

Step Parallelism

Matthew 7:7-11

- (a) 7 **Ask**, and it shall be given you;
- (b) **seek**, and ye shall find;
- (c) **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you:

- (a') 8 For every one that **asketh** receiveth;
- (b') and he that **seeketh** findeth;
- (c') and to him that **knocketh** it shall be opened.

Hebrew 3

A. (7) **Wherefore (as the Holy [Spirit] saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, (8) Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation,** in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

B. (9) When **your fathers** tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

C.(10) Wherefore I was **grieved** with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

D. (11) **So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)**

E.(12) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of **unbelief**, in departing from the living God.

X.(13) But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. (14) For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

A'.(15) **While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.**

B'.(16) For **some**, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

C'.(17) But with whom was he **grieved** forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

D'.(18) **And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest,**

E'. but to them that **believed not**? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of **unbelief**.

Inverted parallelism

Bib. Lit
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SACRED LITERATURE;

COMPRISING

A REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION

LAI'D DOWN BY THE LATE

ROBERT LOWTH, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

IN

HIS PRÆLECTIONS AND ISAIAH:

AND

AN APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES SO REVIEWED,

TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF

The New Testament;

IN A SERIES OF

CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE STYLE AND STRUCTURE

OF THAT SACRED VOLUME.

BY JOHN JEBB, D.D. F.R.S.

BISHOP OF LIMERICK, ARDFERT AND AGHADOE.

Jebb in 1820 “There are stanzas so constructed, that, whatever be the number of lines, the first line shall be parallel with the last ; the second with the penultimate ; and so throughout, in an order that looks inward, or, to borrow a military phrase, from flanks to centre. This may be called the introverted parallelism”.

My son, if thine heart be wise ;
My heart also shall rejoice ;
Yea, my reins shall rejoice ;
When thy lips speak right things.

Bullinger, building on the work of Lowth and Jebb in his book on **Figures of Speech in Scripture** sets out a nomenclature for parallelism including introverted parallelism.

Chiastic parallelism

“the first shall be last and the last first”

A¹ Whoever *sheds*
B¹ the *blood*
C¹ of *man*
C² by *man*
B² will his *blood*
A² be *shed*.

“... two or more **clauses** are related to each other through a reversal of structures in order to make a larger point; that is, the clauses display inverted **parallelism**.”

A If be your sins
B¹ like scarlet,
B² like snow
C they shall be white;
C if they be red
B¹ like crimson,
B² like wool
A they shall be

THE PRESENCE OF CHIASMUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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The purpose of this paper is to exhibit some passages in the Old Testament which seem to have been constructed according to a literary principle called “chiasmus” and to discuss briefly the meaning of these constructions for textual criticism and interpretation. The chiasmus is “a placing crosswise” of words or ideas in a sentence, as the following example will show:

If e'er to bless thy sons
My *voice* or *hands* deny,
These *hands* let useful skill forsake,
This *voice* in silence die [DR. T. DWIGHT].

after N W Lund - The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament, The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, 1930, 26, 104-126.

Leviticus 11

A. And for these **ye shall be unclean**:

B. **whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even.**

25 And whosoever beareth ought of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

C. 26 The carcases of every beast which divideth the hoof, and is not clovenfooted, nor cheweth the cud, **are unclean unto you**:

D. ***every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.***

C'. 27 And whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts that go on all four, **those are unclean unto you**:

B'. **whoso toucheth their carcase shall be unclean until the even. 28 And he that beareth the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even:**

A'. **they are unclean** unto you.

From N W Lund - The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament, The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, 1930, 26, 104-126.

Isaiah 60

A. **Arise**,

B. **shine**;

C. for **thy light** is come,

D. and **the glory**

E. of **the LORD**

F. is **risen** upon thee.

G. 2 For, behold, **the darkness** shall cover the earth,

G'. and gross **darkness** the people:

F'. but upon thee shall **arise**

E'. **the LORD**,

D'. and **his glory** shall be seen upon thee.

C'. 3 And the Gentiles shall come to **thy light**,

B'. and kings to the **brightness**

A'. of thy **rising**.

A. Therefore speak I to them in **parables**:

Matthew 13:13-18

B. **because they seeing see not;
and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.**

C. And in them is fulfilled the **prophecy** of Esaias, which saith,

D. By hearing ye shall **hear**, and shall not understand;

E. and seeing ye shall **see**, and shall not perceive:

F. For this people's **heart** is waxed gross,

G. and their **ears** are dull of hearing,

H. and their **eyes** they have closed;

H'. lest at any time they should see with their **eyes**,

G'. and hear with their **ears**,

F'. and should understand with their **heart**, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

E'. But blessed are your eyes, for they **see**:

D'. and your ears, for they **hear**.

C'. For verily I say unto you, That many **prophets** and righteous men have desired

B'. **to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them;
and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.**

A'. Hear ye therefore the **parable** of the sower.