as evidence for cultivation of the art of speaking. He plainly believes schools existed in ancient Israel; but he rejects the notion of schools being exclusively established for teaching wisdom literature by sages or wise men. Heaton also points out that in addition to the role of the

father in educating his children at home, there were schools in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, as evidenced by its wisdom literature and archeological inscriptions, whereas in Israel such evidence is known mainly from the Second Temple period on.

Nitzan (1994:np) maintains that according to the Hebrew Scriptures, the task of education was imposed upon the parents, mainly on the father as referred to in Gen 18:19; Exodus 12:24-27; 13:8; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:7, 20-25; 32:7, 46; Ps 78:1-8. Nitzan reminds us that the books of the Law instruct the father to teach his children the precepts of God and the traditional history of Israel. In light of such instructions as “Hear, my child, your father’s instruction, and do not reject your mother’s teaching” in Proverbs 1:8, 6:20; etc., he concludes that the sapiential teaching was also the role of the parents.

Schultz (2005:np) points out that the only true glimpse of a wisdom teacher is found in Ecclesiasticus. In chapter 51, Ben Sira gives little doubt that he is a professional teacher with a professional school. Since this book was written in the inter-testamental period, this sheds little light on any period prior to the 4th century. Shultz (2005:np) appears to agree with Heaton that there were schools in Ancient Israel, but not exclusively staffed by wisdom teachers.

1.5 Summary and Conclusions

The sages and wise people in ancient Israel probably emerged among the “plain folk” at first. As Israel progressed, the place of teacher became professionalized as it was in surrounding countries. It appears that Israel’s sages were different from those of Egypt and other countries of the Near East in that they were not restricted to teaching in the courts and to the wealthy.

The lack of hard evidence for “wisdom schools” leads many to discount the notion, while acknowledging the existence of what is referred to today as wisdom literature. The didactic nature of the proverbs does indicate that they were used in training of some fashion, but whether in homes or in formal schools is inconclusive. The arguments for locations such as agrarian, urban, or palace courts also seem inconclusive at this time.

It is apparent that many of the proverbs came from the perspective of the commoner when conveying life’s truths to each other in everyday life. It could be that these gems were passed along through oral tradition until they were eventually collected and preserved by some of Hezekiah’s scribes (Prov 25:1). Other proverbs were obviously the polished work of teachers who used the proverbs as tools to teach their students. Since its use by formal teachers was common in the palaces of Egypt and Mesopotamia, Israel most likely had formal teachers of some form as well. The primary difference in these schools is that the Egypt and Mesopotamia taught the elite, and the schools in Israel do not seem to be that restrictive. As Whybray (1990) points out, the schools could have been for what we refer to today as a middle class, being neither rich nor poor.

As previously mentioned, virtually all cultures have proverbs, whether or not they have a written language (Taylor 1996:np). So the question is not, “did Israel follow this pattern and have popular proverbs or not”; but, “are the Biblical proverbs in their present form actually popular proverbs that have been preserved in their original form, or were they penned by professionals from the start”? Of course, they might be a combination of both.

This brief history of the proverb in Hebrew cultures provides the background for an examination of the proverb and its forms and types. Special attention is given to parallelism because of its dominant roll in proverb and parabolic teaching.

CHAPTER TWO

PROVERB AND PARALLELISM BASICS

A proverb is a short sentence based on long experience.

-- Miguel de Cervantes

Proverbs are like butterflies, some are caught, and some fly away

Anonymous

2.1 Chapter Overview

In this chapter that special form of wisdom literature, the proverb, will be isolated for close examination. The primary motive for such a narrow focus is that the proverb is both the hallmark and signature of wisdom literature. Indeed, wisdom has been compressed into proverbial sayings all over the world across cultures and time (Taylor 1996; Von Rod:3-4). Therefore, because of the proverb's high profile within wisdom literature, it will be poked and probed in search of definitions, illustrations and explanations that increase understanding of its various forms.

2:2 Defining a Proverb

Exactly what is a proverb? What are its components, structure, and forms? As a product of all cultures, proverbs take many forms and styles. The proverb defies rules. It refuses to be boxed or locked inside of a dictionary without an escape clause. The definition and true identity of the proverb is very illusive. Gerhard Von Rad, 1979:3-4) lists some of the qualities that a proverb should contain: Brevity, compactness,

intelligibility, a clear graphic quality, and be easy to remember. Perhaps His treatment of the origin of proverbs will help in forming a definition:

“Every nation with a culture has devoted itself to the care of the literary cultivation of this experiential knowledge and has carefully gathered its statements, especially in the form of sentence-type proverbs. This, then, is one of the most elementary activities of the human mind, with the practical aim of averting harm and impairment of life from man. (Von Rod:3-4).”

Could this imply, then, that proverbs are expressions and sayings based upon experiential knowledge? Archer Taylor (1996) is not convinced that a definition of this sort is broad enough. "The definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking [...]. An incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that is not ...Let us be content with recognizing that a proverb is a saying current among the folk” (Taylor 1996:np).

It soon becomes apparent how difficult it is to lock in a firm definition of a proverb. For example, does the term “proverb” include all pithy and wise sayings? Are all poems, riddles, one-liners, and couplets considered proverbs? If some sayings are labeled as proverbs while others are classified as something else, what is the qualifying factor?

There are some characteristics or traits that all proverbs have in common, however, and one is that they condense what is perceived to be important truth within that culture. Reynolds (1959:74) stresses the practicality of proverbs because they condense so much meaning into so few words. As we will see, Biblical proverbs trade heavily upon this trait. Perhaps proverbs are the integration of culture, nature, nurture and experience.

In *The Study of American Folklore*, Brunvand offers a somewhat restrictive approach when he defines proverbs as; "*popular saying in a relatively fixed form* which

is, or has been, in *oral circulation*" (1986, italics in the original). It is this notion of a fixed form that Semitic proverbs and poetry adhere to with the discipline of a seasoned soldier.

In other words, defining a proverb in the universal sense may be difficult, but spotting one in Biblical literature is much easier thanks to the adherence to literary styles and forms of parallelism that governed Hebrew poetry and proverbs. That is one of the benefits of examining these forms and styles in detail, which is the aim of the next chapter.

2.3 Rhetorical Considerations: Proverbs as Rhetoric

Even though scholars agree on the didactic nature of proverbs, this appraisal is a little incomplete. Not only do the proverbs pass down wisdom and instruction from generation to generation, a primary purpose of even the most static of proverbs is to influence behavior, attitudes or conclusions. That is to say, although Biblical proverbs are instructional, the purpose of giving the information or instructions is to influence some area of thought or action. At its most basic level, rhetoric refers in the least to any form of persuasion, and at the most, written or oral communication.

Many of the classical rhetorical and literary forms that were formalized by the Greeks and Romans are very much present in the genre being studied here. Any proverb intended to persuade, influence, convince, induce, prevail,, advise, affect, allure, argue into, assure, convert, counsel, enlist, entice, exhort, impress, incline, induce, influence, lead, move, prevail upon, prompt, proselyte, proselytize, reason, satisfy, sell on, sway,

talk into, or urge, would be considered rhetorical by the ancient Greeks. For example, some the following proverbs list consequences as a means of persuasion, while others list reward or benefit. Plato and Aristotle could clearly classify these as rhetorical.

³ He who guards his lips guards his life,
but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.

⁴ The sluggard craves and gets nothing,
but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.

⁵ The righteous hate what is false,
but the wicked bring shame and disgrace.

⁶ Righteousness guards the man of integrity,
but wickedness overthrows the sinner. Proverbs 13:3-6 NIV

These proverbs use reward instead of consequences to persuade.

¹² Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold
is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear.

¹³ Like the coolness of snow at harvest time
is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him;
he refreshes the spirit of his masters.

¹⁵ Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a
bone. Proverbs 25:12, 13, 15 NIV

The entire chapter two of Proverbs is written in the action/benefit format.

¹ My son, if you accept my words
and store up my commands within you,

² turning your ear to wisdom
and applying your heart to understanding,

³ and if you call out for insight
and cry aloud for understanding,

⁴ and if you look for it as for silver
and search for it as for hidden treasure,

⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD
and find the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 2:1-5 NIV

Even though many proverbs, especially the didactic ones, are clearly rhetorical in nature, some would argue that the ones that simply inform may fall under the domain of rhetoric as well. The question is, if the proverb does not have a message intended to sway a listener or reader to a certain point of view, attitude, conclusion, behavior, etc., is it classified as rhetoric? Simply put: Does rhetoric always and only persuade? Plato (CA 370 B.C.) and Aristotle (CA 333 B.C.) thought so, but many subsequent rhetoricians have proposed a broader use of rhetoric. The definitions below from Smith (1979:np), Hauser (1986:np.), Bryant (1953:407), Reynolds et al (2005:np) and Bulkeley (2001:np) encompass Biblical proverbs, parables, and so fourth, very thoroughly.

The primordial function of rhetoric is to "make-known" meaning both to oneself and to others. Meaning is derived by a human being in and through the interpretive understanding of reality. Rhetoric is the process of making known that meaning. Is not rhetoric defined as pragmatic communication, more concerned with the contemporary audiences and specific questions than with universal audiences and general questions (Hyde, Michael and Smith 1979 .)

Gerhard Hauser (1986) proposes that "...Rhetoric is communication that attempts to coordinate social action. For this reason, rhetorical communication is explicitly pragmatic. Its goal is to influence human choices on specific matters that require immediate attention" (Hauser, 1986).

From the beginning of publication in writing...essentially rhetorical performances, whether already spoken, or to be spoken, have been committed to paper circulated to be read rather than heard-from Isocrates' Panathenaicus or

Christ's *Sermon the Mount* to Eisenhower's message on the state of the nation....Hence, obviously, rhetoric must be understood to be the rationale of informative and suasive discourse both spoken and written.... (Bryant 1953:407).

“The formal study of rhetoric in the West began in Greece in the fifth century B.C. with the Sophists, followed by Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle” (Reynolds, et al).

Proverbs contains an abundance of Rhetorical forms, but it was completed between the tenth and 6th century BC (Malic 2005:np); whereas the formalization in Greece began no earlier than 500 BC (Reynolds, et al:2005:np). This points to Greeks formalization of rhetoric, but not the origination of it.

Some examples of rhetoric and literary mechanisms follow which are common to proverbs and parallelism. Even though they are not unique to Biblical or Semitic literature, the existence of these literary techniques displays the highly advanced command of language and literary skill. In order to gain an understanding of the wide range of literary knowledge possessed by and used by the Bible's ancient authors, these rhetorical and literary devices should at least be acknowledged. If one chooses to duplicate these Biblical communication styles then a look at the presence of highly developed rhetorical form is mandatory.

Gideon Burton's (1998:np,2003:np) explanation of the term “rhetoric” provides more reasons as to why the various literary forms and devices used in scripture should be considered rhetoric in the classical sense.

Rhetoric has sometimes lived down to its critics, but as set forth from antiquity, rhetoric was a comprehensive art just as much concerned with *what* one could say as *how* one might say it. Indeed, a basic premise for rhetoric is the indivisibility of means from meaning; *how* one says something conveys meaning as much as *what* one says. Rhetoric studies the effectiveness of language comprehensively, including its emotional impact (see pathos), as much as its propositional content (...logos). To see how language and thought worked together, however, it has first been necessary to artificially divide content and form. (Burton, 1998, 2001).

Some of the verses which are used as examples are arranged in a chiasmus here in order to showcase the complexity of the proverb or saying, as well as the skill of the writer, by calling attention to the “forms within forms.” Of course they were not arranged that way in the original script.

2.3.1 Antistrophe: Repetition of the same word or phrase at the end of successive clauses. This device is not as easily spotted in translations from one language to another. The Model Prayer in Matthew 6:9b-10 is a distinct example of the antistrophe being used with precision and rhythm. The matching endings are in bold. As an aside, notice how the first and last clause frames the strophe antithetically and holistically between heaven (οὐρανοῖς) and earth (γῆς).

A: Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·

B: ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·

C: ἔλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·

B: γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου,

A: ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς·

Ephesians 4:6 uses antistrophe in both English and Greek.

A: One God and Father of all

B: who is over all

B: and through all

A: and in all. (Eph 4:4-6 NIV).

6 εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων,

ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων

καὶ διὰ πάντων

καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν (Eph 4:-6, NAGNT).

2.3.2 Anadiplosis: ("doubling back") The rhetorical repetition of one or several words; specifically, repetition of a word that ends one clause and is at the beginning of the next.

A: Save me from bloodguilt

B: O God;

the God

A: who saves me. (Ps 51:14)

2.1.4 Anaphora: The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses or lines.

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven:

a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,

a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build

(Eccl 3:1-3 NIV)

Ephesians 4:5 uses the word “one” very efficiently even when it is only implied.

A: ⁴There is one body

B: and one Spirit just as you were called

C: to one hope when you were called—

C: ⁵one Lord,

B: one faith,

A: one baptism; (Eph 4:5 NIV)

5 εἷς κύριος,

μία πίστις,

ἓν βάπτισμα, (Eph 4:5 NA GNT)

2.3.5 Anastrophe: Transposition of normal word order; most often found in Latin in the case of prepositions and the words they control. Anastrophe is a form of hyperbaton.

Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them (Matt 18:20).

2.3.6 Antithesis: Opposition, or contrast of ideas or words in a balanced or parallel construction. Antithesis is used in anthetic parallelism.

²⁷ The righteous detest the dishonest; the wicked detest the upright (Prov 29:1-2 NIV).

2.3.7 Anthropomorphism: Attributing human characteristic to nonhumans. In the Bible God's the face denotes His presence, the eyes denote His awareness, the ears signify His attentiveness, the nostrils signify His anger, and the heart speaks of His moral purpose Bullinger 1916:871-881, 883-894).

“Incline your ear to me.” (Ps. 31:3)

“Hide your face from my sins.” (Ps. 51:11)

2.3.8 Aporia: Expression of doubt (often feigned) by which a speaker appears uncertain as to what he should think, say, or do.

The manager said to himself, “What shall I do now?” (Lk 16:3 NIV)

2.3.9 Aposiopesis: Sudden silence. To stop talking abruptly, causing a sudden silence; this is usually accompanied by intense emotion such as deprecation, excitement, anger or promise.

“My soul is greatly troubled; but You, O LORD, how long--?” (Ps 6:3)

2.3.10 Apostrophe: A sudden turn from the general audience to address a specific group or person or personified abstraction absent or present.

*The first three verses of Psalm 23 are in the second person, while the last three verses are in first person.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down beside still waters... I will fear no evil, because you are with me. Your rod and your staff comfort me.

2.3.11 Asyndeton: Lack of conjunctions between coordinate phrases, clauses, or words.

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere (Js 3:17 NIV).

2.3.12 Catachresis: a harsh metaphor involving the use of a word beyond its strict sphere.

Let's swallow them alive, like the grave, and whole, like those who go down to the pit (Proverbs 1:12).

2.3.13 Climax: Arrangement of words, phrases, or clauses in an order of

ascending power. Often the last emphatic word in one phrase or clause is repeated as the first emphatic word of the next.

¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God (Eph 3:16-19 NIV).

2.3.14 Diazeugma: The figure by which a single subject governs several verbs or verbal constructions (usually arranged in parallel fashion and expressing a similar idea); the opposite of zeugma.

⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (1 Cor 13:6-7 NIV)

2.3.15 Encomium:

An encomium is the praise of an abstract quality of a person or a thing as a part of oratory or literature. Ryken (1992:293-294) elaborates on the encomium as follows:

In elaborating their theme, writers of encomia draw upon the following motifs:

1. Introduction to the subject that will be praised. This may include a brief definition of the subject.
2. The distinguished and ancient ancestry of the subject; praise “by what kind he came of”.
3. A catalogue or description of the praiseworthy acts or qualities of the subject.
4. The indispensable or superior nature of the subject. The superiority of the subject might include a description of the rewards that accompany it (something distinctively important in biblical encomia).
5. A conclusion urging the reader to emulate the subject Ryken 1992:293). All encomia have a lyric quality comparable to what we find in a psalm of praise.

Some biblical encomia are in prose rather than poetry, but these are so imagistic and patterned in their arrangement that they produce a poetic effect (Ryken 1992:292-294).

A: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

B: —of whom I am the worst.

C: ¹⁶But for that very reason I was shown mercy

C: so that in me,

B: the worst of sinners,

A: Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience

as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life

(1Timothy 1:15b-16 NIV).

A: ¹⁷ Now to the King

B: eternal, immortal, invisible,

B: the only God,

A: be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen (1 Tim 1:17 NIV).

Proverbs 31:10-31 is a good example of the encomium praising a person instead of God.

This proverb extols a good wife's: character (10), competence (11), goodness (12), industry (13-15), business acumen and frugality (16-18, 25, 26-31), benevolence (20), caretaker (21-22)

2.3.16 Envelope effect: The “inclusion” or “envelope effect”, is a literary device that parallels the first and last elements of a passage which is entirely structured according to the laws of parallelism that serves to mark the beginning and end of a unit of thought.

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, the envelope effect or inclusion is thematic instead of literary. Verses four and seven open and close the envelope by stating plainly what it is, while verses five and six dwell on the things that love is not (Ryken (1992:305, 306).

⁴**Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.** ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷**It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.** (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV).

2.3.17 Euphemism: Substitution of an agreeable or at least non-offensive expression for one whose plainer meaning might be harsh or unpleasant.

If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for someone's blood, let's waylay some harmless soul (Prov 1:11 NIV).

2.3.18 Hendiadys: Use of two words connected by a conjunction instead of subordinating one to the other in order to express a single complex idea.

I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications (Ps 116).

2.3.19 Hyperbole: exaggeration for emphasis or for rhetorical effect.

And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. (Mk 9:47 NIV).

2.3.20 Hypocatastasis: Implication, a declaration that implies a comparison between two things of unlike nature that yet have something in common. Since the subject must be inferred, it is an implied metaphor. The main feature is that in the text, the figure will be expressed fully, but the true topic or subject will be suppressed.

Dogs [enemies is implied] have surrounded me (Ps. 22:17).

2.3.21 Hypozeuxis: A construction in which every clause has its own verb.

To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (Jn 1:12 NIV).

2.3.22 Idiom: The regular occurrence of figures of speech. Any figure of speech can become idiomatic when by frequent use it achieves lexical status. An idiom is also called a dead metaphor, low figure, or a common use of a figure. It may be easily activated if used in a fresh way.

He opened His mouth and *began* to teach them, saying (Matt 5:2 NIV).

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the **breaking of bread** and to prayer (Acts 2:42 NIV).

2.3.23 Irony: Expression of something which is contrary to the intended meaning; the words say one thing but mean another.

But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first (Matt 19:30).

2.3.24 Invective or vituperation: Vituperation or invective expounds evil or an evil quality about a person or things, such as animals, ideas, entities, etc. The invective often follows or precedes an encomium for contrast.

²² Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion (Prov 11:22 NIV).

"I will not punish your daughters when they turn to prostitution, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery, because the men themselves consort with harlots and sacrifice with shrine prostitutes— a people without understanding will come to ruin! Hosea 4:14 NIV

2.3.25 Koinos Topos: Common place:

A listing and condemnation of certain or general types or common place examples of vice or persons. Specific people are targeted as in the invective.

⁴⁴You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies (Jn 8:44 NIV)!

2.3.26 Litotes: Understatement, for intensification, by denying the contrary of the thing being affirmed; the use of a negated antonym to make an understatement or to emphatically affirm the positive.

³⁷All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away (Jn 6:37 NIV).

2.3.27 Meiosis: Reference to something with a name disproportionately lesser than its nature (a kind of litotes); a belittling of one thing in order to magnify another.

“And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers,
and so were we in their sight” (Num. 13:33).

2.3.28 Metaphor: Implied comparison achieved through a figurative use of Words; the word is used not in its literal sense, but in one analogous to it.
What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes
(Js 4:14b NIV).

The Lord is my Shepard (Ps 23a).

2.3.29 Metonymy: Substitution of one word for another which it suggests while maintaining contiguity between the figure and the topic, not mere comparison.

“May the name of the God of Jacob protect you” (Ps. 20:2).

In beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the Word was God
(Jn 1:1 NIV).

2.3.30 Oxymoron: Apparent paradox achieved by the juxtaposition of words which seem to contradict one another.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last (Rev 22:13 NIV).

2.3.31 Paradox: An assertion seemingly opposed to common sense, but that may yet have some truth in it.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me (Matt 5:11 NIV).

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few are chosen (Matt 20:16 NIV).

2.3.32 Paraprosdokian: Surprise or unexpected ending of a phrase or series.

¹⁴"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God.

For everyone who exalts he will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Lk 18:14 NIV).

2.3.33 Paronomasia: Use of similar sounding words; often etymological word-play.

¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter [Petros], and on this rock [Petra] I will build my church (Matt16:18a NIV).

2.3.34 Personification: Attribution of human personality or attributes to an impersonal or non-human thing.

But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison (Acts 3:8a NIV).

The land mourns--the oil languishes (Joel 1:10).

Your rod and your staff, they comfort me (Ps. 23:4).

2.3.35 Pleonasm: Use of superfluous or redundant words, often enriching the thought.

He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End (Rev 21 6a NIV).

2.3.36 Prolepsis: The anticipation, in adjectives or nouns, of the result of the action of a verb; also, the positioning of a relative clause before its antecedent.

Consider the lilies of the field how they grow. They neither toil nor spin (Matt 6:29b).

2.3.37 Syncrisis: A comparison and contrast in parallel clauses.

The lips of the wise spread knowledge;
not so the hearts of fools (Prov 15:7 NIV).

2.3.38 Synecdoche: Understanding one thing with another; the use of a part for the whole, or the whole for the part. (A form of metonymy).

Give us this day our daily bread (Matt 6:11 NIV).

2.3.39 Synthesis: the agreement of words according to logic, and not by the grammatical form; a kind of anacoluthon.

For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them (Matt 18:20).

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (Deut 6:4 NIV

2.3.40 Tapeinosis: A lessening of a thing in order to increase it.

“A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (Ps. 51:19 NIV).

2.3.41 Zeugma: Two different words linked to a verb or an adjective which is strictly appropriate to only one of them.

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God (1 Cor 1:18 NIV).

2.3.42 Zoomorphism: An explicit or implicit comparison of God (or other entities) to the lower animals or parts of the lower animals.

“In the shadow of your wings I used to rejoice.” (Ps 63:8)

These examples of rhetorical style in the book of Proverbs are not only intended to solidify the strong presence of rhetorical form, but also to suggest the presences of rhetorical purpose that co-exists with the already agreed upon didactical one. Other forms which also are used to convince are a fortiori, syllogism, and the enthymeme.

2.3 Other Forms and Literary Styles Common In Proverbs

One particular poetic style greatly favored in the Bible, especially the Wisdom literature, is what has come to be known as parallelism. The proverb should not to be confused with the form, however. Whereas the proverb is a genre of literature, parallelism is form or structure favored by Biblical writers. Proverbs are used in the Bible’s wisdom literature, whereas parallelism is a poetic device used in other genres of communication as well, such as the psalms, hymns, liturgical formulas, prophecies and sermons (Ryken 2003, Kugel 1998).

Although there are several types of parallelism, the basic form is obtained by using two clauses in which the second is closely connected to the first, and is intended to

further develop its meaning. These two clauses make up one sentence. In the event of three clauses, each further develops the previous one (Kugel 1998; Coogan 2001; Breck 1994).

In English, the two clauses would most often be separated either by a comma or by a semicolon. The relationships between the two clauses vary. The common elements are that the same word or phrase may occur in both halves, or the same syntactic structure or commonly paired concepts will be repeated. Understanding the form of this “thought-couplets and thought triplets” (Ryken 1992:181) is important because the form cannot readily be separated from its content (Von Rad 1978:25). The artistry required for reducing and honing whole concepts down to such precise, balanced couplets or grouping of couplets is marvelous in itself; but when one considers that each proverb is a completed literary work in its own right, appreciation for its beauty grows. It is like a “wheel within a wheel”, so to speak.

Although the meanings and purposes of the Hebrew sayings in their parallel form are not always as apparent to western readers as they are to those from the Middle East, one thing remains true: Jesus chose to preserve the form even though He would have known that its largest audience would not be Jewish. Obviously, there must be reasons why Jesus used this highly styled parallelism so often. The classic parallel forms that Jesus and His disciples used had grown out of the didactic styles so prevalent in wisdom literature.

One of His most well known teachings that incorporate these Semitisms is the Sermon the Mount found in Matthew 5-7 (Marlowe ND: 1; Lund 1992: 240-261). Even though Israel had been hellenized by Alexander the Great over three hundred years

earlier, the rhetorical forms favored by Greeks such as syllogisms, diatribes and enthymemes do not dominate the New Testament as one would expect. Instead, the New Testament is dominated by forms that are decidedly and inarguably Semitic (Lund 1992: 26-27). The New Testament's use of these forms, or Semitisms, would have stood out in the midst of a Greek and Roman culture (Marlowe nd: 1). That this form continued its popularity after Jesus' departure is curious because at least one fourth of the original New Testament audiences were the Gentiles Paul was writing to, not Jews. Although Paul was educated in Greek, read a Greek Bible, and possibly even thought in Greek, he maintained the Semitic forms of parallelism despite the Hellenistic influence (Wilamovitz-Moellendorff ND:157; Eddy ND:). It should be noted that the New Testament does contain Greek influence. For example, the book of Hebrews is very similar in style to other Greek writings of that period (Lund: 1992:3-17).

Perhaps the gospel and epistle writers favored the use of ancient Semitic parallelism because it connected the Messiah with the message. After all, Jesus fulfilled Hebrew prophecies, not Greek philosophies. Paul continued to use this form even when teaching Gentiles. For example, Romans 6:23 (NIV) states: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 3:23 (NIV) has another example of the parallel form: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Other examples of New Testament parallelism will be examined later in this text.

It should be considered that if these proverbs began as an oral tradition, then they probably would have been composed for the ear, not the eye. In labeling these couplets with a term that assumes a visual linear approach, could this influence the credibility of the oral tradition as the media of origin as well as pose interpretive problems? Even if

the Biblical proverbs were developed in an oral tradition before they were copied down and edited much later by educated folks like the “men of Hezekiah” mentioned in Proverbs 25:1, a question remains unanswered. Whether the proverbs were transcribed as they were and remain that way, or did the scribes transcribe and edit. “Edit” opens the door to major rewrites; and if rewrites occurred in order to make the proverbs consistent in form, then the Biblical proverbs passed down to us are not the original ones from oral tradition, although they may have originated from it. On the other hand, if they were dictated or collected and written as given, then the oral tradition would have been preserved. Psycholinguists Hernadi and Steen (1999:np) observed that, unlike stories and antidotes, the proverb had the distinction of being recalled and repeated in its original form unaltered. If that is the case, there are two conclusions that can be drawn: 1) It is highly possible to preserve the oral traditions unaltered in the original language (translation errors excluded), and 2) any altering by the scribes would rule out the preservation of the original oral tradition for those specific proverbs.

Another interesting thing of note about the term “parallelism” is that it had already been used in relation to Biblical studies over a hundred years prior to Loweth’s publications. Benedict de (Baruch) Spinoza, a brilliant young rabbi who had been expelled from the synagogue and cut off from Judaism in 1656, developed a philosophy which he called “parallelism” (Jacobs ND). His was a rationalistic and dualistic belief that the universe is a unitary whole but this whole was composed of two parts. “Spinoza preferred the designation for unique, single substance that comprises all of reality, ‘*Deus sive Natura*’ (god or nature), and argued that its infinite attributes accounts for the entire universe” (Philosophy pages.com, Jacobs ND). He believed absolutely that these

attributes, known as thought and extension (body), affect each other in a parallel structure of dual natures. Simply put, thought was the reality, and body (or matter) was an extension of it. Unless the mind (thought) ruled the body, a balance could never be reached. That is, one could not exist without the other, but thought ruled. It was mind over matter. Thought, as opposed to feeling and intuition was the key to truth (Philosophy pages.com s.v. Spinoza).

The similarities between the two “parallelisms” are that each featured parallel thought, and each one paralleled that thought with extensions. For Spinoza the extension was the body, and for Loweth the extension was the arrangement of the words to reflect the accuracy of the thought or idea. It was a body of literature in parallel with thought. Indeed, these thoughts may be manifest in words, concepts, sounds, or ideas, but it’s the thought that counts. If it was not the thought that made up Loweth’s parallelisms, it would have been pointless to create a catch-all category such as synthetic parallelism. Only two basic forms, tautological (synonymous) and anthetic, would qualify the couplets as parallelism. A couplet that is neither tautological (synonymous) nor anthetic would remain a couplet. So why was a category created for these non-qualifiers? It is simply because they were still parallel in thought, even though they were neither opposites nor alike.

Even though I am not aware of any allegiance of Loweth to Spinoza’s philosophy, influence does not have to be direct, does it? The parallel between the two parallelisms is rather curious, if nothing more.

2.4 The Structure of Parallelisms

The following definitions and explanations are an adaptation from the works of: Murphy (1990:3-7), Von Rad (1978:5-24), Smith (1997: ND), Bulkeley (2001:np), Clines (1998:314-346), Kugel (1998:2-58), Lund (1992: 1-4, Scott (1965:5-7), and Ryland (1992:159-313).

Parallelism is the term used for a sentence that is commonly broken up into two parts or clauses, sometimes referred to as stiches. These sentences are commonly referred to as couplets because they are made up of two parts. On occasion they are made up of three parts or clauses; those are referred to as a tri-stich. When two couplets are used to complete the thought or idea, that unit is called a quatrain. For discussion purposes, the clauses or stiches will be referred to by the letter A for the first side and by the letter B for the second. The three basic styles of parallelism identified by Loweth as mentioned above will now be explained.

2.4.1 Tautological (synonymous) Parallelism:

Synonymous parallelism occurs in a couplet when both clauses A and B have a similar meaning, or one in which both clauses make the same point. The term Loweth assigned to this type of parallelism is synonymous parallelism. However, tautological parallelism would be a more accurate term. Tautology is the repetition of an idea in a different word, phrase, or sentence. For example: I and the Father are one (Jn 10:30 NIV). Another example is this proverb: Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart (Prov 37:4 NIV). In this example, the person in each clause

is delighted. In side "A" he delights himself, and in side B the Lord delights him by giving him the desires of his heart.

In English translations, Biblical proverbs employing tautological (synonymous) parallelism will often be connected by the conjunction, "and" as in this verse. That is not always the case. It is less common in the New Testament than it is in the Old. Consider the conjunction "and" merely as a clue that the line or proverb requires a closer examination before it can be categorized properly. An example of a tautological (synonymous) parallel without the conjunction is: A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold. (Prov 22:1 NIV). Tautological (synonymous) parallelism then, occurs when each side or clause presents the same message in different ways. The clauses are not identical as the word tautological (synonymous) might imply; they simply emphasize the same point.

2.4.2 Anthetic Parallelism

In this form the two clauses are in contrast to each other. B is either the opposite of A, or in sharp contrast to it. For example: The wise inherit honor, but fools he holds up to shame (Prov 3:35 NIV). In English translations the conjunction most commonly associated with anthetic parallelism is the conjunction "but," because each side says contrasting or opposite things. Although this is not always true, it is the most common form found in the book of Proverbs. Just be aware that proverbs using "but" are not automatically anthetic. What makes them anthetic is that each clause says opposite or contrasting things. 1 Corinthians 1:27 is a good example of this. Foolish is contrasted with wise, and weak is contrasted with strong.

But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong (1 Cor 1:27).

2.4.3 Synthetic Parallelism

Couplets that are neither anthetic nor tautological are classified as synthetic. A and B are neither the same, nor in contrast with each other. Most often, B further develops A. This is the most prominent form of parallelism used in the Book of Proverbs, and is common throughout the Bible. It uses devices such as comparisons, numbers, similarity, assonance, rhyming alliteration, and acrostics (though not always obvious in English), and themes in B may explain, emphasize, or embellish A, or B may show the results of action described in A. For example: “Do not plot harm against your neighbor, who lives trustfully near you” (Prov 3:29 NIV).

In this proverb, B further describes or embellishes A. In English translations those proverbs without either “and” or “but” are prime candidates for the synthetic parallelism designation. Again, this is a guideline for the parallelism hunter or writer, not an absolute.

Sometimes, however, the synthetic proverb may be one of comparison instead of further development.

He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls (Prov 25:28 NIV).

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them (Matt 5:17 NIV).

Another form of synthetic parallelism the proverb may take is that of reason or development. In this form the second line offers an explanation for what the first line affirms. For example:

Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven (Matt 6:1 NIV).

Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him (Prov 26:4 NIV).

These forms will receive more attention in the following section, but first look at a sampling from Proverbs 10 to see how easy these three forms of parallelism can be to spot in an English Bible when they fall under the guidelines listed above. If one is reading in other languages such as Hebrew, the “and” and “but” may not be so obvious. For ease of identification, the conjunctions will be in bold letters in the verses below. Notice that verses 1 and 2 contrast the first half with the second half by pivoting around the word “but.”

Since verses 10 and 18 connect each side with “and,” the reader will expect each side to have similar meaning because of the use of tautological (synonymous) parallelism. This will not always be the case as we will see farther on, but for now we’ll focus on the easy ones.

In contrast, notice that verses 24 and 26 use neither “and” or “but.” This is an indication that synthetic parallelism is being employed. These are intended to be elementary examples; not all synthetic parallelism are this easy to distinguish from

tautological (synonymous) parallelism as will be observed later in section two of this study.

A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son grief to his mother (Prov 10:1 NIV).

In Hebrew the word for “but” is usually the conjunction Vey from the letter Vuv which can be rendered either “and” or “but”, or even ignored. There is another term, Avel, which is an emphatic form of but like the Greek Ala.

Ill-gotten treasures are of no value, but righteousness delivers from death (Prov 10:2 NI; anthetic parallelism).

He who winks maliciously causes grief, and a chattering fool comes to ruin (Prov 10:10; tautological or synonymous parallelism).

He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool. (Prov 18 NIV; tautological or synonymous parallelism).

As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is a sluggard to those who send him. (Prov 10:24, 26. NIV; synthetic parallelism).

2.4.4 Wordstep Parallelism

The term “step parallelism” is the term that has come to be associated with the repetition of key words from one clause to the next. In other words, the key phrase or word “steps” from one clause to another like a boy walking across the river by stepping from one stone to another. However, since the term “step parallelism” is often confused with stair-like (stair step) parallelism, the term is modified in this work. According to Ryken (1992:441), step parallelism, which he refers to as stair-step parallelism, is a

device that is similar to one not in English literature as “gradation” in which a word that ends one clause or sentence begins the next. However, the most common rhetorical term for ending one clause or sentence and beginning the next with the same word is anadiplosis; placing the repeated word or phrase at the beginning of each clause or sentence is styled anaphora. The most obvious example of pure anadiplosis is Psalm 51:14. Save me from bloodguilt, O God; The God who saves me (NIV). Notice how the term “O God” ends one clause and begins the next? Next look at how Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 uses anaphora to its fullest advantage by placing the phrase, “a time to” is at the beginning of each clause in verses 2-8.

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven:

a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,

a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,

a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

(Eccl 3:1-4 NIV).

But since the repeated words in Hebrew parallelism do not adhere to such specific placement rules as those which have been handed down from traditional Greek grammar and syntax, these terms also must be modified. There are a few pure examples of these forms, but they are rare. Most repetitious word plays place the words where they best fit for meaning, not form compliance. The correct literary term for the various types of repetition could be specified and identified, but those without knowledge or access to the original Biblical language would be somewhat handicapped. Therefore, for the purposes

of this study of Hebrew parallelism, no matter how the repetition is arranged in the strophes, the catch-all term will be wordstep parallelism. The term “Step parallelism” will not be used.

2.4.5 Acrostic Parallelism

In acrostic parallelism, each line or section begins with a sequential letter of the alphabet. For example, in Proverb 31:10-31, which is the “who can find a virtuous woman” passage, each sentence begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Psalm 25 uses the same format, wherein each verse begins with the next letter of the alphabet.

This form is more obvious to the English reader in Psalms 119 because each stanza begins with a Hebrew letter, and this letter is transliterated and is used as a divider name for that section. In most translations it appears like this:

Aleph

¹ Blessed are they whose ways are blameless,
who walk according to the law of the LORD....

Beth

⁹ How can a young man keep his way pure?
By living according to your word....

Gimel

¹⁷ Do good to your servant, and I will live;
I will obey your word....

The Psalm continues until all letters of the alphabet are used in their proper order.

2.4.6 AB-AB Arrangement, or Alternating Parallelism

A common arrangement in the wisdom literature of the Bible is alternating parallelism. This parallelism is arranged into the AB-AB, or ABC-ABC pattern by pairing any of the forms of parallelism previously noted in an alternating pattern. Here is an excellent example in which A is parallel with A by the use of opposites, and B is parallel with B in the same manner:

A: When the righteous thrive,

B: the people rejoice;

A: but when the wicked rule,

B: the people groan (Prov 29:2 NIV).

2.4.7 Admonitions and Poetic Styles

Murphy (1990:7-8) tells us that the three literary forms occurring most often in the book of Proverbs are the saying, the admonition, and the wisdom poem. The saying can be either a one-line saying or a couplet. The saying is often a didactic proverb, which usually asks a question for the student to answer. The questions are either rhetorical or followed by the answer. Proverbs 23:29-30 is a perfect example of the didactic form (Von Rad 1978: 15-23, Murphy 1990: 7-8).

²⁹ Who has woe? Who has sorrow?

Who has strife? Who has complaints?

Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes?

³⁰ Those who linger over wine,
who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. (Prov 23:29-30 NIV).

Murphy (1990) points out that the didactic saying may also be experiential in nature by stating facts without expecting a response.

For example, the entire thirteenth chapter of Proverbs provides experientially based instructions.

My son, do not forget my teaching,
but keep my commands in your heart,

for they will prolong your life many years
and bring you prosperity (Prov 13:1-2 NIV).

The admonition is more liturgical in nature instead of didactic (Murphy 1990:7-9). This proverb gives warnings, direction, and commands. The admonition proverb is quick to announce things that are an abomination to the Lord, and to tell the reader or listener what to do, or what not to do. Proverbs 3 contains many admonitions.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. (Prov 3:5-6 NIV).

2.4.8 Stair-Like Parallel Arrangements

In stair-like parallelism, each line builds upon the first in some kind of progression or digression. In the examples below, the progression is you-anybody-our-

the whole world, and ask, seek, knock. Notice that 1 John 2:1-2 employs both tautological anthetic parallelism, as well as both chiastic and stair-like arrangements.

A: My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin.

B: But if anybody does sin,

C: we have one who speaks to the Father in our
defense—

C: Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

B: He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins,

A: and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world

(1 Jn 2:1-2 NIV).

In Matt 7:7, Jesus uses this style effectively with tautological parallelism.

(A) Ask, (B) and it shall be given to you.

(A) Seek (B) and you shall find.

(A) Knock (B) and it shall be opened unto you (Matt 7:7 NIV).

2.4.9 Arrangements of Various Forms of Parallelism

As stated previously, a trend among Bible scholars who study the chiasmus is to ignore the three designated forms of parallelism because, as Kugel (1998:12) implied, all forms are synthetic because it is a defective term that is a catch-all for all parallelism. For Kugel (1998:2-12), parallelism is nothing more than two (or three) clauses in which the second or third emphasizes the first or intensifies it in some way. There are not three

classifications such as synonymous, anthethisis, and synthetic. Robert Alter (1985:3-6) disagrees with this view, stating that B does not always further A; B and A may say two separate things.

The forms listed above, tautological, synthetic, and anthetic, are not as important as the parallel forms used within the and how they are arranged. Depending upon the structure, different styles and parallelisms emerge merely from the arrangement of the parallelisms. That is to say, the parallel forms by themselves are marvelous literary devises and easy to use, but their usefulness does not stop there. When paired, stacked, and arranged in various artistic patterns, these parallel constructions become yet another distinctive and unique form. The parallel arrangements or patterns most commonly found in the Bible are chiasmic, alternating or “AB-AB” arrangements.

2.4.10 The Chiasmus: A Chiasmic Parallel Arrangement

The chiasmus is a grouping of words in which the message of the first half is given in reverse in the second half; or a grouping of clauses, strophes and stanzas in which ideas that are presented in order (A, B, C . . .) correspond to ideas that later occur in reverse order (. . .C, B, A).

Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mk 2:27 NIV).

Chiasmic parallelism is also known by many names such as inverted parallelism, mirror-like parallelism, concentric parallelism, incomplete and complete chiasmus, chiasm, chiasmic parallelism, helix, and most commonly; chiasmus. The definition for chiasmus commonly accepted outside of the Biblical and Semitic studies circles is: A reversal in the order of words in two otherwise

parallel phrases (Grothe 2005:np). This definition is not specific enough for serious Biblical study because of the complexity of some chiasmi. It is unfortunate that “chiasmus” is commonly associated with word reversals for cute, artistic, or mnemonic reasons, ignoring the thematic, conceptual, and idea chiasmus. Biblical chiasmi often offer much more than the reversal of words, meaning, or even concepts. Sometimes the shift in the center of the chiasmus will shift to a different direction entirely. Sometimes a problem will be posed in the first half with a solution in the second half. Others may ask a question in the first half and answer it in the second. Word-reversals are certainly abundant within the book of Proverbs, though. 1 John 4:7 is a good example: Love is of God, for God is love. Word reversals are quite catchy and easy to remember. This type of chiasmus is popular today, too. A popular proverb that is often quoted today is: “People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care” (author unknown). Or how about the one associated with John F. Kennedy: “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.”

Not all scholars favor blending the term ”chiasmus” with inverted parallelism. John Breck (1994:3-4) stresses that the chiasmus is more than a simple reversal of a line or parallel structure. It must have a center or pivoting point. For example: Breck (1994:3-5) would consider ABBA as inverted parallelism, whereas AB-C-BA pivots on C, and therefore is a genuine chiasmus. As one may gather by my statements in the paragraph above, my observations support the observations about the concentric property of the chiasmus. The chiasmic nature of Biblical poetry and prose demand a movement of intensification

from A to B, as well as a definite shift in focus at the center is indisputable (Breck 1994:38-58; Kugel 1998:2-58; Clines 1998:314-336; Welsh 2001 Lund 1992:40-41). However, for the purpose of simplicity and global recognition we shall use the term “chiasmus and its derivatives to indicate both word reversals and structures that employ an external chiastic form, but contain much more complexity and precision than this simple term implies. Biblical chiastic arrangements may use any of the forms of parallelism which allow them to say explicit messages in both sides of the chiasmus. Tim Bulkeley (2001:np) explains the chiasmus like this.

“Chiasm (the adjective is "chiastic") is the arrangement of elements (e.g. of a text) in the form of mirror-like reflection: ABBA, or ABCD-DCBA. It is obvious that Biblical authors liked to arrange texts in patterns. The chiasmus is extremely common throughout scripture. These are both large scale (where the echoed element is a phrase, sentence or idea), and small scale where it is words or sounds that are echoed in the Hebrew text. E.g. Genesis 9:6a.”

A Whoever sheds
 B the blood
 C of man
 C man shall
 B his blood
A be shed

A key feature of the chiasmus is that it forces concentration upon a key point which is found predominately in the center of the chiasmus. Therefore it becomes much easier to understand and interpret the focus of the passage, subsequently revealing the authors intended meaning (Breck 1994:45-58). The

form below of Jeremiah 2:27c-28a (NIV) displays this more effectively when using Breck's (1994:44) system of replacing letters with numbers. In this method, zero will always be the center, and often the main point of the passage. When the main point is in the center it will be introduced by the line immediately preceding it, and reinforced by the one immediately following it. Conversely, when the main point is in the extremes or outermost strophes, the chiasmus begins and ends with the main point.

2: yet when they are in trouble, they say,

1: 'Come and save us!'

0: where then are the gods you made for yourselves?

1: Let them come if they can save you

2: when you are in trouble (Jeremiah 2:27c-28a NIV).!

Of course, the chiasmus can place the emphasis upon the outer extremes as well. The point of focus is not agreed upon by all who study the chiasmus, however. It was suggested at the Hebrew Poetry Group of the Society of Biblical Literature in the 1980s that the extremes may be as important as, if not more significant, than the center of a chiasm (Welch 1995:np). Nils Lund's (1992:40-41) seven laws of the chiasmus show his concentration upon both the center and the extreme. His work demonstrates a little more focus on the center than upon the extremes. Lund's seven laws are useful to anyone interested in ancient literature. Here are his seven laws. The laws and explanation have been paraphrased, but the scriptures are directly from Lund (1992:40-58).

2.4.11 Lund's seven laws of the chiasmus

2.4.11.1 The center is always the turning point. This means that the chiasmus has a pivotal point in which it changes direction.

As you recall, Breck (1998:55-58) went further with the concept of the center by saying that a true chiasmus pivoted at the center instead of merely walking forward and backwards, so to speak. ABA pivots on B, whereas ABBA need not pivot at all. In other words, a reversal occurs, but there is no shift in theme, emphasis, or direction. The examples in #2 illustrate the pivotal point very well.

2.4.11.2 The shift at the center: At the center there is often a change in the direction of thought. From this change in direction comes an antithetic idea. After this the original trend is continued until the system is concluded. However, the second example below demonstrates that not all of these shifts are apparent when they take up the original theme. The first one will return to the original theme, but the second one appears to stay with the new theme that occurred at the shift. Nevertheless, after closer scrutiny it becomes apparent that C ends the first strophe and begins the next. Therefore the themes are the same.

A: ⁷He came as a witness

B: to testify concerning that light,

C: so that through him all men might believe.

B: ⁸He himself was not the light;

A: He came only as a witness to the light.

Example 2: The center shifts the focus. The first A and B receive and believe, but C and the second A and B deals with birth.

A: ¹²Yet to all who received him,

B: to those who believed in his name,

C: he gave the right to become children of

God—

B: ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision
or a husband's will,

A: but born of God (Jn 1:12-13 NIV).

2.4.11.3 Identical ideas occur in the extremes and the center,

and nowhere else in the arrangement. I will modify that to say more correctly that identical ideas **may** occur in the extremes and the center, and nowhere else in the arrangement. This happens, as well as the antithesis of one line occurring in the other, thereby making them opposing themes that use the center as a pivoting point. But here is an example of Lund's idea in which the theme of purifying the house is in the extremes and the center.

A: ⁴⁹ To purify the house he is to take two birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop.

B: ⁵⁰ He shall kill one of the birds over fresh water in a clay pot.

C: ⁵¹ Then he is to take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the
scarlet yarn

C: and the live bird,

D: dip them into the blood of the dead

bird and the fresh water,

E: and sprinkle the house

I: seven times.

E: ⁵² He shall purify the house

D: with the bird's blood, the fresh water,

C: the live bird,

B: the cedar wood, the hyssop and the scarlet yarn.

A: ⁵³ Then he is to release the live bird in the open fields outside the town. In this way he will make atonement for the house, and it will be clean." Lev 14:49-53 NIV

2.4.11.4. Shift from center to the extremes.

The words, meanings or ideas will appear in the extremes and Isaiah 60:1-3 demonstrates this. The "darkness" in the center, G, points to the "light" in lines A and B.

The extremes convey the idea of light, and the center presents darkness.

A: 1 "Arise,

B: shine,

C: for your light has come,

D: and the glory

E: of the LORD

F: rises upon you.

G: ² See, darkness covers the earth

G: and thick darkness
F: is over the peoples,

E: But the LORD rises upon you

D: and his glory appears over you.

C: ³ Nations will come to your light,

B: and kings to the brightness

A: of your dawn. Isaiah 60:1-3 NIV

2.4.11.5 The tendency of certain terms to gravitate toward certain positions within a given system, such as the divine names in the Psalms, quotations in central position in a system in the New Testament, or such terms as “body” when denoting the church. In Isaiah 28:15-18, the center line is:

A stone: a stone tried
Behold I lay in Zion: A corner precious
A foundation well founded (Lund 1992:45)

2.4.11.6 Larger units are frequently introduced by framed passages.

Lund sites Rev 6:9-17, 8:1-5 as an example of this. I assume he is referring to the envelope effect in which the passage is framed by similar themes, words, phrases or ideas.

⁹When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.
¹⁰They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood (Rev 6:9-10 NIV)?"

³Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. ⁴The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. ⁵Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake (Rev 8:3-5 NIV).

2.4.12.7 There is frequently chiasmic parallelism and alternating parallelism within the same structure. A good example of this is Isaiah 55:7-8: (1992:45).

A: Let the wicked forsake his way,

B: And the unrighteous man his thought;

a: And let him return to Yahweh,

C: b: And he will have mercy upon him;

a: And to our God,

b: For he will abundantly pardon

B: For my thoughts are not your thoughts,

A: Neither are your ways my ways, says Yahweh.

Lund's laws are not laws of course, but useful guidelines for understanding the chiasmic structures. Welch (1995) structured fifteen criteria to look for when determining whether or not a chiasmic structure exists in the literature being examined. These criteria are objectivity, purpose, boundaries, competition with other forms, length, density, dominance, reduplication, centrality, balance, climax, return, compatibility, and aesthetics.

2.4.12 The Collapsible-Expandable Chiasmus With Twin and Triplet Chiasmi.

The name “col-ex chiasmus” comes from the fact that when the larger macro chiasmus is collapsed in the middle, three individual chiasmus are created that are all parallel with each other. If diagramed, it would look like the letter M. Conversely, a larger chiasmus resembling the letter “V” that is laying on its side, is created by expanding the meeting point of twin chiasmi, which is actually the center of the middle chiasmus. In other words, the center inverted V in the letter M is punched upward forming one inverted V. The term “twin chiasmi” refers to two chiasmi butted next to each other with all four lines being parallel. If that twin chiasmus shares a common strophe as the end of one and the beginning of the other, it is referred to as a Siamese twin or triplet. Observe the center of the second chiasmus below: “The ever-shining light/never-ending grace.” The junction of the one creates triplets that can be expanded to make one the overall chiasmus: “Those who receive and believe have the right to become children of God.” The pattern below shows that these are more than twins; they are triplets because the inversion of the center creates an inverted chiasmus. The center of the overall chiasmus became the center of a smaller one when the center was folded in, or “collapsed”. Look closely at two arrangements of the same chiastic outline of John’s prologue in John 1:1-18. The first one is the mega chiasmus, and the second one is the same outline that has been “collapsed” in the middle, forming three chiasmi inside the one.

6: (1-2) The Word with God in beginning

5: (3) Creation through Christ

4: (4) Life for Men through Christ

3: (5) The ever-shinning light

2: (6-8) John as witness

1: (9-11) Jesus and His creation.

0: (12-13) Receiving Christ

and adoption by the Father

1: (14) The Word joins His creation

2: (15) John bore witness

3: (16) never-ending grace

4: (17a) Law for man through man

5: (17b) Grace and truth come into being

6: (18) The only-born with the Father

3: (1-2) The Word with God in beginning

2: (3) Creation through Christ

1: (4) Life for Men through Christ

0: (5) The ever-shinning light

1: (6-8) John as witness

2: (9-11) Jesus and His creation.

3 (12) Receiving Christ

3 (13) Becoming a child of God

2: (14) The Word joins His creation

1: (15) John bore witness

0: (16) never-ending grace

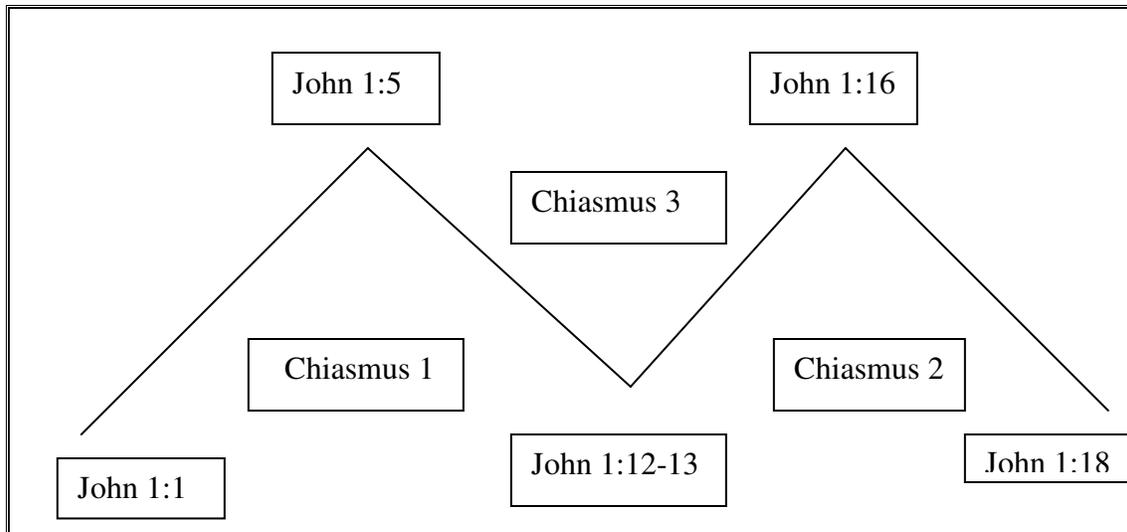
1: (17a) Law for man through man

2: (17b) Grace and truth come into being

3: (18) The only-born with the Father

Instead of having two “1’s,” “2’s” and so on, that match like they would in one single chiasmus, in the col-ex chiasmus there are four parallel strophes at each level except at point “0”. This is more than quarto parallelism, which in itself is mark of excellence for the writer, but these parallelisms are connected in such a way to form “Siamese chiasmi.” The lines are connected by being part of one continuous twin or triplet chiasmus that results in all four parallel lines being interchangeably parallel. That is, the first “leg” is not only parallel with the second as is expected, but is parallel with the third and fourth as well.

Conversely, the three individual chiasmus can be expanded to form one larger chiasmus; thus the name, collapsible-expandable chiasmus. This enigmatic occurrence is illustrated in the box below.



See how the collapsing of the center created not just two, but three chiasmi? Yes, there are three chiasmi inside of one, and one chiasmus concealed in three. What an interesting possibility.

The value of even the possibility of a col-ex in the prologue raises several questions, making the col-ex a rather interesting diagnostic tool, if nothing else.

1: Is it the work of the interpreter or the author? That is, did the interpreter force a nonexistent schema onto the form being studied?

2: Is this col-ex chiasmus the work of one author or two? Did one author build upon the work of the first by using the last strophe in the second half of the first chiasmus as the first strophe in the second?

3: If the work of one author, were the two sides written together, or did one side precede the other, thereby giving birth to the overall chiasmus?

4. Was the col-ex chiasmus intentional, or just a result of other intentions?

5: Assuming that the double chiasmus was intentional, was the third intended as well?

6: In the case of the prologue, did the first chiasmus actually end with verse 12, with the second beginning with verse 13?

2.4.13 Alternating parallelism

This is an AB-AB or ABC-ABC type arrangement in which the parallel colons or bicolons rotate by being parallel with every other line, or every third line pattern. Any parallel forms can be used and arranged in this fashion. In the example below, wordstep parallelism is used with the words deeds and faith. The alternating pattern was employed frequently by the Bible writers.

A: ⁵He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son,

B: but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.

A: ⁶ Blessings crown the head of the righteous,

B: but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked.

A: ⁷ The memory of the righteous will be a blessing,

B but the name of the wicked will rot. Prov 10:5-7 NIV

¹⁸But someone will say, (anacrusis)

A: "You have faith;

B: I have deeds."

A: Show me your faith

B: without deeds,

A: and I will show you my faith

B: by what I do. James 2:18 NIV

2.4.14 Other Proverbial Patterns

2.4.14.1 Wisdom poems

Wisdom poems are poems that are inserted within a proverb, or the poem can be the entire proverb. The first nine chapters of Proverbs contain many wisdom poems.

Here is an example from chapter one.

²⁰ Wisdom calls aloud in the street,
she raises her voice in the public squares;

²¹ at the head of the noisy streets she cries out,
in the gateways of the city she makes her speech:

(Prov 1:20-21).

The acrostical form mentioned earlier is also an example of poetic form.

Scott (1965:np) has identified seven proverbial patterns in which the author expresses the life principles, which he advocates: These are helpful clarifications.

2.4.14.2 Congruity:

The righteous care about justice for the poor,
but the wicked have no such concern (Prov 29:7 NIV).

2.4.14.3 Contrast:

He who is full loathes honey,
but to the hungry even what is bitter tastes sweet. (Prov 27:7 NIV).

2.4.14.4 Comparison:

²⁵ Like cold water to a weary soul is good news from a distant land. (Prov 25:25 NIV).

2.4.14.5 Contrary to proper order:

Of what use is money in the hand of a fool,
since he has no desire to get wisdom (Prov 17:16 NIV)?

2.4.14.6 Classification:

A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps
(Prov 14:15 NIV).

2.4.14.6 7 Priority:

A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than
silver or gold (Prov 22:1 NIV).

2.4.14.7 Consequences:

A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing
(Prov 20:4 NIV).

2.4.14.8 Formulas for Sayings:

Common “sayings” formulas used in Proverbs and other wisdom literature are
pointed out by Murphy (1990:7-8) are:

2.4.14.9 The “good” sayings:

These may be expressed as “not good” or “no good.”

It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way
(Prov 19:2 NIV).

2.4.14.10 The “better” sayings:

These sayings most often use the formula: It is better to/than to.

Better to be a nobody and yet have a servant than pretend to be somebody and
have no food (Prov 12:9 NIV).

2.4.14.11 The numerical sayings:

These sayings use the formula of a title line with numbers, followed by a list of
items or actions. The number line often uses the equation of $X + 1$. Proverbs 30
contains examples of both:

"There are three things that are too amazing for me,
four that I do not understand:

the way of an eagle in the sky,
the way of a snake on a rock,
the way of a ship on the high seas,
and the way of a man with a maiden (Prov 30:18-19 NIV).

"Four things on earth are small,
yet they are extremely wise:

Ants are creatures of little strength,
yet they store up their food in the summer;

coney are creatures of little power,
yet they make their home in the crags;

locusts have no king,
yet they advance together in ranks;

a lizard can be caught with the hand,
yet it is found in kings' palaces
(Prov 30:24-28 NIV).

2.4.14.12 The “abomination” sayings:

These sayings call attention to those things that God does not like, or things that do not please God.

A false balance is an abomination to the LORD,
But a just weight is His delight (Prov 16:1).

2.4.14.13 The “blessed” sayings:

This is the formula found in the beatitudes during the Sermon the Mount in Matthew 5. Proverbs 28 has a good example of this form.

Blessed is the man who always fears the LORD,
but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble (Prov 28:14 NIV).

2.4.14.14 The “A fortiori” sayings:

Although this category was identified by Murphy (1990:7-8), rather than defining a fortiori proverbs as those that draw a conclusion, the definitions for a fortiori employed here are from Avi Seon ’s (1995:np) article, *Judaic Logic and Webster’s Dictionary Online* (nd)

If A, then how much more so B.

If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Matt 7:11).

Webster's Dictionary Online defines a for-ti-o-ri this way.

Etymology: New Latin, literally, from the stronger (argument): with greater reason or more convincing force -- used in drawing a conclusion that is inferred to be even more certain than another. The man of prejudice is, *a fortiori*, a man of limited mental vision (*Webster's Dictionary Online* n. d.).

I will list other types and forms of sayings which use parallelism.

2.4.14.15 The “As so” sayings:

This is a commone in both Old and New Testament.

The “as so saying” is always tautological and it always equates side B with side A. For .example:

As in heaven, so on earth (Matt 6:10b NIV).

2.4.14.16 The “Reasoning” sayings:

These are the sayings Murphy (1990) categorized as a fortiori. This includes sayings like “if then, if also, and so, etc. The A fortiori saying mentioned above is also a “reasoning saying.” 2 Chronicles 7:14 is an excellent example. “If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from

their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sins, and heal their land".
Romans 10:9-10 is also a reasoning saying.

2.5 Summary and Considerations

Parallelisms occur in Hebrew poetry and proverbs when ideas, thoughts, themes, words or sounds are repeated in parallel clauses, strophes, or stanzas. One of the more stylistic parallelisms is the chiasmus. The chiasmus is that literary form in which ideas that have been presented in order (A, B, C . . .) correspond to ideas that later occur in reverse order (. . .C, B, A).

The fact that ancient Semitic writers used finely crafted rhetorical forms that were later catalogued by Greek rhetoricians illustrates the high literary quality of Biblical writing. Many scholars propose that the literary quality of proverbs was actually developed orally, some suggest that it is the other way around.

Although the purpose of proverbs seems to be didactic in scope, exactly where these proverbs were used, and by whom, is not a settled issue. Artifacts to base these presumptions upon are scarce. Lund

CHAPTER THREE

THE SIX-STEP PROCESS FOR LOCATING PARALLELISM IN SCRIPTURE

3.1 Chapter Overview

This is the “application” chapter. In it the reader will cross over from spectator to participant. Definitions and identifications have been established for the primary purpose of equipping the minister how to identify wisdom writing writings that include proverbs and parallelism in scripture. Reading the results of other people’s study and research has much less of an impact than being capable of spotting the various forms and styles being addressed here. Methods and tools for locating these forms for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the text, as well as a boost for the would-be proverb and chiasmus writer. The reader will be walked through several exercises of locating proverbs and parallelism in the New Testament.

Up to now, criteria for proverbs and parallelism has been discussed, but little methodology has been demonstrated. In the following method, step three is for the writer. Therefore, if the reader is only searching for forms and structures, skip step three. There would be no need to identify tautological, synthetic, and anthetic parallelisms if the only aim is to learn how to identify chiasmi, for example. But becoming intimate with all the forms increases familiarity, competency and control of the many facets of parallelism. Artistic style flourishes after the minute details of the art become second nature, and this artistic literary style will soon become apparent as the scripture is analyzed.

3.2 Six general steps for locating parallelism in scripture

These Six steps can be very helpful in locating and identifying parallelism. After using it a few times, steps one, two, and three can be consolidated into one, which will be demonstrated later on in this chapter. Consider these six general steps as guidelines or training wheels which eventually will not be necessary.

The six general steps for locating parallelism area:

- 1) Identify and separate each colon.
- 2) Highlight or mark repetitious words.
- 3) Identify the basic forms of parallelism used.
- 4) Determine the possible arrangements, such as chiasmus, wordstep, or stair-like.
- 5) Select the most likely arrangement.
- 6) Questions, comments, and observations.

As stated above, steps one and two may be consolidated, and step three may be eliminated, reducing the steps to these four.

- 1) Identify and separate each colon, and highlight or mark repetitious words.
- 2) Determine the possible arrangements, such as chiasmus, wordstep, or stair-like.
- 3) Select the most likely arrangement.
- 4) Questions, comments, and considerations

Methods are more easily explained by demonstration than by merely giving instructions. John 1:1-18 NIV is a good place to begin.

3.3 John 1

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning.

³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.^[b]

¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent,^[c] nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only,^[d] who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' "¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 1:1

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning.

3.3.1 Step One: Identify and separate each colon.

We'll start with the first two verses for ease of illustration and learning.

¹In the beginning was the Word,

and the Word was with God,

and the Word was God.

²He was with God in the beginning.

3.3.2 Step Two: Highlight or mark repetitious words

In these exercises a different type of font is used for each set of words.

¹In the *beginning* was the Word,

and the Word was with God,

and the Word was God.

²He was with God in the *beginning*.

3.3.3 Step Three: Identify the basic forms of parallelism used

Note: This step is for training the writer, not the analyst.

Here is a quatrain, or a total of four colons within one strophe. The parallelism used in this clause is tautological (synonymous) because they explain the meaning using metaphor. For example: Word is a metaphor for Christ.

3.3.4 Step Four: Determine the possible arrangements, such as chiasmus, wordstep, or stair-like.

Consult other translations or commentaries when necessary. Look at the highlighted words and determine the arrangement that is most likely and try it. First of all, it is obvious that wordstep parallelism is being used by repeating the words in other clauses or colons. What else? By looking at the highlighted words, a chiasmus appears. *Beginning* is on the outside, or first and last lines, and *Word* is on the inside, sandwiched in between the other two. If other translations or Greek Bibles need to be consulted to resolve some textual question, this is done at this time.

A: ¹In the beginning was the Word,

B: and the Word was with God,

B: and the Word was God.

A: ²He was with God in the beginning. (Tautological (synonymous) parallelism within the chiasmus).

Determine all the possibilities, and then chose the most likely.

A: ¹In the beginning

B: was the Word,

C: and the Word

D: was with God,

D: and God

C: was the Word-or God the word was

(θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.)

B: ²He was with God

A: in the beginning.

This arrangement works and is very artistic, but the central emphasis changes like the first one did: And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Read this central line in between the two extremes (A's).

In the beginning the Word was with God, and the Word was God in the beginning with God.

Or another possible chiasmus is this stream-lined model.

- A. In (the) beginning
- B. was
- C. the *Word*
- D. and the *Word*
- E. was
- F. with *God*;
- F. and *God*
- E. was
- D. the *Word*;
- C. the same (*Word*)
- B. was
- A. in beginning with God

Or possibly:

A: ¹In the *beginning*

B: was the Word,

C: and the Word

D: was with God,

D: and God

C: was the Word-(θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.)

B: ²He was with God

A: in the *beginning*.

Or even

A: ¹In the *beginning* was the Word,

B: and the Word was with God,

C: and God was the Word-(θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.)

B: ²He was with God

A: in the *beginning*. (Greek manuscripts arrange this differently: οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν He was in (the) beginning with God).

A: ¹In (the) *beginning* (ἐν ἀρχῇ)

B: was the Word,

C: and the Word

D: was with God,

D: and God

C: was the Word-(θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.)

B: ²He was

A: in (the) *beginning* with God (ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν).

3.3.5 Step Five: Settle on the final form for this portion

At first look, the first two look most probable because God is in the center of each. The third one, however, displays the most likely emphasis in the center, “God was the word.” The B’s work much better because they are actually perfect matches as parallels; B1 “the word was with God, and B2 “He was with God.” The first A appears a little awkward in this arrangement, though. This will be examined more closely in the next step.

3.3.6 Step Six: Questions comments and observations

Settle any questions that come up. Look at the center and the extremes in the first chiasmus. “ADDA” combines to make a powerful message: In the beginning with God and God in the beginning with God. There are several questions with this one.

1: Since this chiasmus works in English and Greek, was craftsmanship required to exact such symmetry intentional, or did such exactness just happen to be the way the chiasmus unfolded in the writer’s mind as he attempted to form the overall chiasmus?.

1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ
 ἦν
 ὁ λόγος,
 καὶ ὁ λόγος
 ἦν
 πρὸς τὸν θεόν
 καὶ θεὸς
 ἦν
 ὁ λόγος.
 2 οὗτος
 ἦν
 ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

2: With the exception of the last three words, πρὸς τὸν θεόν this chiasmus is perfectly precise. Indeed, πρὸς τὸν θεόν seems to hang there all by itself. Does this imply that πρὸς τὸν θεόν was not in the original manuscript and added at a later date at the expense of the original author’s perfect form of literary expression?

3. Since none of the remaining chiasmi are this exact, could that imply that the chiasmus was intended not to call attention to the balance each ἦν (was) like it does? This exactness appears inconsistent with the remaining more loosely constructed chiasmi in the whole passage.

4: What contribution does isolating the verb make to the core of the message? Did John actually want “God” in the center framed by the “beginning” in the opening and ending lines on the extremities? Does this approach detract from the focus of the message by placing so much emphasis upon the Word being a “was”, instead of the “I am” that the book of John is so well known for? In other words, is it consistent with the author’s overall style? Or was it simply conceived in a less isolated flow of words? Were the

words grouped together in a way that does not set the “was” out by itself? Perhaps it was more like

- 1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,
καὶ ὁ λόγος
ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν
καὶ θεὸς
ἦν ὁ λόγος.
2 οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

Or even more compact.

- 1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,
καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν
καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.
2 οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

No matter what the original grouping was, the exact mirror-like order of words reflects a high level of literary skill.

Perhaps the intent of the chiasmic structure is not to determine which words are to be emphasized when speaking. The overall balance and flow created by this exact repetition is probably not sacrificed by the way it was achieved. Whatever the answers to these questions are, the symmetry represented here is instructive to any minister who desires to preach in such a balanced and precise manner. This is truly a chiasmus of precision, and a befitting opening for any book or sermon that brings the gospel message.

Just for the sake of demonstrating the balance the author achieved, if you were to read each of these two lines from the center to the front (backwards), it would read like this.

Top line: with *God*; was the *Word*, and the *Word* was in (the) beginning

Bottom: and *God* was the *Word*; the same (*Word*) was in beginning with God. Please note that the same meaning for a chiasmus when read either backwards or forwards is the exception rather than the rule. This is indeed a finely tuned and polished poetic introduction.

3.4 John 1:3

³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

3.4.1 Step One: Identify and separate each colon.

³Through him all things were made;
without him nothing was made
that has been made.

3.4.2 Step Two: Highlight or mark repetitious words.

³Through him all things were *made*;
without him nothing was *made*
that has been *made*.

3.4.3 Step Three: Identify the basic forms of parallelism used.

Verse 3 is a tautological (synonymous) bi-colon (line with two clauses or stiches); colons. This is rather confusing because anthethisis is definitely employed here, but in a positive way. At first, “all things” seem to be opposite of “nothing”, therefore making the verse anthetic. In addition to that, “through Him’ is contrasted with “without Him”. Although contrast is used, both clauses are tautological (synonymous) in nature. That is, they are explaining the same phenomenon of Christ in creation, and creation through Christ. If the last phrase, “That has been made” were removed, anthetic parallelism would remain because the clauses would be contrasted with each other.

3.4.4 Step Four: Determine the possible arrangements, such as chiasmus, wordstep, or stair-like. Consult other translations or commentaries when necessary.

While examining the highlighted words, determine the arrangement that is most likely and try it. First of all, it is readily observed that wordstep parallelism is being accomplished by repeating the words in other clauses or colons. But what else?

³Through him all things were *made*;

without him nothing was *made*

that has been *made*

Watch what happens when the colons are arranged in a simple AB-AB pattern featuring wordstep parallelism.

A: ³Through him

B: all things were *made*;

A: without him

B: nothing was *made*

A (or C): that has been *made*.

AB-ABC is not the typical AB or alternating pattern. Five lines leave one odd line. That sounds like it could be a chiasmus with a center line. Arrange that strophe into a chiasmus and see how that odd line in the middle fits.

A: ³Through him

B: all things were *made*;

C: without him

B: nothing was *made*

A: that has been *made*.

So this strophe could be a chiasmus after all! But is this the best arrangement?

Could this also be a simple chiasmus?

A: ³Through him all things were *made*;

B: without him nothing was *made*

A: that has been *made*.

Or even:

A: ³Through him *all things* were *made*;

B: without him

A: nothing was made that has been made.

The simple chiasmus is more balanced, and the antitheses expressed by the “A’s is clear cut, making the chiasmus easier to identify. Therefore, the key words and phrases are “all things” and “nothing”, and “was made and were made” can be the common denominator.

“Made” (ἐγένετο, “came into being”), displays an excellent use of wordstep parallelism that adds rhythm through repetition, making the verse easier to remember while focusing upon “him” and “made”.

The question is, which of the two simple chiasmi is best suited for this verse? The first one is very artistic because each clause illustrates the use of antistrophe, or repetition of the same word or phrase at the end of successive clauses, by ending with “made”. The only way to be sure of this is to check the original language to see if each clause ends with the word “made.” If reading Greek is not an option, then use an interlinear Greek Bible. “πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν. ὃ γέγονεν (John 1:3 Nestle-Aland GNT).” The first clause ends with “became”, the second clause ends with became being negated, thereby rendering the colon “became not one thing”, and the third clause ends with “had become”. This may weaken the antistrophe in languages such as English, but the strophe is in keeping which good Greek syntax and maintains the antistrophe

In both versions of the simple chiasmus, the center represents a shift. The second one is attractive because the two A's appear to be very balanced, but the poetic sense of chiasmus is lost. The middle chiasmus, which is the first simple chiasmus, is the strongest candidate because the antistrophic theme is most employed.

At first glance, the last phrase, "that has been made" does not appear to be necessary. That will be checked. This is important, because without it there is no chiasmus. In order to get the sense of it in English, change the order to:

"Nothing that has been made was made without him."

Now the inclusion of the phrase makes sense because it makes a complete thought. Just to be sure, remove "that has been made" and see if the meaning is changed. "Nothing was made without him."

Removal of this phrase does change the meaning. If nothing was made at all this statement would still be true.

Those are good considerations, but there is another possibility which may be plausible. What if this is two simple chiasmi rather than one?

A: ³Through him

B: *all things*

A: were *made*;

A: without him

B: *nothing* was made

A: that has been made.

This arrangement works perfectly in English by contrasting “all things with nothing”, and “through Him” with “without Him”. However, it is not that clear cut because the arrangement from the Greek New Testament contains a different word order.

A: All things	πάντα
B: Through Him	δι' αὐτοῦ
A: Came into being	ἔγένετο,
A: And without him	καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ
B: came into being not one thing	ἔγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν
A: That has come into being	ὃ γέγονεν

In the two-chiasmus model, the first chiasmus features “through Him” as the focal point, whereas “nothing was made” is the center of the second. In the first chiasmus the second A completes the first. However, in the second chiasmus, it may be a stretch to match the second A with the first. Does “without Him” equate with “has come into being”? Even though the last A in each chiasmus is parallel, the strengths for this arrangement portrayed in English may lessen when viewed in Greek.

But for the sake of being thorough, look what happens when the negating phrase, “not one thing” (οὐδὲ ἓν) stands in the B position alone.

A: Without him was made	καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ
B: not one thing	οὐδὲ ἓν.
A: that was made.	ὃ γέγονεν .

Now the second A does complete the first. Combine the two strophes.

A: All things	πάντα
B: Through Him	δι' αὐτοῦ
A: Came into being	ἐγένετο,
A: And without him came into being	καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο
B: not one thing	οὐδὲ ἓν
A: that has come into being	ὃ γέγονεν

The A's in both chiasmi are compatible. In the first chiasmus, "All things ...came into being" certainly behave like a concentric chiasmus when read from the center because the outer phrases complement the center one. "Through Him all things came into being". The second chiasmus accomplishes the same thing. "Not one thing without him came into being that has come into being."

However, what would happen if this arrangement were placed into an alternating AB-AB pattern?

A: All things	πάντα
B: Through Him	δι' αὐτοῦ
A: Came into being	ἐγένετο,
B: And without him	καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ
A: came into being	ἐγένετο

B: not one thing that has come into being οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν

Close, but not close enough because the thoughts are in three phrases each. If that is true, then perhaps this is an ABC-ABC pattern.

Take a look.

A: All things πάντα

B: Through Him δι' αὐτοῦ

C: Came into being ἐγένετο,

A: And without him καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ

B: came into being ἐγένετο

C: not one thing that has come into being οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν

Yes, this is good. So good in fact, that the arrangement also works as a chiasmus.

To test this, simply indent the B's.

A: All things πάντα

B: Through Him δι' αὐτοῦ

C: Came into being ἐγένετο,

A: And without him καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ

B: came into being ἐγένετο

C: not one thing that has come into being οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν

This looks familiar does it not? This is the last chiastic arrangement that was tested above. What does this mean? Perhaps nothing; perhaps everything.

It gives credence to the feasibility of verse 2 being comprised of two chiasmi instead of one. Is this important? Yes, it is very critical because the number of strophes determines the center of the overall chiastic structure, which in turn will reveal the main theme of the prologue. For example, if there are thirteen strophes, then number seven will be the center, thereby announcing the main purpose of the prologue. However, if there are fourteen instead of thirteen, then both seven and eight will be the center. This could alter or cloud the issue when attempting to determine the main focus of the passage. If there are fifteen instead of thirteen, then number eight alone is the focal point. So, yes, it does matter. Since it is important, examine the chosen one-strophe chiasmus in the more literal Greek translation that was used with the two-strophe chiasmi.

A: All things through Him came into being

πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,

B: And without him came into being not one thing

καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν

A: That has come into being

ὃ γέγονεν

This works as smoothly in Greek as it does in English.

3.4.5 Steps Five: Determine or chose the most likely arrangement or form.

Now that so many of the possibilities make sense in some fashion, which is correct? Or even the most correct?

This is a difficult call, because the arguments and explanations for several propositions have merit. The decision made at this stage is not irrevocable, however. Once the entire passage is completed and viewed as one unit, adjustments can be made so that the arrangement of each strophe is consistent with the author's overall writing style. First, narrow the choices down to two, and then decide among them. The two most likely are these. In the NIV translation this one makes the most sense.

A: ³Through him *all things*;

B: without him *nothing* was made

A: that has been *made* (Jn 1:3 NIV).

Or more literally:

A: All things through Him came into being

πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,

B: And without him came into being not one thing

καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν

A: That has come into being

ὃ γέγονεν (Gaultney Paraphrase).

The more literal interpretation from the Greek New Testament, however, poses this one as the second candidate.

A: All things

B: Through Him

C: Came into being

A: And without him

B: came into being

C: Not one thing that has come into being (Jn 1:3 Gaultney's paraphrase).

The problem is that one rendering provides one chiasmus, and the other one is made up of two. Therefore the choice will matter because the number of strophes' in the overall passage will be affected by either choice. The overall messages are the same.

How do we choose?

The best approach is to look for the one that fits. The number of verses needed for the parallel sometimes will help. In this case, if the parallel of this verse turns out to be only one verse, then the decision is made for us. If it takes two, then we will reconsider.

The single chiasmus will be used for the time being, with the double chiasmus waiting if needed. In other words, wait and see.

A: ³Through him *all things were made*;

B: without him *nothing was made*

A: that has been *made*.

3.4.6 Step Six: Questions, comments, and observations. It is rather curious that Breck (1990:198-199) does not include verse 3 as an individual chiasmus, but he does include it as being significant in the overall chiastic outline of the prologue.

One may make observations as it was done with the first two verses, or deal with any textual questions such as what is the focal point of the passage or strophe? Is the passage complete, or are there more verses that make up the passage? More than likely, though, enough questions and observations have already been made.

3.5 John 1:4-5

⁴In him was life and that life was the light of men.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

3.5.1 Step One: Identify and separate each colon and clause

⁴In him was life
and that life was the light of men.

⁵The light shines in the darkness,
But the darkness has not understood^[a] it.

3.5.2 Step Two: Highlight or mark repetitious words.

⁴In him was life
and that life was the light of men.

⁵The light shines in the darkness,
But the darkness has not understood it.

3.5.3 Step Three: Identify the basic forms of parallelism used.

Both verses use tautological (synonymous) parallelism with word pairs arranged in a chiasmus.

3.5.4 Step Four: Determine the possible arrangements, such as chiasmus, wordstep , or stair-like.

A: In him

B: was life,

B: and that life

A: was the light of men.

A: ⁵The light

B: shines in the darkness,

B: but the darkness (“καὶ” is best rendered “and” instead of “but”)

A: has not understood (or overtaken) it.

Wordstep parallelism using the words life and light.

Tautological: The light is still shining in the darkness.

3.5.5 Step Five: Determine or choose the most likely arrangement.

There is only one suggestion, so both verses remain the same.

3.5.6 Step Six: Questions, Comments, and Observations

These verses demonstrate repeated step parallelism very effectively by using the word pairs, life, light, and darkness. For more continuity and correctness, perhaps verse five should be rendered:

A: ⁵The light shines

B: in the darkness,

B: *and* the darkness

A: has not or *overtaken* it (or put it out).

3.6 Determining strophes and stanzas

In this section a “strophe hunt” will be conducted before attempting an analysis.

3.6.1 John 1:6-13

The next few verses present many puzzles.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God

Is this one chiasmus, many, or just a group of parallelisms in “AB-AB”

alternating lines in which only wordstep parallelism is prominent? If there is more than one chiasmus, where does each chiasmus start and stop? The whole block of John 1:6-13 seem intertwined. Is verse 6 alone, or should it be paired with verse 7, or verse 7-8?

Which grouping is verse 9's partner, 7-8 or 10-11 or just 10? Does verse 11 pair with verses 10 or 12-13, or is it alone? Could the whole block, 7-13 be one big chiasmus, or are any of them chiasmus at all? The only way to know this is to try them, and if they all work, then the true picture will not emerge until they are placed within the completed chiasmus of John 1:1-18.

Verse 6 appears to be an anacrusis that introduces verse 7-8, assume for now that verse is apart from verse 7. An anacrusis, as you may recall, is a word or phrase that introduces a clause, phrase, strophe or stanza.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. NOTE: this is an anacrusis which introduces the following verses (Breck 199).

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John.

⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe.

⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

Behold the marvels and problems that word-pairs bring. Verses 7-9 repeat the word "light"; whereas in verses 10-11, "world" and "his own" sets the theme as creator/creation. Verse 12 steps from verse 11 using the word "received", and then steps onto verse 13 using the theme of children and child-birth. The question to be resolved is: Are these word pairs merely mnemonic devices that tie one verse to the other, or are they truly interlocked into another form such as a chiasmus?

The methodology about to be demonstrated often makes the job of separating the verse easier. Even though it is not always definitive in every situation, use this strategy when appropriate.

3.6.2 Step One and Two are combined: Separate the colons and highlight the repetitious words or themes

⁶There came a *man* who was sent from God;
his name was *John*.

⁷He came as a *witness* to *testify* concerning that *light*,
so that through him all men might believe.

⁸He himself was not the *light*;
he came only as a *witness* to the *light*.

⁹The true *light* that gives light to every man
was coming into the *world*.

¹⁰He was in the *world*,
and though the *world* was made through him,
the *world* did not recognize him.

¹¹He came to that which was *his own*,
but *his own* did not receive him.

¹²Yet to all who *received* him,
to those who believed in him
he gave the right to *become* children of God—

¹³children *born not of natural descent*,

nor of *human decision or a husband's will*,
but *born of God*.

3.6.3 Step Three: Look for patterns and common words and phrases.

This step replaces the third step previously used because the purpose is different.

Beginning with the first verse in the sequence, find possible “matches”, that is, colons that have either word in common.

Verse 6 and 13 have “God” in common. The first colon in verse 7 shares “witness” with the last colon in verse 8. This could signify a chiasmic arrangement of both 7-8. Verses 7-9 contain “light”. This could indicate a chiasmus made up of 7-9. It quickly becomes evident that two possibilities exist with these verses. Another problem is about to surface because “world” appears in both verses 9 and 10, with a metaphor for creator in the 11th verse. This could be a chiasmic structure that includes verses 9-10, or 9-11.

Verse 12 and 13 carry the theme of salvation from the first colon in 12 to the last colon in 13. The words used are “received him”, “believed”, “right to be come God’s children”, and “born of God”. Going back to the top, does verse 6 really fit with verses 12-13? No

Verses 7-8 seem a pair, and 7-9 are another possibility because of “light”. Because witness ties 7-8 together without violating the meaning with or without verse 9, 7-8 is a more likely a combination.

Verses 9, 10 and 11 could be mates, but 9 and 11 could each stand alone. Verse 12 and 13 are locked without question because 13 further explains verse 12. So, those are

the prime candidates. All but verse 6, who has no partner, and cannot qualify on it's own without a considerable stretch or force.

⁶There came a man who was *sent from God*;

his name was John.

See the problem? the order is right, but “his” and “God” do not match because “his” name was “John” not “God”. That places verse 6 as an introductory verse, or anacrusis. Verse 7 and 8 are definite. Verse 9 will have to be tried three ways, but a pair or tri-colon is the most likely because they are tied together with apparent intention.

Look for a Pattern: A pattern is emerging. The word that only 7 and 8 share, “witness”, does not carry over to verse 9. The words that only 9 and 10 share do not carry over in kind, but in theme only. If these differences are intentional, then the most likely arrangement places verse 9 with verse 10 and possibly verse 11. Verse 10 is tied to one or the other, or both. It will not stand alone. Verse 11 has nothing in common with verses 7- 8, but it does share a common theme with verse 9-10. It can either stand alone or be paired with verse 10. Verses 12-13 are locked together because verse 13 completes the thought began in verse 12.

Projected arrangements for John 1:6-13

Here is the line up:

6 = anacrusis

7-8 = chiasmus

9-10 Or 9-11 = possible chiasmus

10-11 = possible chiasmus

11 = chiasmus or may connect with 10.

12-13 = chiasmus

That painstaking exercise reduces the amount of experimentation the analyst will have to do later.

3.7 John 1:7-8

⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light,
so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came
only as a witness to the light.

3.7.1 Step One: Identify and separate each colon.

⁷He came as a witness
to testify concerning that light,
so that through him all men might believe.
⁸He himself was not the light;
he came only as a witness to the light.

3.7.2 Step Two: Highlight repetitious words

⁷He came as a *witness*
to *testify* concerning that light,
so that through him all men might believe
⁸He himself was not the light;
He came only as a *witness* to the light.

**3.7.3 Step Three: Identify the forms of parallelisms. **

Verse seven uses synthetic parallelism for the purpose of explanation. Verse eight uses anthetic parallelism by telling first who he was not, followed by who he was. John takes great care to depict the different roles of John the Baptist and Jesus.

3.7.4 Step Four: Determine the most likely arrangements.

These verses are using wordstep parallelism primarily with “light.” Some form of “he” appears in four of the five colons, and “witness” is in the first and last colons.

A: ⁷He came as a *witness*

B: to *testify* concerning that light,

C: so that through him all men might believe.

B: ⁸He himself was not the light;

A: He came only as a *witness* to the light.

Here is what happens when verse 9 is added to the mix. Unfortunately, both chiasmi do well. Next examine the focal points of each chiasmus.

A: ⁷He came as a *witness*

B: to *testify* concerning that light,

C: so that through him all men might believe.

D: ⁸He himself was not the light;

D: He came only as a *witness* to the light.

C: ⁹The true light

B: that gives light to every man

A: was coming into the world

In the 7-8 chiasmus, the central passage or focal point is: so that through him all men might believe. When verse nine is added, the outermost lines in the “A’s” are: A: He came as a *witness*. A: He was coming into the world. The structure is clear and definite. The extremes tell about the witness to the light, and the center tells us about Him who is the light. The central message is a soteriological one. D: ⁸He himself was not the light; A: ⁷He came as a *witness* to the light. This works in the sense that when read together they give the central message if B is included. Without the second B, the two A’s are not harmonious. The first A, “he came as a witness”, does not complement

the second A which reads “was coming into the world.” However, see what happens when the A’s and B’s are combined.

A: ⁷He came as a *witness to testify* concerning that light,

B: so that through him all men might believe.

C: ⁸He himself was not the light;

C: He came only as a *witness* to the light.

B: ⁹The true light

A: that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

Interesting. Now we have two strong chiasmi. Two more questions. Does one have a more definite shift to the center than the other? Does one strophe employ the inclusion for the envelope effect?

Answers: Both chiasmi shift in the center, but the 7-8 chiasmus is the most balanced of the two; and it contains an inclusion.

3.7.5 Step Five: Choose the correct form.

Which structure is most compatible with the whole passage? There are two ways to seek the answer to this question. 1) Wait until all verses are completed then examine the center of the larger chiasmus and determine which of the two are most compatible with the rest of the passage it is a part of, or 2) go with the suggestions made in the earlier analysis.

We’ll start with our original pairing of 7-8 and see how it fits.

3.7.6 Step Six: Questions, comments, and observations

In this chiasmus one line intensifies the next. The balance is excellent. The shift to the center is easily identified. The word pairs work very well. Now proceed with the

remaining verses and see if you can locate the strophes. In this one we will combine the first three steps.

3.8 John 1:10-11

¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

3.8.1 Steps One and Two: Break down, locate repetitions.

¹⁰He was in the world,
and though the world was made through him,
the world did not recognize him.
¹¹He came to that which was his own,
own did not receive him .

3.8.2 Step Three: Identify the forms of parallelisms.

Verse 10 is anthetic parallelism. It portrays the idea: he came to his own, but his own did not know who he was.

Verse 11 is anthetic parallelism: It portrays the idea: he came but was rejected.

3.8.3 Step Four: Determine the most likely Arrangements.

Wordstep parallelism is definitely at work.

Verse 10 alone:

A: ¹⁰He was in the world,

B: and though the world

B: was made through him,

A: the world did not recognize him.

A: ¹⁰He was in the world,

B: and though the world was made through him,

A: the world did not recognize him.

A and B work but “world and Him are in the wrong order in C. 10a can stand alone, but 10b cannot. Verse 10 will require help.

Verse 11 Alone:

A: ¹¹He came

B: to that which was his own,

A: *His own* did not receive him.

This is a perfect chiasmus. It can stand alone, or complete verse ten.

Note: This works, so now combine the two verses.

A: ¹⁰He was in the world,

B: and though the world was made through him,

C: the world did not recognize him.

B: ¹¹He came to that which was his own,

A: but his own did not receive him.

The balance is good and the theme is consistent.

Here is a slight variation of this combination. Notice that the center and extremes support the same themes as before’

A: ¹⁰He was in the world,

B: and though the world

C: was made through him,

D: the world did not recognize him.

C: ¹¹He came to that which was his own,

B: but his own

A: did not receive him.

Now add verse 9. This works. Now combine the verses. Note that the 10-11 chiasmus has D, “the world did not recognize him” as the center.

A: ⁹The true light

B: that gives light to every man

C: was coming into the world

D: ¹⁰He was in the world,

E: and though the world was made through him,

D the world did not recognize him.

C: ¹¹He came to that which was his own,

B: but his own

A: did not receive him.

This is indeed a chiasmus using wordstep parallelism with the words light, world, own, and him’. The central theme, “though the world was made through him,” refers back to the opening of the prologue.

Now pair verses 9 and 10 only by eliminating verse 11.

A: ⁹The true light

B that gives light to every man

C: was coming into the world

C: ¹⁰He was in the world,

B: and though the world was made through him,

A: the world did not recognize him.

All right, this works too. This kind of dilemma is common with puzzling out the possible arrangements. The central focus is Jesus coming into the world, and the extremes give the message of the world’s denial.

3.8.4 Step Five: Choose the most likely arrangement.

The 9-11 chiasmus is the most likely. The first half features the word “world”, and places the emphasis upon Jesus (He/Him) as creator, and then shifts the second half to feature the phrase, “his own,” with the emphasis upon Jesus’ rejection by his creation.

3.8.5 Step Six: Questions, comments, and observations.

It may or may not be significant, but in the first half in which Jesus’ role in creation is emphasized, “world” is used three times, while in the second half the phrase “his own” is mentioned only two times. The number three has long been recognized as being significant in Biblical literature because it carries with it the concept of perfection. The implication is that acts designated by the number three are the perfect works of God (Bullinger 1921; Smothers 1970:np). If this is the intended meaning, then the fact that the notion of coming unto “his own” and being rejected was only used twice would imply imperfection, or “wrongful behavior” on the part of the people’s treatment of Jesus.

This covert implication would further support the proposed chiastic form. In this arrangement balance and harmony is easily recognized. Of course one must also take note of the fact that “world” is used in verse nine immediately preceding this one. Although “world” completes the thought in verse nine, the line of thought continues in verse ten. Therefore, very little weight can be given to the notion of numerical significance, but it is worth mentioning.

3.9 John 1:12-13

¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, He gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human

decision or a husband's will, but born of God. It appears that verse 12 and 13 form one strophe. A simple test will let us know if it stands on its own. Isolate it.

It looks self contained, but in order to avoid the problem encountered with John 1:7-9 wherein verse nine was not included at first, look briefly at the following verses to see if they are needed in order to make a complete thought. “¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” neither adds to nor completes the preceding verses. Verses 12-13 stand on their own. Steps one and two can be done together.

3.9.1 Step One and Two combined: Separate the colons and highlight the repetitious words.

¹²Yet to all who received him,

to those who believed in his name,

He gave the right to become children of God—

¹³children born not of natural descent, (or, children born not out of blood nor will/want of the flesh)

nor of human decision or a husband's will, (or, nor out of human will)

but born of God (John 1:12-13 NIV).

3.9.2 Step Three: Identify the forms of parallelism.

Verse 12 is tautological (synonymous) parallelism, and verse 13 is anthetic; not out of...but born of God.

3.9.3 Step four: Determine the most likely arrangement.

There is no wordstep parallelism here, so we'll look for chiasmus since they are the norm for this passage, and look for stair-like parallelism as well.

A: ¹²Yet to all who received him,

B: to those who believed in his name,

C: he gave the right to become children of God—

B: ¹³children born not of natural descent,

nor of human decision or a husband's will,

A: but born of God (John 1:12-13 NIV).

This is the way it fell naturally without any changes needed. Now explore the possibility of stair-like parallelism. Two progressions seem to be in place here. ABC has: Receive him, believe him, and be born of him and BC has: Born of woman (natural birth), of husband, and of God.

A: ¹²Yet to all who received him,

B: to those who believed in his name,

C: he gave the right to become children of God—

B: ¹³children born not of natural descent,

nor of human decision or a husband's will,

A: but born of God.

3.9.4 Step five can be skipped because no adjustments are needed.

3.9.5 Step Six: Questions, comments and observations

The focus of this passage is: he gave the right to become children of God.

Continue to the next verses: Verse 14 seems to stand alone. Verse 15 is going to shift the focus a little.

3.10 John 1:14

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only,
who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

3.10.1 Step One and Two: Separate colons and highlight repetitious words.

¹⁴The Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us.

We have seen his glory,
the glory of the One and Only,

Who came from the Father
full of grace and truth.

3.10.3 Step Three: Identify the forms of parallelism:

All of verse 14 is tautological (synonymous) parallelism.

3.10.4 Step Four: Determine the possible arrangements.

In this possibility the each parallel further explains the first. If A1, even more so A2.

When read together, each completes its parallel. A1: The Word became flesh, A2: with

full of grace and truth. B1: and made his dwelling among us, B2: who came (to us) from the father. C1: We have seen his glory, C2: the glory of the One and Only.

A: ¹⁴The Word became flesh

B: and made his dwelling among us.

C: We have seen his glory,

C: the glory of the One and Only,

B: who came (to us) from the Father,

A: full of grace and truth.

This one displays thematic wordstep parallelism featuring Word, flesh, his, One and Only, and literary wordstep parallelism with the word pairing of “glory.” There are other possibilities. What would happen if A and B were combined?

A: ¹⁴The Word became Flesh and made his dwelling among us.

B: We have seen his glory,

B: the glory of the One and Only,

A: who came (to us) from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Parallels are maintained, but nothing is really accomplished.

3.10.4 Step Five: Determine the most likely form.

The first chiasmus is the most because the pattern is more consistent.

The clauses remain separated in all parallels, not together in some and apart in others.

3.10.5 Step Six: Questions, comments and observations.

The central theme is “we have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only”

14 Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.

The passage begins with “and,” which connects it to verses 12 and 13. The interesting thing is that verse 14 appears to use “the one and only, or more literally, the only born or the Father (μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός), as the opening of an inclusion that is closed in verse 18 which uses the phrase, μονογενῆς θεὸς ὁ, the only born of God. If this is true, it would be interesting to re-examine verses 1-13 to see if they too have an inclusion.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

²He was with God in the beginning.

³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 1

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. 2 οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν. 3 πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν. ὃ γέγονεν (John 1:1-3 Nestle-Aland GNT).

¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

10. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω.

11 εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον.

Verse 10 and 11 continue the creation theme that John opened with in verses 1-3.

At this point, then, an interesting phenomenon is developing. Verses 1-11 are in an envelope, and verses 14-18 are in an envelope. What about verses 12-13? Why were

they excluded? Perhaps the entire prologue is a macro-chiasmus with three smaller structures within it, with even smaller structures with them? Is that a possibility? It could be.

3.11 Next verses: John 1:15

¹⁵John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying,

"This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'

3.11.1 Step One and Two combined: Separate the colons and highlight the repetitious words.

¹⁵John testifies concerning him.

He cries out, saying,

"This was he of whom I said,

'He who comes after me

has surpassed me

because he was before me.'

3.11.2 Step Three: Identify the most likely forms of parallelisms.

Verse 15 is tautological (synonymous) parallelism. It begins by saying John testifies, then it says what he testifies. This is who I've been telling you about.

3.11.3 Step Four: Determine the possible arrangements.

Clause 15a and b are each tautological (synonymous) separately and combined as a strophe: He testifies = He cries out, saying; and, This was he of whom I said; He who comes after me ... are tautological. Wordstep parallelism uses "he" to step from one verse to another, and "he and me" are represented in all but one line or clause. Because

these are tetracolons (three colons, also referred to as a tri-stich), begin the search by working with them separately. Each chiasmus will be a simple chiasmus of only three lines.

A: ¹⁵John testifies concerning him.

B: He cries out, saying,

A: "This was he of whom I said,

A: 'He who comes after me

B: (he) has surpassed me

A: because he was before me

^{15b} John testifies concerning Him and cries out, saying

A: "This was he of whom I said,

B: 'He who comes after me

B: (he) has surpassed me

A: because he was before me.

3.11.4 Step Five: Determine the most likely arrangement.

It is difficult to determine which arrangement dominates, the chiasmus or wordstep parallelism. It should also be noted that each line in the second strophe either begins with or implies "He." The order of "He" preceding "me" appears to be intentional to because it emphasis the message of "Him being before me." In fact, if this assumption is correct and can be verified in the Greek New Testament, then another approach may make more sense of both the arrangement and the passage. Assume the first A and B make up an individual chiasmus that introduces one chiasmus rather than insisting upon two tetracolons. First let's arrange 15a.

A: ¹⁵John testifies

B: concerning him.

A: (He) cries out, saying,

No, even though the him (Jesus) and the implied “He” are word matches, they are not theme matches. John’s style is a serious one as opposed to word-plays of that nature. However, 15a could still be an anacrusis and introduce 15b. We have already seen this device employed whereby verse 6 introduces 7-8.

1b John testifies concerning Him and cries out, saying

A: "This was he of whom I said,

B: He who comes after me

B: (he) has surpassed me

A: because he was before me.

This presents a coordinated picture in which the word order of “he” was before me” mirrors and illustrates the message being presented. However, the Greek word order is not exactly like this because of the difference in grammar and syntax.

15 Ἰωάννης μαρτυρεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ κέκραγεν λέγων,

Οὗτος ἦν ὃν εἶπον, Ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν
(John 1:15 Nestle-Aland GNT 1993).

Either approach displays skill and craftsmanship of composition and story telling. Which one should be used? That question can only be answered when the whole passage is aligned and viewed as one chiasmus. Note: Experimentation of this sort wherein different possibilities are “fleshed out” is an important part of the process, so be bold and work them out. For now, the single chiasmus is the chosen arrangement.

15: John testifies concerning Him and cries out, saying

A: "This was he of whom I said,

B: He who comes after me

B: (he) has surpassed me
A: because he was before me.

3.11.5 Step Six: Questions, observations or comments:

There are no further observations.

3.12 John 1:16

¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

3.12.1 Steps one and two combined: Separate the colons and highlight repetitious words.

A: From the fullness of his grace
B: we have all received and
A: one blessing after another.

3.12.2 Step Three: Identify the parallel forms.

The parallelism is synthetic.

This is a simple tri-stich chiasmus.

3.12.3 Step Four: Determine the possible arrangements.

A: ¹⁶From the fullness of his grace
B: we have all received
A: one blessing after another.

3.12.4 Step Five: Determine the most likely arrangement.

Same as above.

3.12.5 Step Six: Questions, comments, and observations

“Fullness of His grace” is literally, the fullness of Him.

“one blessing after another” can also be rendered “grace upon grace”, or “grace in place of grace”, or even, “favor upon favor” or “favor replaced by favor.”

Ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος

Because out of the fullness of him we all have received and grace in place of grace.

Note the “and” after received. Why is the “and” placed here? Perhaps a paraphrase that captures current meaning of the phrase would be like this:

From His fullness we have received all, including blessing upon blessing.

In the New Testament Translation for Today, William Beck (1963) translates it: “From all that is in Him....”

Perhaps it will make become a little easier to understand when we read the next verse.

3.12.2 John 1:17

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

3.12.1 Steps One and Two: Separate Clauses and Highlight Repetitious words.

For the law was given through Moses;
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

3.12.2 Step Three: Identify possible forms of parallelism.

Verse 17 is anthetic parallelism that contrasts the law with grace and truth.

3.12.3 Step Four: Determine possible arrangements.

There are three possibilities here; one is an AB-AB alternating parallelism, and the other two potentials are individual simple chiasmi. The first chiasmus is the order assigned by Breck (198-199). The second, however, appears more consistent with the rest of the passage.

Possibility one: ABAB alternating parallelism.

- A: ¹⁷For the law
- B: was given through Moses;
- A: grace and truth
- B: came through Jesus Christ.

One will recall that Lund (45) demonstrated in Isaiah 55:7-8 that alternating parallelism can appear within a chiasmus.

Possibility two: ABA Chiasmus

- A: ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses;
- B: grace and truth
- A: came through Jesus Christ.

Possibility three: Two simple ABA chiasmi anthetic to each other.

- A: For the law
- B: was given
- A: through Moses
- (“but” implied)
- A: Grace and truth
- B: came
- A: through Jesus Christ.

The arrangement of this passage is slightly different in the Greek New Testament.

A: Ὅτι ὁ νόμος (The law)

B: διὰ Μωϋσέως (through Moses)

A: ἐδόθη, (was given),

A: ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια (Grace and truth)

B: διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (through Jesus Christ)

A: ἐγένετο (came into being), (John 1:17 Nestle-Aland GNT).

3.12.4 Step Five: Determine most likely arrangement

Each of these has strong appeal. Two work better than the other one. The least favored is chiasmus #2. Interestingly enough, this form is Breck's choice (198-199).

A: 17For the law was given through Moses;

B: grace and truth

A: Came through Jesus Christ.

This rendering is problematic though because it takes classic parallels and isolates them by breaking them up. As written, "The law" is directly parallel and contrasted with "grace and truth", and "given through" is parallel with "came through," and "Moses" is definitely parallel with Jesus Christ.

For the law was given through Moses;

grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

This is true in the original arrangement as well as it is in English. Although "given" and "came" or "came into being" are in the last lines, they are still parallel. When these parallels are broken up, not only is the parallelism lost, the meaning or proper interpretation is less apparent.

A: ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses;

B: grace and truth

A: came through Jesus Christ.

First, “Given through” and “came through” are parallel in the “A’s” because they are compared and contrasted with each other as Moses and Jesus Christ are. But the colons which are completely parallel when left intact lose their impact when broken up. “The law given through Moses” is not totally parallel with the segmented stich, “came through Jesus Christ. Second, should “grace and truth” be separated from “came through Jesus Christ when “the law” is not separated from “given through Moses? The AB-AB arrangement displays this complete thought more clearly.

A: ¹⁷For the law

B: was given through Moses;

A: grace and truth

B: came through Jesus Christ.

This arrangement is far more sensible than the forced chiasmus above. It definitely highlights the contrasts between law vs. grace and truth, as well as the difference between Moses with Christ. The difference “given through” vs “came or through” is subtle, but very significant. This significance is down-played in the first chiasmus and more apparent in the alternating parallel; but it stands out much more in the second chiasmus. Is this important? I think so, and here is why.

“Given” implies the act of someone giving, producing, causing to happen, or allowing (Louw & Nida 1996:sv , c1989; Strong’s 1996; G1325, Kittel, Bromiley and Friedrich 1995,c 1885 s.v. δίδωμι; Swanson 1997.) Whereas “γίνομαι” denotes “became,” or came into being, begin to be, or come into existence.

The care taken to use “δίδωμι” seems significant because it requires a giver, but “γίνομαι” points back to the opening of the prologue because it connotes origination and creation. Grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ. If the prologue is a true chiasmic structure, then verse 17, which is at the end of the chiasmus, should have a parallel in the opening. As will be seen, Verses 1 and 2, which make up the first chiasmus, are parallel with verse 18 because each one deals with the co-existence of Christ in the beginning.

Consider the next verse, verse 3, which NASB renders:

All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being (John 1:3 NASB).

Ἐγένετο, the word for “came,” or “came into being” used in verse 3 is the same word used in verse 17 to explain that grace and truth “came into being” or “originated” through Jesus Christ. The parallels between verses 3 and 17 are easily seen when placed side by side, or one over the other. Give attention to the words in bold letters. They are the common thread in the two parallel verses.

³**Through** (δι’) him *all things* were made **Ἐγένετο, came into being**); without him nothing was made (**Ἐγένετο, came into being**) that has been made (*γέγονεν*, had become, or **had come into being**).

¹⁷For the law was **given through** διὰ) (Moses;

grace and truth came (**Ἐγένετο, came into being**) **through** (διὰ) Jesus Christ.

The “all things” in verse 3 includes the law that had originated with God through Christ before it was “given through” Moses in verse 17, as well as “grace and truth” that

came directly through the Creator. By referring back to verse 3, verse 17 begins closing the envelope which is sealed by verse 18. By paralleling verses 1 and 2, verse 18 completes the inclusion, thereby ending the prologue. The inclusion that includes verse 16 as well, will be discussed in more detail at the conclusion of this section.

If these premises are correct, then the most correct chiastic arrangement of verse 17 is possibility number three.

A: Because the law	ὅτι ὁ νόμος
B: through Moses	διὰ Μωϋσέως
A: was given	ἐδόθη,
A: Grace and truth	ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια
B: through Jesus Christ	διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
A: Came into being	ἐγένετο.

Mapped in this fashion using the Greek arrangement, verse 17 parallels verse 3 perfectly. Verse 3, as one may recall, also was arranged into two chiasmi due to the verse's arrangement in the Greek New Testament. Therefore, this choice helps solidify the selected arrangement in verse 3.

To recap, verses 1-3 and verses 10-11 create the envelope effect for all verses and strophes in between. Verses 14-18 also create the envelope effect. Now it appears that verse 17-18 may also parallel with verses 1-3, creating a much larger envelope, and therefore a much larger chiasmus.

John 1:16

A: Because out of His fullness	ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ
--------------------------------	-----------------------------

B: we have received all,	ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν
A: and grace replaced by grace.	καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος
A: Because the law	ὅτι ὁ νόμος
B: through Moses	διὰ Μωϋσέως
A: was given	ἐδόθη,
A: Grace and truth	ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια
B: through Jesus Christ	διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
A: Came into being	ἐγένετο.

Because the law through Moses was given, grace and truth through Jesus Christ came into being. Are these two verses an explanation of “grace upon grace”? Was the law the first blessing, and the grace and truth of Jesus Christ the second, or was “grace” the first and “truth” the second blessing? This has an echo of verse 15, does it not? “He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.” The grace and truth that came *after* the law actually existed *before* the law is what is being implied here.

Could “because” also be an indication that verses 16 and 17 are one chiasmus; or does the reference to the One and Only (ὡς μονογενοῦς) link them together by continuing a thought that in verse 14 and ended in verse 18. Note also that ὡς μονογενοῦς can be translated as “the only born.”

In the spirit of chiasmus, the last question will be dealt with first. Here is the passage from verses 14-18.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'"

¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'

¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

Yes, the key words of verse 14 are reversed in verse 18. The envelope is complete. Not only had that, but verse 15b mirrored verse 17, thereby locking the verses together with an envelope of its own.

15: He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' 17: because the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ (who was before the law because He was with God in the beginning)...

Now about the possibility of verse 16-17 being a chiasmus, here is what it would look like.

A: ¹⁶ From the fullness of his grace we have all received

B: one blessing after another.

B: ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses;

A: grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

That looks alright, but the "B's" parallelism is not dead on. But what would it look like if verse 15 was included?

A: ¹⁵ He who comes after me

B: has surpassed me
A: because he was before me.' "

A: ¹⁶From the fullness of his grace
B: we have all received one
A: blessing after another.

A: ¹⁷For the law
B: was given
A: through Moses;

A: grace and truth
B: came into being
A: through Jesus Christ.

Even though the alternating parallel arrangement of AB-AB discussed previously retains its parallelism by maintaining the thematic order of the words and phrases, these two simple chiasmi reveal the connection of Christ as the creator of all, including grace and truth, whereas Moses was only a conduit for God to pass the Law through. That is, Moses was the messenger, but Christ was the message.

3.12.5 Step Six: Questions, comments, and considerations

Of major importance here is consistency. Even though the AB-AB parallelism seems to fit the verses best, at first, it is now apparent that the chiasmic arrangements of

verses 16 and 17 make up a chiasmus of their own. As Welsh (2001:np) pointed out in the criteria for locating chiasmus, the arrangement must be consistent with the author's style. The balance of the entire prologue is made up of chiasmi; therefore, the established style for this passage sways the vote in favor of the two simple chiasmi. The primary evidence for this is its continuity with verses 14-18, and its parallel verses at the opening of the prologue, verses 3 and 4. They have been interpreted and arranged using the same methodology, and fit each other like matching pieces of a puzzle.

As an observation, verses 15 and 16 contain the conjunction ὅτι that is either dropped in most English translations, or translated as “for”. It would be interesting to know why.

A: out of his fullness	ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ
B: we have received all,	ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν
A: and grace replaced by grace.	καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος
A: Because the law	ὅτι ὁ νόμος
B: through Moses	διὰ Μωϋσέως
A: was given	ἐδόθη,

3.13 John 1:18

¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, Who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

3.13.1 Steps One and Two: Separate the clauses and highlight repeated words or phrases

¹⁸No one has ever seen God,
but God the One and Only
Who is at the Father's side,
has made him known.

3.13.2 Step Three: Identify the type of Parallelism

Anthetic parallelism. No one has ever seen God but...

3.14.3. Step Four: Determine possible arrangements:

There are two possibilities here.

Possibility One: ABBA

A: ¹⁸No *one* has ever seen God,
B: but God the *One* and Only
B: who is at the Father's side,
A: has made him known.

Possibility Two: ABC D CBA

A: ¹⁸No *one*
B: has ever seen God,
C: but God
D: the One and Only
C: who (He)
B: at the Father's side,
A: has made him known.

3.13.4 Step Five: Determine most likely arrangement

Possibility 2: ABC D CBA.

3.13.5 Step Six: Questions, comments, and observations

This is the type of chiasmus that Breck (38-61) refers to as concentric or heliacal chiasmus because it has a definite center from which the meaning of the main point spirals downward around the sides from the center point to the outermost colons or clauses. This is demonstrated when the parallels are read together:

A: No one has made him known; B: has ever seen God at the Father's side; C:
But God, who (he) D: the One and Only

Verse 18 completes the envelope effect by referring back to the beginning, John 1:1, In beginning was the Word. The Word was with God and God was the Word (or the Word was God; or God the Word was). Verse 18 implies that God the one and only was at the Father's side from the beginning.

Now that the prologue is finished, the total prologue will be considered in order to determine a chiastic outline for the entire passage. Each chiasmus will be numbered. The center number or numbers should be the focal point, or theme of the entire passage.

Here is the completed prologue. Each chiasmus is numbered separately because each one is in itself a strophe within the larger chiasmus.

A: ¹In the beginning was the Word,

B: and the Word was with God,

C: and God was the Word (θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.)

B: ²He was with God

A: in the beginning.

A: ³Through him all things were made;

5 B: without him nothing was made
A: that has been made.

A. In him
B. was life,
4 B: and that life
A: was the light of men

A: ⁵The light shines
B: in the darkness,
3 B: But the darkness
A: has not understood (overtaken) it.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; (verse 6 is an anacrusis that introduces the chiasmus in 7-8).

A: ⁷He came as a witness
B: to testify concerning that light,
2 C: so that through him all men might
believe.
B: ⁸He himself was not the light;
A: He came only as a witness to the light.

A: ⁹The true light

B: that gives light to every man

C: was coming into the world.

D: ¹⁰He was in the world,

E: and though the world was made

1 through him,

D: the world did not recognize him.

C: ¹¹He came to that which was his own,

B: but his own

A: did not receive him.

A: ¹²Yet to all who received him,

B: to those who believed in his name,

0 C: he gave the right to become children of God—

B: ¹³children born not of natural descent,

nor of human decision or a husband's will,

A: but born of God.

A: ¹⁴The Word became flesh

B: and made his dwelling among us.

C: We have seen his glory,

1 C: the glory of the One and Only,

B: who came from the Father,

A: full of grace and truth.

A: ¹⁵John testifies concerning him.

2 B: He cries out, saying,

A: "This was he of whom I said,

A: 'He who comes after me

3 B: (he) has surpassed me

A: because he was before me

A: ¹⁶Because from the fullness of his grace

4 B: we have received all,

A: and (including) one blessing after another.

A: ¹⁷because the law

B: was given

A: through Moses

A: grace and truth

5 B: came

C: through Jesus

A: ¹⁸No one has ever seen God,

6 B: but God the One and Only

B: who (He) at the Father's side,

A: has made him known.

There are thirteen sections all together, therefore, the center or “0” chiasmus should be the seventh, or verse 12-13. Now the primary theme of John’s prologue is clearly seen: Salvation. To check this, first examine the strophes on each side of the “center”, and ascertain that they indeed are parallels. If parallelism is obvious, then more than likely, the center pivoting point has been located. Of course, if this is one chiastic structure, then the strophes on each leg of the chiasmus should be parallel. Will they match up? We will begin inside out by comparing the 1’s on each side of the center.

A: ⁹The true light

B: that gives light to every man

C: was coming into the world.

D: ¹⁰He was in the world,

1 E: and though the world was made through

Him,

D: the world did not recognize Him.

C: ¹¹He came to that which was His own,

B: but his own

A: did not receive him.

A: ¹⁴The Word became flesh

B: and made his dwelling among us.

C: We have seen his glory,

1 C: the glory of the One and Only,¹

B: who came from the Father,

A: full of grace and truth.

Yes. They are a compatible pair separated by “0”, which does not contain their key word, “world”. Both carry the same theme.

Now the 2’s.

A: ⁷He came as a witness

B: to testify concerning that light,

2 C: so that through him all men might believe.

B: ⁸He himself was not the light;

A: He came only as a witness to the light.

¹⁵John testifies concerning him.

2 A: He cries out, saying,

B: "This was he of whom I said,

C: 'He who comes after me

Good. Both are about John being a witness. Now strophe number 3.

A: ⁵The light shines

B: in the darkness,

3 B: But the darkness

A: has not understood (overtaken) it.

A: ¹⁶From the fullness of His grace

B: We have received

A: One blessing after another.

Yes. The light shining in the darkness is the fullness of His grace.

Next, the 4's.

A. In him

B. was life,

4 B: and that life

A: was the light of men

¹⁷ For the law

More literally
A: The law

4 B: was given

B: Through Moses

A: through Moses;

A: was given

Yes. Life that was the light of all men came from within Him in verse 4 is contrasted with the law that came from Moses in verse 17. This clarifies that Moses did not originate the law; it did not come from within him, it came from someone else. God. It came from Him in whom was life, and that life was the light of men.

Here are the 5's.

A: ³Through him all things were made (came into being).

5 B: without him nothing was made (came into being)

A: that has been made (came into being).

A: Grace and truth

A: Grace and Truth

2: (6-8) John as witness

1: (9-11) Jesus and His creation.

0: (12-13) Receiving Christ

and adoption by the Father

1: (14) The Word joins His creation

2: (15) John bore witness

3: (16) never-ending grace

4: (17a) Law for man through man

5: (17b) Grace and truth come into being

6: (18) The only-born with the Father

3.14 Col-ex Chiasmus: Twin and Triplet Chiasmi

Now examine the same passage diagramed differently.

Two chiasmi are immediately created. Observe the center of the twin chiasmi: “The ever-shining light/never-ending grace”. The junction of the one the two create when they join is the center of the overall chiasmus: “Those who receive and believe have the right to become children of God”. The pattern below shows that these are more than twins; they are triplets because the inversion of the center creates an inverted chiasmus. The center of the overall chiasmus became the center of a smaller when he center was folded in, or “collapsed”.

3: (1-2) The Word with God in beginning

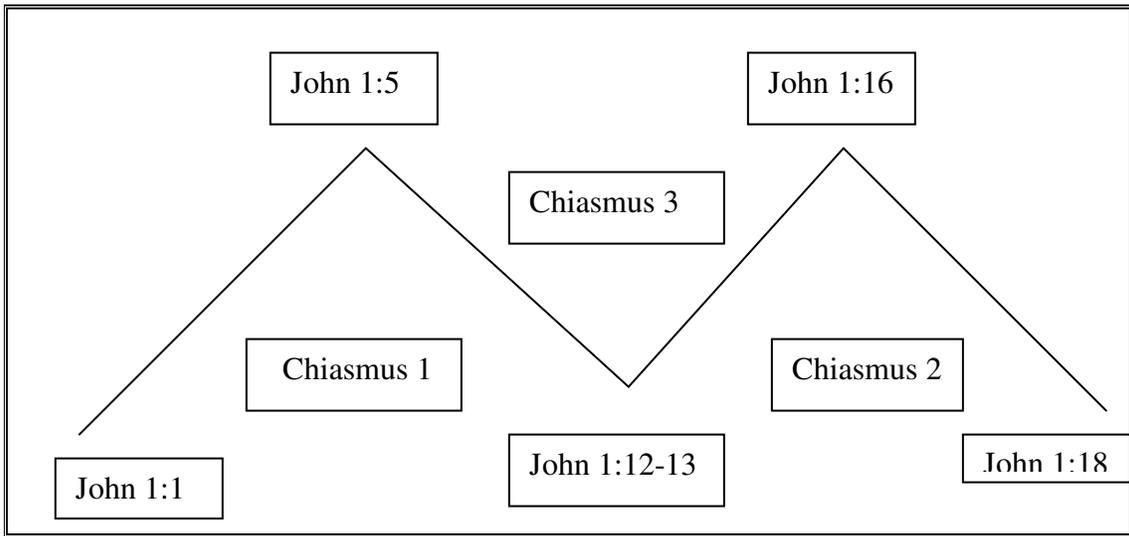
2: (3) Creation through Christ

- 1: (4) Life for Men through Christ
 - 0: (5) The ever-shinning light
 - 1: (6-8) John as witness
 - 2: (9-11) Jesus and His creation.
 - 3 (12) Receiving Christ
 - 3 (13) Becoming a child of God
 - 2: (14) The Word joins His creation
 - 1: (15) John bore witness
 - 0: (16) never-ending grace
 - 1: (17a) Law for man through man
 - 2: (17b) Grace and truth come into being
 - 3: (18) The only-born with the Father

Earlier in this text I introduced a chiasmic style which came to my attention while researching the prologue. This is the collapsible-expandable chiasmus or chiasmic arrangement. It could be referred to as col-ex chi for short. The name comes from the fact that when the larger chiasmus is collapsed in the middle, three individual chiasmus are created that are all parallel with each other. Instead of having two “1’s,” “2’s and so on, that match, in the col-ex chi there are four parallel strophes at each level except at point “0”. This is more than quarto parallelism, which in itself is mark of excellence for the writer, but these parallelisms are connected in such a way to form “Siamese chiasmi”. The lines are connected by being part of one continuous twin or triplet chiasmus that results in all four parallel lines being interchangeably parallel. That is, the first “leg” is

not only parallel with the second as is expected, but is parallel with the third and fourth as well.

Conversely, the two individual chiasmus can be expanded to form one larger chiasmus; thus the name, collapsible-expandable chiasmus. This nesting chiasmus is illustrated in the box below.



See how the collapsing of the center created not just two, but three chiasmi? Yes, there are three chiasmi inside of one, and one chiasmus concealed in three. This is interesting possibility since it coincides with the doctrine of the Trinity.

The col-ex chi is a recent discovery and several questions will challenge its authenticity.

1: Is it the work of the interpreter or the author? That is, did the interpreter force a nonexistent schema onto the form being studied?

2: Is this col-ex chiasmus the work of one author or two? Did one author build upon the work of the first by using the last strophe in the second half of the first chiasmus as the first strophe in the second?

3: If the work of one author, were the two sides written together, or did one side precede the other, thereby giving birth to the overall chiasmus.

4. Was the col-ex chiasmus intentional, or just an iphenomenal result of other intentions?

5: Assuming that the double chiasmus was intentional, was the third intended as well?

6: In the case of the prologue, did the first chiasmus actually end with verse 12, with the second beginning with verse 13?

7: What overall theological or literary purpose does the col-ex serve?

Given these unanswered questions, there are three things that appear to have merit in the overall chiasmus: The beginning, the center, and the end. Even though some of the individual verses were mapped differently by other researchers, there are similarities between two other researcher's conclusions and mine. The first analysis is John Breck's (1994:199), and the second is Allen Culpepper (1992:np). Note that the beginning, center, and the ending are the same as the one above.

5:1-2): The Word with God

4: (3): His role in creation

3: (4-5): He gave life and light to men

2: (6-8) The witness of the Baptist

1: (9-11): The Word came into the world

0: (12-13) Believers become children of God

1: (14): The Word became incarnate

- 2: (15): The witness of the Baptist
- 3: (16): He gave grace upon grace to men
- 4: (17): His role in the new creation
- 5: (18): The Son in the Father (Breck 199).

Alan Culpepper (1992) proposes a slightly different arrangement.

- A: (1-2) The Word as *Theos* with God
 - B: (3) Creation came through the Word
 - C: (4-5: We have received life from the Word
 - D: (6-8) John was sent to testify
 - E: (9-10): Incarnation and the response of the world
 - F: (11) The world and his own (Israel)
 - G: (12a): Those who accepted his Word
 - H: (12b) He gave authority to become the children of God
 - G: (12c) those who the Word came to
 - F (13) The Word and His own believers
 - E: (14): Incarnation and the response of the community.
 - D: (15): John's testimony
 - C: (16) We have received grace from the Word
 - B: (17) Grace and truth came through the Word
 - A: (18) The Word as *Theos* with God (Culpepper 1992)

As can be seen, both Breck and Culpepper agree that verse 12 and 13 make up the center thereby making the prologue soteriological. The center is usually the main focus of a chiasmus of this size, and therefore is the main point of the entire message. The extremes (A's and B's) reinforce this main point. As previously discussed, the key to

finding the main theme of a chiastic structured passage is in locating the center of the chiasmus, instead of looking for the key phrase or theme sentence at the beginning of the work as is the western custom. In this case the main point is soteriology (Breck 199). That is, the purpose of telling this story is to relate the means of salvation through Christ. Without understanding its chiastic structure, the central theme intended by John is easily missed. This effect is tripled with the use of the col-ex chiasmus, however. The three centers form their own chiasmus with the extreme's further developing or explaining the center.

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| The ever shining light | Center 1 |
| New birth in Christ | Center 2 |
| Never ending grace | Center 3 |

The resulting message is the gospel in one breath: New birth comes from the ever shining light of Christ through his never ending grace.

3.15 Overall Observations Resulting From This Study Of John 1:1-18

Now that the search for parallelism in the prologue is complete and the passage is divided into strophes, what observations or considerations as a result of the study comes to mind?

3.15.1 The problem of the miniature biography

There were complications with certain stanzas and strophes that need attention. First, verses 6-9 were complicated because they did not seem to fit. Verse 6 stood out as an anacrusis that introduced a strophe that itself was more like an introduction to something else. Verse 9 could fit with 7-8, or verse 10-11, but not both. This abrupt breach of style wasn't so obvious until attempting to determine the parallelisms and strophes. John the

Baptizer made another appearance in verse 15 supposedly to introduce a major point that needed no introduction. In fact the introduction was an interruption that resembled more of an afterthought or an attempt to force a parallelism in the chiasmus with verses 6-9 which were out of place as well.

In fact, these verses best fit when moved out of the prologue inserted between verses 18 and 19. R. E. Brown (1970) recognized the displacement of these verses as well. The brief biography about John the Baptizer fits better in the section of passage that introduces John. Notice how naturally verse 9 flows into 15.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.^[b]

¹⁵John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' " (John 1:6-9, 15).

Of course one would immediately want to know if the prologue was damaged when those passages are removed. No, just the opposite happens. It was the John introduction that interrupted the flow and pattern of the prologue. Note the passages that were on either side of the ones removed. Also note that the chiasmus remains balanced because the center is maintained.

³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.... ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God (John 1:3-5, 10-13 NIV).

The flow is logical and sequential. Verses 5 and 10 form perfect parallelisms. In verse 5 the darkness could not comprehend the light, and verse 10 the world did not recognize him. .Actually, great stair-step parallelism is exhibited in verses 5,10 and 11. ...the darkness has not understood it....the world did not recognize him....his own did not receive him. The difficulty in pairing the bicolon and strophes in verse 9-11 is more easily resolved once verses 6-9 are relocated.

Verses 14 flows just as easily with verse 16 as 5 did with verse 10.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

Verse 14 is certainly parallel with verse 16, is it not? ...who came from the Father, full of grace and truth¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. The sequencing is both artistic and rhythmic.

If the miniature biography were to be removed, the chiastic arrangement would look like.

5: (1-2) The Word with God in beginning

4: (3) Creation through Christ

3: (4) Life for Men through Christ

2: (5) The ever-shinning light

1: (10-11) Jesus and His creation.

0: (12-13) Receiving Christ

and adoption by the Father

1: (14) The Word joins His creation

2: (16) never-ending grace

3: (17a) Law for man through man

4: (17b) Grace and truth come into being

5: (18) The only-born with the Father

The parallels have not moved and the chiasmus is not affected because the miniature biography strophes were parallel. This is not conclusive evidence that the miniature biography was originally intended as a direct and immediate introduction to John the Baptizer after the prologue; but the observation that the sequence is much smoother and more logical when these verses are relocated in order for them to introduce John the Baptizer is a valid one.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

¹⁵John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' "

¹⁹Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ." ²¹They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" (John:16-9, 14, 19-22 NIV)

This exercise accomplished these results:

1) They add support to R. E. Brown (1995)'s suggestion that verses 6-9 were displaced from in front of verse 19.

2) The removal of verses 6-9 and 15 confirm their parallel position, thereby giving credence to the notion that John 1:1-18 is indeed a chiasmus.

3) The possibility of isolating the center of the chiasmus would increase if one could be certain that the verses were in the number two position of the chiasmus as they appear now, being once removed from the center. This would narrow the possibility of locating the center of the chiasmus considerably by providing a benchmark to search from.

4) The confirmation of John 1:1-8's chiasity enforced the idea that the prologue's main theme is in the center, not the opening strophe, In the beginning... The positioning of verses 6-9, and 15 point to verses 12-13 as being the center.

5) The idea of an editor reshaping another author's work exhibits some merit if the above points are true. The verses could have either been inserted into an existing chiastic structure in their current parallel positions; or the verses might have been part of other existing material that was rearranged to form a chiasmus. Either way assumes the existence of the prologue in some form prior to the creation of the chiasmus; and that the original writer and the editor were different people. The writer wrote, and the editor edited.

6) The characteristic of the encomium became evident as the story focused upon the person of praise. Encomium rarely brings other people in and out of them. They focus upon the subject of praise.

Encomium review: Writers of encomia draw from the following (Ryken 1992:293)

1. Introduction to the subject that will be praised. John1:1
2. The distinguished and ancient ancestry of the subject; praise "by what stock he came of". John1:1-2
3. A catalogue or description of the praiseworthy acts or qualities of the subject. John 1:3-5, 10-14
4. The indispensable or superior nature of the subject John 1:16-18.
5. A conclusion urging the reader to emulate the subject

All encomia have a lyric quality comparable to what we find in a psalm of praise (Ryken 1992:293).

3.15.2 The form of the prologue

Determining the form of the prologue becomes easier when looking at it without the John miniature biography. This brings one to wonder about the form as well as intent and content John chose to introduce the gospel message with. A passage as purposeful and intricately designed as this one was crafted with much care about delivery and word choice. What form is John's prologue, exactly? And why was that particular form chosen?

Does John employ parallelism that is more indicative of the praise Psalms or wisdom literature like some of the encomiums of Proverbs? A popular view is that John 1:1-18 is a praise song like the psalm often referred as the last great hallel, like Psalm 136 (Labushange 2005:np). Certainly the similarities between the two warrant the attention and consideration which they have received. Other than the opening and close of the Psalm, both passages follow the standard style of the praise Psalm. Even over and above that the common traits are impressive.

Or perhaps John 1:1-18 is a wisdom hymn or poem of some nature. If so, why did John choose a form of wisdom literature as his platform to express this message in the first place? What is the significance of this choice? Perhaps the key word here is "wisdom." Scholars have long seen a close relationship of the Old Testament concepts of wisdom, *chakmah* and *tebunah* with the New Testament notion of "Logos" as shown by Dodd (1953), Ladd (1974), Beasley-Murray (1987:np), Brown (1970), Van Egman (nd), Witherington (1995:np), and a host of others. Of course some scholars like Bultman (1971) veer in the other direction by switching their vote from Hebrew influence

to purely Hellenistic influence of Logos in John 1:1-18. This study doesn't deny Hellenistic influence, but holds it at that: influence. The Hebrew roots remain intact, and their concept of wisdom pushes out the local common Greek philosophies that are forced into the prologue. The wisdom of the wisdom literature is what drives the logos in John 1:1.

Psalms 136 and Proverbs 3, and 8 paint a definite picture of the power of wisdom. James affirms that true wisdom comes from God (James 1:5). Proverbs 8:28-31 sounds a lot like the opening of the prologue and Psalm 136 in reference to creation when wisdom establishes her bonifides.

²² The LORD possessed (wisdom-chakmah) me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. ²³ I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. ²⁴ When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water. ²⁵ Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: ²⁶ While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. ²⁷ When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: ²⁸ When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: ²⁹ When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: ³⁰ Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him; ³¹ Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men (Proverbs 8:22-31 NASB).

In some of the intertestamental books wisdom is addressed either as God or coming from god.

Ecclesiasticus 1:1-4 All wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with him for ever. The sand of the sea, and the drops of the rain, And the days of eternity who shall number? The height of the heaven and the breadth of the earth And the deep and wisdom, who shall search them out? Wisdom hath been created before all things, And the understanding of prudence from everlasting.

I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, And covered the earth as a mist. He created me from the beginning of the world, And to the end I shall not fail. 24:3-)

James Holding (nd) makes the following comparisons between John 1:18 and wisdom literature. Now consider these parallels with John's prologue and the Wisdom literature:

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Wisdom of Solomon 9:9 With you (God) is Wisdom, who knows your works and was present when you made the world.

John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Proverbs 8:35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (1:11)

1 Enoch 42:2 Wisdom went forth to make her dwelling among the children of men, and found no dwelling place.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Sirach 24:8 The one who created me assigned a place for my tent. And he said: 'Make your dwelling in Jerusalem.'

Wisdom was in the beginning (Prov. 8:22-23, Sir. 1:4, Wis. 9:9)

The Word was with God (John 1:1)

Wisdom was with God (Prov. 8:30, Sir. 1:1, Wis. 9:4)

The Word was co-creator (John 1:1-3)

Wisdom was co-creator (Prov. 3:19, 8:25; Is. 7:21, 9:1-2)

The Word provides light (John 1:4, 9)

Wisdom provides light (Prov. 8:22, Wis. 7:26, 8:13; Sir. 4:12)

Word as light in contrast to darkness (John 1:5)

Wisdom as light in contrast to darkness (Wis. 7:29-30)

The Word was in the world (John 1:10)

Wisdom was in the world (Wis. 8:1, Sir. 24:6)

The Word was rejected by its own (John 1:11)

Wisdom was rejected by its own (Sir. 15:7)

The Word was received by the faithful (John 1:12)

Wisdom was received by the faithful (Wis. 7:27)

Christ is the bread of life (John 6:35)

Wisdom is the bread or substance of life (Prov. 9:5, Sir. 15:3, 24:21, 29:21; Wis. 11:4)

Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12)

Wisdom is light (Wis. 7:26-30, 18:3-4)

Christ is the door of the sheep and the good shepherd (John 10:7, 11, 14)

Wisdom is the door and the good shepherd (Prov. 8:34-5, Wis. 7:25-7, 8:2-16; Sir. 24:19-22)

Christ is life (John 11:25)

Wisdom brings life (Prov. 3:16, 8:35, 9:11; Wis. 8:13)

Christ is the way to truth (John 14:6)

Wisdom is the way (Prov. 3:17, 8:32-34; Sir. 6:26) J. P. Holding (nd).

The connection between wisdom and logos appears to have ample parallels in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and inter-testamental period, and John 1:18 fits the genre very well. A closer look at the ancient Jewish concept of wisdom will bring us closer to the ancient view of wisdom.

The word for wisdom used in Psalms 136 is *tebunah*, and *chakmah* is used in Proverbs 8:22. However, in Proverbs 8:1 wisdom-*chakmah* is parallel or synonymous with understanding-*tebunah*. “Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice” (Prov 8:1 NIV)? This would lead one to believe that the two were conceptually joined at the hip, so to speak. The notion that the *chakmah* of Biblical wisdom literature (Witherington 1995, Hahn 2006, Brown 1970) can be used in parallel to Logos gains much strength upon the realization that Jesus as *chakmah*/logos was expressed within the form of wisdom’s own literature. The first strophe of John’s prologue equates Jesus with the powerful force God created the world with in Genesis 1 by using the same opening phrase, “In the beginning,” and portraying Jesus in John 1 :1 as the spoken word God used to create heaven and earth in Genesis 1 (Hahn 2006, Witherinton 1995, Holding ND). His prologue becomes an extension of wisdom literature’s portrayal of wisdom as in Proverbs 3 and 8 merely by using the phrase “In beginning was the Logos, followed by

the declaration that “By him all things were made, and without him nothing was made that was made” (Witherington 1995: 52).

“Not only Proverbs 3 but also Proverbs 8:1-96 should be considered. There one learns that personified Wisdom was present at creation, but also that she called God’s people back to the right path and offered them like and favor from God (cf. 8L35). There are the very things being said of the Word as well in this hymn.... The Wisdom character and background of the Logos hymn has long been recognized. One can point out the remarkable parallel in 1QS 11:11: “All things come to pass by his knowledge. He establishes all things by His design, and without him nothing is don [made].” On the idea of Wisdom providing life and light, one thinks again of Wisdom of Solomon 7:27, where Wisdom is said to be the effulgence of eternal light, and she is said to be the very life breath of God in Wisdom of Solomon 7:25a (Witherington 1995:52)

By using a form of wisdom literature in introducing Jesus as the Logos, John transfers the Jewish understanding of *chakmah* to Jesus. By pairing a new concept with an old one, John reduces resistance to his message. Christ. At this stage, then, it is seen that Jesus is both the Logos and the *chakmah* because they are the same. Although one can only speculate as to why John used *logos* instead of *chakmah*, it did set the stage for the gospel to be taken to the gentiles because the notion of *logos* is a familiar one to them. In the second half of the chiasmus verses 16-17 we find truth as a parallel to *logos*, and introduce an enriched version of the Old Testament perception of “*hesed*,” God’s steadfast love (Hahn 2006). It is the balanced combination of *chakmah* and *hesed-logos* and grace, that shapes the entire Gospel of John.

Proverbs 31 should be examined because of its direct impact upon John 1:1-18 being classified as a proverb. If the poem in Proverbs 31 is a proverb, then it may be that the prologue fits that genre as well. After all, the prologue is written in a parallel style in which B further explains A.

Proverbs 31:10-31

- 10 A wife of noble character who can find?
She is worth far more than rubies.
- 11 Her husband has full confidence in her
and lacks nothing of value.
- 12 She brings him good, not harm,
all the days of her life.
- 13 She selects wool and flax
and works with eager hands.
- 14 She is like the merchant ships,
bringing her food from afar.
- 15 She gets up while it is still dark;
she provides food for her family
and portions for her servant girls.
- 16 She considers a field and buys it;
out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.
- 17 She sets about her work vigorously;
her arms are strong for her tasks.
- 18 She sees that her trading is profitable,
and her lamp does not go out at night.
- 19 In her hand she holds the distaff
and grasps the spindle with her fingers.
- 20 She opens her arms to the poor
and extends her hands to the needy.
- 21 When it snows, she has no fear for her household;
for all of them are clothed in scarlet.
- 22 She makes coverings for her bed;
she is clothed in fine linen and purple.
- 23 Her husband is respected at the city gate,
where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.
- 24 She makes linen garments and sells them,
and supplies the merchants with sashes.
- 25 She is clothed with strength and dignity;
she can laugh at the days to come.
- 26 She speaks with wisdom,
and faithful instruction is on her tongue.
- 27 She watches over the affairs of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness.
- 28 Her children arise and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
- 29 "Many women do noble things,
but you surpass them all."
- 30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.
- 31 Give her the reward she has earned,
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate. Proverbs 31:10-31 NIV

Compare John 1:1-18 to Proverbs 31: 10-31. The virtuous woman poem is an encomium which combines the descriptive and expository type of storytelling by listing attributes and expounding upon them. The prologue opens and closes its encomium by raising Jesus to the level of God. He tells his story poetically by listing a series of events and explaining them (Ryken 2004:209).

There are notable differences in style of delivery, of course, but each tells a story praising its subject. The acrostic arrangement was used in the Proverbs passage whereas John 1:1-18 is in a rather complex chiasmus. Proverbs 31:10-31 depends heavily upon synonymous parallelism and a simple list recitation, whereas John 1:1-18 is predominantly an apologetic which uses the narrative and expository methodology as its main vehicle. The prologue is written primarily in past tense telling us what God has done, whereas the attributes of a good woman poem is written mostly in present tense telling us what the actions of a good woman are. In Proverbs 31 the attributes of a woman are praised, and in John 1 the attributes of the son are extolled. Each passage maintains a consistent theme throughout. Each poem tells its story using a different platform. That is, each employs many of the poetic devices and literary tools found in Biblical wisdom literature such as praise, anthetic, synthetic and synonymous parallelism, stair-like and wordstep parallelism, metaphors, similes, rhetorical, androgogical or didactic methodology, paradox, pleonasm, and idioms.

There are other similarities as well as marked differences between Proverbs 31:10-31 and John 1:1-18. Proverbs 31:10-31 is obvious in its intent to instruct, influence, and persuade. The prologue is more subtle in the areas of instruction and persuasion because it is

an apologetic written in persuasive prose such as that in verses 12-13. Intentional influence of action is wrapped very well in an artistic combination of epic and explanation made possible by equating logos with the chakmah of Wisdom literature. Even though each poem employs those forms of parallelism preferred by the writers of Biblical wisdom material, they each have a different “feel” or signature flavor.

Also note that Proverbs 31:10-31 is decidedly more didactic than John 1:1-18, and John 1 is more informative and expository than Proverbs 31:10-31. Neither contains admonitions, yet both do exhibit formulas common to wisdom literature and parallelism as pointed out by Scott (1965) such as congruity, contrast, comparison, classification, results or consequences, and priority.

It is the discoveries like these that give both the search for parallelisms and the methods used, value. John 1:1-18’s kindred to wisdom literature has been observed by many (Breck 1994, Brown 1970, Witherington 1995:2); Even though Ryken (1995:293-294) made the observation that the prologue is an encomium proverb, as well as cite the Virtuous Woman to be an encomium, to date no one has compared to two and drawn from their commonalities. That notion was more developed in this manuscript. The dressing of Logos in wisdom’s chakmah clothes brings more credibility because the new Chakmah, or Logos, is set within the framework of wisdom literature. This identification of the wisdom poem demonstrated that whether directly or indirectly, the six-step method for puzzling out parallelisms in scripture leads to insightful observations. But it doesn’t stop here. John’s prologue has many layers. Next, another parallel will be examined that goes hand-in-hand with the encomium. Actually, it is within it. That passage is Psalms 136.

3.15 .1 Comparing Psalms 136 with John 1:1-18

Psalm 136

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

His love endures forever.

2 Give thanks to the God of gods.

His love endures forever.

3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

His love endures forever.

4 to him who alone does great wonders,

His love endures forever.

5 who by his understanding made the heavens,

His love endures forever.

6 who spread out the earth upon the waters,

His love endures forever.

7 who made the great lights—

His love endures forever.

8 the sun to govern the day,

His love endures forever.

9 the moon and stars to govern the night;

His love endures forever.

10 to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt

His love endures forever.

11 and brought Israel out from among them

His love endures forever.

12 with a mighty hand and outstretched arm;

His love endures forever.

13 to him who divided the Red Sea asunder

His love endures forever.

14 and brought Israel through the midst of it,

His love endures forever.

15 but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;

His love endures forever.

16 to him who led his people through the desert,

His love endures forever.

17 who struck down great kings,

His love endures forever.

18 and killed mighty kings—

His love endures forever.

19 Sihon king of the Amorites
His love endures forever.
20 and Og king of Bashan—
His love endures forever.

21 and gave their land as an inheritance,
His love endures forever.
22 an inheritance to his servant Israel;
His love endures forever.

23 to the One who remembered us in our low estate
His love endures forever.
24 and freed us from our enemies,
His love endures forever.
25 and who gives food to every creature.
His love endures forever.

26 Give thanks to the God of heaven.
His love endures forever. Psalm 136 NIV

At first the prologue looks like a hallel like this one. More convincers of their kinship in form and style are the; similarities between the prologue and Psalm 136 such as: each contain creation and redemption poems (Gaebelein 1992), each features a supreme force other than God (wisdom/logos), enemies, kings, miracles, divisions, deliverance, inheritance/gift, God's provisions. Often one is contrasted with the other. For example, the sun and moon are the great lights in Psalms 136, but Jesus is the light of the world in the prologue; God struck down Israel's enemies vs. Jesus was struck down (by being lifted up) as an enemy. As mentioned earlier, the hallel, or praise psalm, opens and closes with overt praise, and John does not. It shares the praise psalm's motif, but not the title.

3.16 Other Observations And Possibilities

The prologue would make an ideal liturgical piece. Liturgical literature benefits from parallelism because it is easier to place the breaks between the worship leader's part and the congregation's part, if desired. This is one of the benefits of parallelism. In addition to an abundance of parallelisms, the prologue's content lends itself to public. I say this because of the many similarities between John 1:1-18 and Psalm 136, and because many early Christians were Jews who would have been comfortable with this form of worship. Of course it is not known whether or not the prologue was really used for this purpose, but speculation of this sort is an ideal way to demonstrate how scriptures using a lot of parallelisms are so readily adaptable to liturgical use.

I will pose one possible arrangement of a responsive reading and interaction between a worship leader and a congregation of the early church. The repetitive "His love endures forever" of Psalm 136 is replaced with a dialogue between leader and congregation. The Jewish congregation would have readily responded to this form of recitation having been steep in this liturgical style their entire lives. Notice how smoothly this flows without the mini-bios of John the Baptizer.

Leader: ¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Congregation: ²He was with God in the beginning.

Leader: ³Through him all things were made;

Congregation: without him nothing was made that has been made.

Leader: ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Congregation : ⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood^[a] it.

Leader: ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him,

the world did not recognize him.

Congregation: ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

Leader: ¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

Congregation: ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

Leader: ¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

Congregation: ¹⁵We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Leader: ¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

Congregation: ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Leader: ¹⁸No one has ever seen God,

Congregation: but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

Note: Verse 18 has been broken up in the example above, but all of verse 18 may have been spoken by the Leader, thereby keeping to the spirit of the chiasmic arrangement in tack by opening and closing with the same person.

Alternatively, as mentioned earlier, the refrain in Psalm 136, “His love endures forever,” is implied in John 1:1-18 simply by its association with that Psalm. With that in mind, John’s prologue could have been used in worship services by the people responding to each bicolon with “His love endures forever.” This would have been a natural worship style for the early church since Christianity has its roots in Judaism. If in fact this was done responsively between worship leader and the congregation as an act of praise, it could have been something like this.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

His love endures forever

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

His love endures forever.

²He was with God in the beginning.

His love endures forever

³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

His love endures forever.

⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

His love endures forever.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

His love endures forever (John 1:1-5 NIV).

Whether the refrain was actually used or merely implied, understanding the prologue's indirect linkage with praise psalms answers some questions about form and content, but very little about intent.

3.17 Summary

In this chapter the readers have been introduced to a step-by-step process for locating parallelism in scripture. The main intent was to give the readers a kind of “eye witness” view of the methodology and exegetical benefits of discovering parallelism in scripture. This was done by inviting them to observe the process in action, rather than to merely examine the results. The second intent was to familiarize readers with enough of the literary forms that Jesus used so that these forms and styles could be duplicated in the

pulpit. A third intent was to demonstrate the exegetical value of understanding parallelism in scripture.

By using the methodology, we discovered or uncovered the following points to ponder:

- 1) The possibility of a different chiasmic arrangement, the co-lex chiasmus, was noted.
- 2) The designation of the form of wisdom literature John's prologue was written in was introduced.
- 3) The parallel of John's prologue with Proverbs 31:10-31 was introduced.
- 4) The affect of moving John 1: 6-9, and 15 to be between verses 18 and 19 was examined.

Chapter Four: Final Points and Conclusions

4.1 Chapter One Summary

The first chapter reviewed the literature concerning the history and purpose of proverbs in ancient Israel. The consensus among scholars is that proverbs were primarily used for teaching and transferring knowledge. The identity of the teacher has not been resolved. One or more of the following people could have been responsible for teaching children and youth: Father, mother, scribes, court advisors, or private or public school teachers. The notion of a wisdom school has little support, whereas the idea of in-home instruction, public schooling, and schools for the elite each has strong support. Therefore, the purpose and place of instruction is yet to be determined, as is the identity of the teachers who used these proverbs for instruction. The archeological evidence is insufficient for us to draw definite conclusions in any of these areas. A passage in Ecclesiasticus 51, however, does indicate that Jesus Ben Siriac was a professional teacher with a private school. Although this confirms the existence of private schools and professional teachers in Israel, it was in a much later period.

Whether the proverbs originated in an oral or written tradition is not clear. What is clear, however, is that the proverb, or *mashal*, was the teaching method of choice for Jesus; and there is no record that his lessons were ever written before he taught them.

4.2 Chapter Two Summary

In the second chapter the difficulties of defining a proverb were pointed out, and various forms of parallelisms found within scripture were explained. A review of the

literature on the general nature and definition of proverbs it has not produced an exact definition of a proverb. Von Rad (1978: 3-4) suggested that some of the qualities that a proverb should contain are brevity, compactness, intelligibility, a clear graphic quality, and be easy to remember. Taylor (1996) concluded that a proverb is “a saying current among the folk”. Hernadi and Steen (1999) observed that, “Proverbs are brief, memorable, and intuitively convincing formulations of socially sanctioned advice.” Brunvand (1986:np) defines proverb as; "*popular saying in a relatively fixed form which is, or has been in oral circulation*", (italics in the original).

4.2.1 Forms of parallelism

Later in chapter two the various forms and arrangements of parallelism used in scripture were examined. This established a framework for chapter three which applied the knowledge of Semitic parallelism to examining John’s prologue. The process of analyzing scripture was demonstrated in a play-by-play fashion. Methods and instructions for locating parallelism in scripture, were given demonstrated in an “accompany me while I do it” manner. The methods taught depended upon familiarization with the various forms of parallelism which were explained in chapter two. Two ways ministers and preachers should benefit from this type of study are 1) enhanced exegetical study, and 2) literary and rhetorical training.

4.3 Chapter Three Summary

In chapter three a six-step method for finding parallelisms in scripture was introduced and John 1:1-18 analyzed and diagramed. It soon evident very soon that form cannot be separated from content. Some of the information gained from this study was a direct result of doing word searchers in hopes of locating various types of parallelisms. For example, in the first half of John 1:7-8, Jesus' role in creation is emphasized, and the word, "world" is used three times. In the second half, the phrase "his own" is mentioned only two times. The number three has long been recognized as being significant in Biblical literature because it carries with it the concept of perfection. The implication is that acts designated by the number three are the perfect works of God (Bullinger 1921; Smothers 1970). If this is the intended meaning, then does the fact that this notion of coming unto 'his own' and being rejected was only used twice imply imperfection, or "wrongful behavior" on the part of the people's treatment of Jesus?

The contribution the six-step method makes to exegesis is that it seeks out the central thought or theme of the passage, and exposes unanswered or unasked questions whose answers may make a great contribution to understanding these scriptures. The value of recognizing the parallel forms became self-evident when the center of the mega-chiasmus was determined to be soteriological (Breck 1995, Culpepper 1987:np). Verses 12-13 were in the center of the chiasmus, revealing the central theme of soteriology. The centers of the twin chiasmi introduced and supported the main theme of new birth in Christ.

Verse 5: The ever shining light

Verse 12-13: New birth in Christ

Verse 16: Never ending grace

One of the intents chapter three was to demonstrate the exegetical value of understanding parallelism in scripture. The use of the six-step methodology brought the following points to the researcher's attention.

1) The commonality between John's prologue and Proverbs 31:10-31 was explained. 2) The form John's prologue written in was identified. 3) A different chiastic arrangement, the co-lex chiasmus was suggested. 4) John 1: 6-9 and 15 were determined to be displaced, as had Brown (1970) had also determined years earlier. The miniature biography material provided a good introduction to John the Baptizer when it was positioned between verses 18 and 19. 5) The notions that the chakmah of the Old Testament was the logos/truth of the New, and that the hesed of the Old Testament was grace in the New Testament were discussed (Hahn 2006, Witherington 1995, Brown 1970). That the Jewish notions of chakmah appeared in the first half of the chiasmus and hesed in the second was given close attention. Identifying Jesus with the chakmah established immediate credibility for John's gospel, and the connection with hesed in the second half of the chiasmus added compassion to chakmah or logos. Hesed and chakmah are paralleled by grace and truth in verse 16 and 17, as well as throughout the gospel. It is this combination power with love that makes the theme of soteriology creditable and the center of the chiasmus obvious. The messages of truth, (logos/chamah's parallel) and grace (hesed's parallel) in verses 12-13, 16-17, cleared the way for the news that the grace and truth of Jesus eclipsed the torah of Moses (Witherington 1995). This would be totally unacceptable if the author had not established the idea Jesus as the Logos/chakmah are one with God, and that God's loving mercy was personified in Jesus.

By verse 16, Jesus as the Logos is more powerful than the torah. 6) The possibility of John's prologue being used for corporate worship due to its rhythmic parallelism as well as its kinship with Psalm 136 was demonstrated. Although this is purely conjecture, it was demonstrated that the passage does lend itself to liturgical use. It would be surprising to find that the early church did not use it.

Insights and inquiries cited resulted from the 6-step study methodology introduced in this manuscript. Even when the methodology itself did not reveal significant points directly, the process itself created the atmosphere for asking the right questions. Merely parallel or chiasmus shopping would not produce as broad a perspective as the six-step method should. The exegetical value the six-step process is that it tends to increase one's awareness of the subject under consideration by approaching it from different angles. Without the process to follow, the prologue's identity as an encomium proverb as well as the combination of chakmah in the first half of the chiasmus, and hesed in the second would remain undetected by me. Indeed, chakmah and hesed shape the entire gospel of John.

4.4 A More Intricate Form Of Chiasmus

In chapter two the idea of a collapsible-expandable chiasmus was introduced, and in chapter three the possibility that the prologue may in fact be a col-ex chiasmus raised a question about the time-line of the first and second half. Was the first half of the prologue written at the same time as the second half? If the prologue is two chiasmus instead of one initially, then the central themes of God's eternity and never-ending

grace would be in verses 5 and 16. Although verses 12-13 become supporting strophes in the extremes, their soteriological theme is maintained due to their position in the inverted chiasmus in the middle of the other two. If that is so, what real change has occurred? The central themes in the twin chiasmi highlight the eternal goodness of God's nature further develop the eternal nature of God in verses 1-2, and 18, which are the extremes of the mega-chiasmus. The result of this interpretation reveals the eternal nature of God who gives all who believe the right to become children of God, and also explains his motivation for doing it in the central themes of the twin chiasmi. His eternal nature is one that reveals himself because he is filled with grace.

4.5 Semitic Rhetorical Methodology

The training value of the methodology is a very useful and practical one. As the minister seeks to study the Bible in this manner, the Semitic rhetorical methodology becomes more and more ingrained as familiarity develops. This should bring the minister to the place where he can duplicate the Biblical style of preaching and teaching. This is done loosely by some preachers and speakers in the format of "tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and tell them what you have told them. It has become evident in this study that the Biblical writers and teachers used much more sophisticated and intricate outlines and formats than that. Scripture was cited that reveal that Jesus, John and Paul were highly skilled in this ancient literary style of teaching. Whether they learned this formally or not is unknown, but it is highly probable, although speculative, that as Hebrews they were probably taught in the same traditional manner.

For androgical purposes, some of the terms in current use were replaced by less confusing ones. Step parallelism was replaced by wordstep parallelism to avoid confusion with stair-like or stair-step parallelism. Synonymous parallelism was replaced with the term “tautological parallelism” because the clauses are not synonymous; they are tautological because they say the same thing in different ways.

Much of the rhetorical terminology created by the Greeks described literary and oratory methods were already being used by ancient Biblical writers. In other words, the Greeks discovered, analyzed, and tagged all the parts, but they did not create the whole. The Semitic contribution was a highly developed use of parallelism and sophisticated forms of logic which are often found in wisdom literature. In fact, a uniquely Semitic form of argument, a fortiori, is much different from the Greek syllogisms. The a fortiori itself is the epitome of Semitic parallelism. The a fortiori formula is, if A, then how much more so B? This is the foundational structure of Semitic parallelism.

Knowledge of the composition of Biblical wisdom and proverbial sayings may better equip ministers to convey the gospel message as well as interpret it. If Jesus and his disciples favored the poetic parallel literary devices of the Hebrews, we should strongly consider continuing the tradition. It seems advisable to master the teaching methods of the Master. That is why this work goes beyond informing and offers a first step of instruction that promotes continuation of the Biblical teaching tradition.

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