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A Brief History of the Knowledge of the Literary Structures and Language of Ancient Scripture Up Until the Time of the Book of Mormon

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Sources

A. A Brief History of the Knowledge of the Literary Structures and Language of Ancient Scripture Up Until the Time of the Book of Mormon

In 1898, Ebenezer W. Bullinger, wrote the following in the Introduction to his classic work, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (in which parallelistic structures are prominently featured):

The manifold forms which words and sentences assume were called by the Greeks “Schema” and by the Romans “Figura.” Both words have the same meaning—a shape or figure. When we speak of a person as being “a figure” we mean one who is dressed in some peculiar style . . . Applied to words, a figure denotes some form which a word or sentence takes, different from its ordinary and natural form. This is always for the purpose of giving additional force, more life, intensified feeling, and greater emphasis . . . No branch of Bible study can be more important, or offer greater promise of substantial reward [than the study of the figures of speech.] . . . it is the key to true interpretation . . . In fact, it is not too much to say that, in the use of these figures, we have, as it were, the Holy Spirit’s own markings of our Bibles . . . Yet we may truly say that **there is no branch of [Scripture-study] which has been so utterly neglected.** (E. W. Bullinger, D.D., *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1898/ republished 1968, pp. v-xiii)

To illustrate this “neglect” of understanding regarding these various figures of speech with all their various repetitive line forms, I will quote the Reverend Martin T. Lamb from just a decade previous to Bullinger’s statement above. Reverend Lamb was a Baptist minister whose lifetime spanned most of the century following the publication of the Book of Mormon and who became its premier critic. He wrote the following:

God stamps himself, his own infinite perfections upon everything He undertakes . . . Whether He records a history, utters a prophecy, or inspires a proverb or a psalm, He should do it in a way that will be true to Himself, stamp His own infinite nature upon it . . . The style will be found to be **simplicity itself** . . . This unapproachable ability to say a great deal in a few plain, simple words, prevails all through the Bible. It would appear to be God’s way of writing, precisely what we might expect from a being of infinite perfection.

So according to Reverend Lamb, God chose simplicity (rather than parallelistic figures of speech). Thus in regards to the Book of Mormon, Reverend Lamb proudly proclaimed the following:

We are forced therefore to the conclusion that **all these senseless repetitions, this worse than useless verbiage**, is and must have been in the original [gold] plates, and not at all the result of Mr. [Joseph] Smith’s ignorance and want of culture. And hence we must call in question the divine inspiration of those original plates, inasmuch as **such blundering repetitions** are directly at variance with all we have learned of God’s manner of writing. (Rev. M. T. Lamb, *The Golden Bible, Or, The Book of Mormon. Is It From God?*, 1887: Chapter 1).

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

So why had the knowledge of biblical rhetoric, especially parallelism been neglected? The answer is that it had, and it hadn't. Where do I begin? Let me first confess that it has been hard for me to understand that the various devices of rhetoric, including parallelism, and the various forms of biblical "poetry," which include parallelism have not always been viewed as being joined-together as a means of communicating what is found in the Bible. Indeed, in 1820 John Jebb, a scholar of biblical poetry, was worried about proposing inverted parallelisms in the New Testament. This, despite the fact that similar structures had been named in the lists of Greek rhetorical devices for centuries—even millennia!

In order to explain this paradoxical situation a little better, I am first going to take the perspective of rhetoric by providing a brief timeline and a few examples. Then I will proceed with the evolution of understanding regarding biblical "poetry."

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines rhetoric as "the art of speaking or writing effectively." In other words, by (a) studying the principles and methods of composition formulated by critics of times past, one can (b) effectively speak or write as a means of communication or persuasion. Principles of rhetoric have existed since ancient times.

According to Jack Lundbom,

Hebrew rhetoric developed from an ancient pre-classical rhetorical tradition going back to the beginning of recorded history. Sumerian scribal schools, called "tablet houses," produced a literate class that has left behind a rich legacy of rhetorical discourse from early Mesopotamian society (*c. 3000 BCE). The Sumerians wrote poetry having repetition, parallelism, epithets, [etc.] . . . A rhetorical tradition doubtless developed during the same period in Egypt, where scribal schools are known to have existed from the early third millennium, and where poetry also was written, but about this tradition little is known. (Jack R. Lundbom, *Biblical Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*, 2012, p. 165-166.)

Lundbom goes on to say the following:

Ancient Hebrew rhetoric survives largely in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, from which it may be concluded that during the eighth-to sixth-centuries BCE it experienced its "golden age" a full three centuries and more before the art achieved classical expression by Aristotle in Greece . . . How they [the prophets and the scribes] received their schooling is not known, but it is reasonable to assume that they attended a Jerusalem school where writing and rhetorical skills were taught. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other Judahite prophets would have attended this school . . . Scribes appear as a professional class in the book of Jeremiah (Jer. 8:8), where we also meet up with individual scribes such as Baruch, called "Baruch, the scribe" (Jer. 36:26, 32), and Baruch's brother, Seraiah, the "quartermaster" of Zedekiah (Jer. 51:59-64) . . . In Jeremiah's time, it [the scribal school] . . . would have been attached to the palace or the temple, as in neighboring societies (cf. 2 Kgs 22:8-10). (Lundbom, *Biblical Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*, p. 82-83, 166-167)

Lundbom further writes that "the prophet possessing the greatest rhetorical skill is unquestionably Jeremiah, who can hold rank with the best of the Greek and Roman rhetors, anticipating them as he does in style, structure, and modes of argumentation." (*Biblical Rhetoric*, p. 166.)

Note Intriguingly, Nephi, the writer of the first part of the Book of Mormon, mentions that he “was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father.” (1 Nephi 1:1) He goes on to mention that they were blessed by the Lord to take along with them the brass plates and Laban’s scribe Zoram. (1 Nephi 4) Nephi records that the brass plates contained “a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah . . . and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.” (1 Nephi 4:35-38; 5:10-16) Thus Nephi would have had access to teachers (his father and Zoram) and a text (the brass plates, which included the writings of Jeremiah) whereby he could gain the excellent training he needed to become a literary instrument in the hands of God. Even more intriguingly, Lundbom writes: “The term ‘new covenant’ occurs in Jeremiah 31:31, and only there in the Old Testament, denoting the basis on which a future relationship between God and his people will rest following the collapse of the Sinai (or Mosaic) covenant and Israel’s loss of nationhood in 587/6 BCE. This new relationship, which God himself will create, is anticipated in other terms by Jeremiah (24:7; 32:38-40; 50:5) and also by Ezekiel . . . Isaiah . . . and Malachi.” (Biblical Rhetoric, p. 303) Covenants and Christ are precisely the focus of all the Book of Mormon abridgers, starting with Nephi.*

Note In some well-researched and footnoted blogs (Monday, January 3, 17, 2011, “The Nephite-Kenite Hypothesis”) Joey Green gives multiple scholarly perspectives on the scribes that produced the literary texts in ancient times, especially the sacred biblical texts of Israel. He proposes the possibility (citing Book of Mormon scriptural references) that Lehi and Nephi might have had scribal training even before they left Jerusalem.*

Now let’s return to our discussion. As for the Greeks, the following are a few excerpts from a timeline developed by Gideon O Burton, Brigham Young University (“Silva Rhetoricae” [rhetoric.byu.edu]). They illustrate that the principles of rhetoric were known by the Greeks from ancient times.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Work</u>	<u>Time</u>
Plato	<u>Gorgias</u>	ca. 385 BCE
Aristotle	<u>Rhetoric</u>	ca. 332 BCE
Cicero	<u>De inventione</u>	ca. 87 BCE
Quintilian	<u>Institutio Oratoria</u>	95 CE
Augustine	<u>De doctrina christiana</u>	426 CE
Alcuin	<u>Disputatio</u>	ca. 802
Geoffrey of Vinsauf	<u>Poetria nova</u>	1210
Melanchthon	<u>Elements of Rhetoric</u>	1521
Angel Day	<u>The English Secretary</u>	1599

The Greeks had names for the various types of rhetorical devices, some of which apply to parallelism. For example, in an article titled “50 Rhetorical Devices for Rational Writing” by Mark Nichol (www.dailywritingtips.com/), we find a few of the Greek-related names for parallel devices:

Anaphora is the repetition of one or more words at the head of consecutive phrases or clauses, or sentences.

Antimetabole is the reversal of repeated words or phrases for effect.

Chiasmus is the reversal of grammatical order from one phrase to the next.

Epistrophe is the repetition of a word at the end of each phrase or clause.

Polysyndeton is the insertion of conjunctions before each word in a list.

(Sources: A Brief History to 1830)

Yet for centuries, these rhetorical devices seemed to be disconnected from the interpretation given in many instances of biblical verse by Bible scholars. One might ask, “Why?” The answer appears to be related to what came to be considered “poetry.”

Classic poetry is defined as a literary work in which special intensity is given to the expression of feelings and ideas by the use of distinctive style and emphasis (often associated with rhetorical figures of speech). Because it was thought that much of what was to be considered Hebrew poetry was designed to be chanted (and thus remembered or made part of sacred celebrations), Biblical “poetry” came to be solely defined by special emphasis on syllables (meter or cadence).

Meanwhile, there was debate on the extent to which parallelisms (and other related rhetorical devices dealing with similar or contrasting content) played a part in this “poetry.” In other words, there was a dichotomy (if not a paradox) of perspective. G. B. Gray writes that while the Rabbis were examining Scripture but not mentioning anything about parallelism, these same Jews were writing poems that were full of parallelistic forms. (*Forms of Hebrew Poetry*, p. 27)

James L. Kugel has written an excellent review of the evolution of thinking in regards to biblical “poetry” and parallelism (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History*, 1981), in which he explains this paradox. He writes that when the Jewish Rabbis were faced with a parallelistic sort of line (for example: “I will praise the Lord in my life / I will sing to my God while I live” - Psalm 146:2) they gave Part B a different meaning than Part A. According to Kugel, this manner of interpretation was “connected to the rabbinic conception of the Bible’s sanctity, and most notably to the principle of biblical ‘omniscificance.’” That is, “what the Rabbis looked for in the text was its highest reading.” “To say that this or that verse had been written for the purpose of parallelism ended discussion.” . . . “Every textual trait or peculiarity had to be examined as an individual case, in order to reveal what particular fine point of law or lore it was designed to communicate.” Thus, “under such circumstances, he who sought to explain line B’s resemblance to line A by so lame a principle as parallelism was little more than a fool.” Thus Kugel concluded: “This was, in our view, the most significant force behind the Jewish approach to parallelism until the late Middle Ages.” (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History*, pp. 97-109)

Kugel adds another perspective that complicates this paradox:

With the entrance of Hellenic political power into the territory of Israel, first under Alexander and then with successive regimes of Ptolemies and Seleucids, Greek culture began to penetrate every aspect of Jewish life. . . . Among the many new items Hellenization brought with it was its own peculiar concept – *poieisis*. What was this concept? The Greeks had used their meters for all sorts of compositions . . . (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry*, p. 127)

Kugel writes that “In Philo’s Alexandria, and even within Judea, the Greek norms of poetry were thus simply transposed onto Hebrew texts of suitable ‘genre’.” (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry* p. 129)

Note: First of all, Philo (25 BCE – c. 50 CE) was a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher who lived in Alexandria, in the Roman province of Egypt. He attempted to harmonize Greek philosophy with Jewish philosophy. Next, a “genre” is a type of literature characterized by a particular form, style, or content. In Biblical studies, genres were usually associated with whole books (with some scholars detecting numerous subgenres). The following basic Bible genres came to be “authoritatively” recognized:

Historical narrative: *Origins of the world and world view.*

The Law: *Laws by which God's people live.*

Wisdom: *Inspirational stories to live by.*

Psalms/Songs/Lamentations: *Lyrics (“poetry”) intended for communal worship.*

Prophecy: *Words of God spoken by his prophets.*

Apocalyptic: *Future crises couched in symbolism and mystery.*

Gospel: *The “good news” about Jesus.*

Epistle: *Letters about theological issues.*

The following books of the Bible were generally associated with the above genres:

Historical narrative: *Genesis, Exodus (1st half), Numbers, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Jonah, and possibly Acts.*

The Law: *Exodus (2nd half), Leviticus, Deuteronomy, also the Sermon on the Mount.*

Wisdom: *Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes.*

Psalms/Songs/Lamentations: *Psalms, Song of Solomon, Lamentations.*

Prophecy: *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.*

Apocalyptic: *Daniel, Revelation.*

Gospel: *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and possibly Acts*

Epistle: *Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, Jude*

(Sources: Wikipedia: “Biblical Genre”; An Introduction to Biblical Genres and Form Criticism,” by Felix Just. S. J., Ph.D. (catholic-resources.org/Bible/Genres.htm); J. Krejcir Ph.D, “What Are the Types of Literature Genres in the Bible?” *Into Thy Word Ministries* (intothyword.org), 2006.)

Unfortunately, according to Kugel, because of this overwhelming Greek influence, only what the Greeks thought was “poetic” was called poetry in the Bible; and in classic literary Greek, “poetry” needed to be “metrical,” so the genre of biblical “poetry” became limited. (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry*, p. 128, 129) Thus Kugel notes:

In his work, *The Contemplative Life*, Philo attributed hexameters, trimeters, and other Greek meters to Hebrew poetry. . . . Josephus, that other chief purveyor of the metrical hypothesis in Hebrew poetry to the Greek-speaking world, was somewhat more specific about the Bible: in three separate instances in the *Jewish Antiquities* he names the meter of biblical compositions. (Ibid., p. 140)

Philo's flawed idea of “metrical poetry” was carried on by Jerome (347 - 420 AD), an Italian theologian and historian. Jerome is best known for his translation of the Bible into Latin (known as the “Vulgate Bible”) and his Gospel commentaries. According to Kugel (p. 153-154), while Jerome might have entertained doubts about the presence of meter in the Bible, he acquiesced to previous authority. Kugel laments that this false authoritative ‘metrical poetry’ definition “remained unchallenged in Christian circles into the Renaissance.” (Ibid., p. 156)

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

Nils W. Lund (*Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 1942, p. 4-6) adds one more perspective. He writes:

The attitude of the fathers of the church seems to have been that the gospel had been victorious over paganism not because of any perfection in rhetorical form but because of its simplicity . . . Indeed, Origen (184-254 AD) had suggested that if Jesus had selected as his messengers men with rhetorical training, “the divinity of his doctrine would not have manifested itself.”

Augustine (354-430 AD), who for years had been a teacher of rhetoric, made some observations on the style of the Scriptures, and supplied several interesting examples from Paul with which to illustrate the rhetorical skill of the apostle, . . . yet the rhetorician and the churchman were obviously at conflict in Augustine. Though the rhetorical qualities of these passages did not fail to impress a man of his literary training, he felt himself unable to admit that Paul was indebted to the schools for his skill.

Nils Lund continues on this perspective of “simplicity”:

Two centuries later Pope Gregory the Great (540-604 AD) exclaimed: “I am strongly of the opinion, that it is an indignity that the words of the oracle of heaven should be restrained by the rules of Donatus.” [Aelius Donatus was a 4th century AD Roman grammarian and teacher of rhetoric.]

In reality, it would not be until the middle of the eighteenth century before the rhetorical perspective, the Rabbinical perspective, and the false authoritative “metered poetry” perspective would **begin** to be resolved with Robert Lowth’s treatment of parallelism in his *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (see the 1754 notation).

So now, very briefly, I would like to list some of the works by which the principle of parallelism and rhetorical figures of speech have expanded the view of scriptural “poetry,” not only to all parts of the Bible, but more especially to the Book of Mormon.

Ancient Hebrew Old Testament Manuscripts:

For the most part, the books of the Old Testament were originally written in Hebrew.

Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) ~200 BC

“The History of the Septuagint”

The word “Septuagint” is often used when referring to the Hebrew Bible, yet many people do not know what it refers to, or the very interesting story behind the text. Until about 200 BCE, the Hebrew Bible was only available in the original language in which it was written: Biblical Hebrew. After Alexander the Great died, his massive Greek Empire was split in two, and ultimately a ruler named Ptolemy II Philadelphus came to rule the southwestern portion of this empire, based in Egypt. Seeing the Hebrew Bible as a great philosophical and literary treasure, Ptolemy II Philadelphus decided that he wanted the entire Hebrew Bible to be translated into Greek to be placed in his library.

In order to accomplish his mission of translating the Bible from Ancient Hebrew into contemporary Greek, he picked 70 (some say 72) of the most renowned Jewish scholars. In fact,

the word “Septuagint” comes from the Latin word meaning “seventy.” He placed each scholar in a separate room on the Island of Pharos, and had them all translate the text. According to tradition, all of the scholars emerged with their completed translations on the same day and the translations were nearly identical, with just 13 differences between them all!

(Source: Biblical Hebrew: Unlock the Bible's Secrets." <http://www.bible-hebrew.com/>)

Whether the story is real or not, the Greek translation was subsequently put in circulation among the Alexandrian Jews who were fluent in Greek but not in Hebrew—Greek being the common language of Alexandria, Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean at the time.

Greek New Testament (~100 AD)

Books comprising the New Testament were also written in Greek. This probably happened in part because of the spread of Christianity around the Mediterranean Sea, but another reason had to do with the “scriptures” that were already established— the Greek Septuagint Old Testament. The Septuagint was the most quoted version of the Old Testament quoted in the New Testament.

Latin “Vulgate” Bible ~350 AD

Following the rise of the Roman Empire, Latin became the most popular language. In the middle of the fourth century A.D. the Latin “Vulgate” Bible was written—“Vulgate” meaning “for the people.”

Middle English “Wycliffe” Bible ~1350 AD

In the fourteenth century, and with the growing influence of England, a religious scholar by the name of John Wycliffe, of Oxford University, supervised the translation of the Vulgate Bible into Middle English. This was the first complete English translation of the Bible.

“Gutenberg” Bible ~1450 AD

The moveable-type printing press was perfected around the year 1450 in Germany. At this time, the first “printed” bible was produced.

“Tyndale” Bible ~1530 AD

Persecutions that came with the Protestant Reformation in England caused scholar William Tyndale to leave Cambridge University and move to Germany in 1524. There he worked with Gutenberg’s foreman to produce the first Protestant translation and the first Printed English Bible. Tyndale’s Bible is credited with being the first English translation to work directly from Hebrew and Greek texts. Furthermore, it was the first English biblical translation that was mass-produced as a result of new advances in the art of printing. Because of the use of this Bible, a number of words and phrases became popularized in the English language.

Tyndale writes:

The properties of the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin. The manner of speaking is both one, so that in a thousand places thou needst not but to translate it into English word for word, when thou must seek a compass in the Latin, and yet shalt have much work to translate it well-favorably. . . . (William Tyndale, “The Obedience of a Christian,” *The Works of Master William Tyndale*. London: John Daye, 1572, p. 102)

(Sources: A Brief History to 1830)

“Matthews” Bible

Despite the fact that William Tyndale was burned at the stake, the very next year the first English Bible was licensed by the government and printed in England. Significantly, it was two-thirds the work of Tyndale.

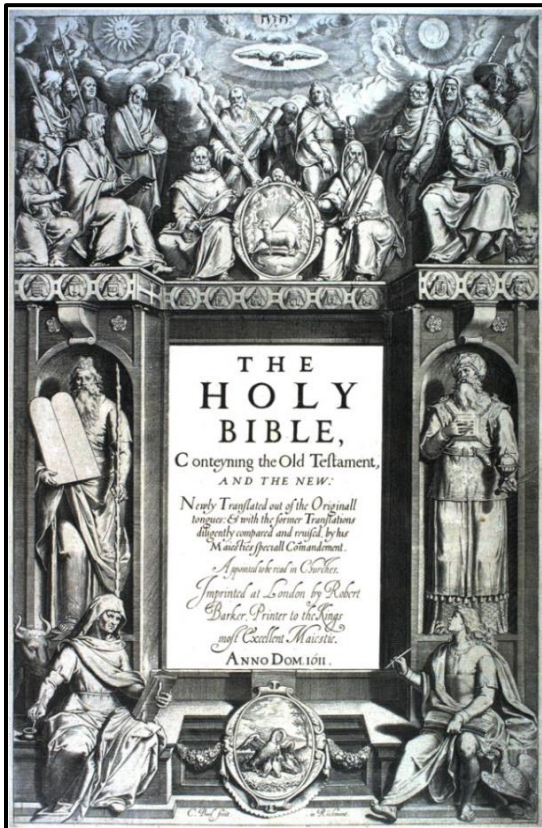
“Geneva” Bible 1560 AD

The Geneva Bible was the first complete Bible to be divided into verses. It was also the first to use italics for words not found in the original languages but necessary to the English language.

The “King James” Bible 1604—1611 AD

King James of Scotland ascended to the throne of England in 1603. On his trip to London, he was met by Puritans who complained about problems in previous translations of the Bible and suggested a review. Apparently influenced by their words, King James called for a special Church clerical conference the next year.

The translation was done by 47 scholars, all of whom were members of the Church of England. The New Testament was translated from Greek. The Old Testament was translated from Hebrew and Aramaic text. The result (referred to as the King James Version or “KJV”) was approved by the English Church authorities.



1611 King James Bible

imgarcade.com

Although extensively re-edited in 1769, the translation is widely considered one of the grand achievements in English literature. The phrasing is both beautiful and scholarly. It has become the standard version of scripture for English-speaking people and the most widely printed book in history.

In his book, *Defining the Word: Understanding the History and Language of the Bible*, (2006, p. 21,) John Tvedtnes writes that contrary to popular thinking, and significant to our discussion, the KJV was NOT written in the language of the time. The language was mostly taken from previous editions of the Bible. Upwards of eighty percent of the KJV comes from the Tyndale Bible language. This means that the language of the KJV was already eighty years old at the very least and probably a lot older than that by the time the KJV was published. Yet because of its popularity, the language of the KJV set the standard for what was considered to be the “language of the scriptures.”

Joseph Smith was brought up with the KJV Bible. According to John Tvedtnes, (*Defining the Word*, p. 22) it is possible that because the KJV Bible set the standard for scriptural structure and language, Joseph Smith was inspired and prompted by the Lord to use the KJV translation as part of his translation of the Book of Mormon. Whether anyone realized it at the time, the Lord could see that this language and structure would not only convey a familiar “sacred” tone, but would make it easier for readers to recognize when biblical books were being quoted, or to recognize when language similar to that of the biblical writers was used by the Book of Mormon record keepers.

To be sure, all these scriptural record keepers were themselves directed by the Lord Jesus Christ - Jehovah.

1625 Solomon Glassius, *Philogia Sacra*

Bullinger writes that Solomon Glassius, a converted Jew and a distinguished theologian in Germany, published in 1625 his important work *Philogia Sacra*, that included an important treatise on Sacred Rhetoric. According to Bullinger, this was by far the fullest account of Biblical Figures ever published, but it was written in Latin and was never translated into any other language. (Bullinger 1898/1968:viii)

1682 Benjamin Keach, *Tropologia; a key, to open Scripture metaphors, in four books. To which are prefixed arguments to prove the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures: Together with types of the Old Testament. London, England, 1682. Reprinted in 1779 and 1855.*

Benjamin Keach (1640 – 1704) was a Baptist preacher in London, England. In 1682, Benjamin Keach published his *Tropologia: a Key to open the Scripture metaphors . . . Together with types of the Old Testament*, which included much of Glassius’ work on Sacred Rhetoric with his own. Unfortunately, much of Keach’s work wasn’t taken seriously. Yet of his 43 works, this thousand-page work would be the best known.

After writing on the purpose of establishing the “Divine Authority” of the Bible, Keach begins Chapter 1 (or Part 1) with “Tropes and Figures.” Keach writes:

“Scripture Rhetoric, or Sacred Elocution, may be reduced to two principal heads or chapters. . . .

First, Tropes: which concern the sense of words . . .

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

Second, Figures . . . signifying the habit or ornament of speech. [They] do not alter or vary the sense of words, but embellish, beautify, or adorn them.”

Keach divides “Tropes” into four categories: Metonymy, Irony, Metaphor, Synecdoche. A few examples are given below:

METONYMY

“A sword is put for war or slaughter,” p. 6

“Gold and silver are put for things made of them,” p. 11

“The heart is put for wisdom,” p. 14

“Islands are put for inhabitants,” p. 15

“The name of God is put for God himself,” p. 28

IRONY

These are words used in a mocking attitude, where a word used previously is now used to mean something contrary.

METAPHOR

“Brass and iron denote hardness and solidarity,” p. 129

“Seed, of which a plant grows, metaphorically signifies the word of God,” p. 131

“Metaphors taken from the Olive Tree and its Fruit,” p. 135-136

“Metaphors from the Vine [Vineyard],” p. 136-138

SYNECDOCHE

“The whole is put for part, or part for the whole” p. 185

“The word all or every is put for the kinds of singulars” p. 185

“Time is put for part of time” – Solomon “of old” p. 187

In Chapter 2 Keach treats “Schemes and Figures” (p. 199). It is here where Keach touches on things that we might term **parallelistic**. He writes about the following:

“When the same word or sound is continued or repeated in the same sentence . . . Holy, Holy, Holy,” p. 200 [*Duplication*]

“Gradation, or a climbing by steps,” . . . when the last word of the former sentence is repeated in the beginning of the next,” p. 200 [*Climactic step parallelism*]

“Anaphora . . . to bring back or rehearse, is when the same word, or more, is repeated in the beginning of divers clauses or sentences”, p. 200 [*Like beginnings*]

“Epistrophe . . . when the same word or phrase is repeated in the end of divers sentences,” p. 200 [*Like endings*]

“When the same word or phrase both begins and ends a sentence,” p. 201 [*Inclusion*]

“Epanodos . . . turning back . . . is a figure when the same word is repeated in the beginning and middle, or in the middle and end, so as that there is an **inversion** of them.” p. 201 [*Simple chiasmatic or inversion parallelism*]

“When words of the same root . . . are used in a different termination,” p. 201 [*Cognates*]

“Antanaclassis . . . a figure when the word is repeated in a different, if not contrary signification” . . . “They are not all Israel which are of Israel,” p. 202-203 [*Word clashing*]

“Interrogation . . . asking a question,” p. 210 [*Questions*]

“Antithesis . . . when a thing is illustrated by its contrary opposite,” p. 215 [*Contrast*]

“Antimetabole . . . inversion . . . the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,” p. 215 [*Inversion with contrast*]

“Distribution is when the whole is largely expounded by a deduction from the parts,” p. 216 [*Distribution*]

“When things of several species are piled or huddled together,” p. 216 [*Enumeration*]

“Anabasis . . . when the speech ascends by degrees from the lowest to the highest,” p. 216 [*Upward Gradation*]

Parallels of testimony “He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows,” p. 218 [*Simple synonymous parallelism*]

[Note The fact that Keach addresses these figures of speech in the same Greek-derived terms as Bullinger, and that in 1898 Bullinger listed about 500 of these figures of speech by their Greek-derived names, makes me wonder just how many different figures of speech there were (beyond what he listed), that Keach was actually able to recognize in the Bible. Interestingly, Keach approached scriptural interpretation from a “Rhetorical” perspective, something that might not have resonated with scholars of “biblical poetry.”]*

On page 225 Keach discusses “Types and Parallels.” Keach gives multiple metaphorical types for God the Father, Christ, the Holy Ghost, the Word of God, etc. He also elaborates on them, citing and explaining scriptural references. A few examples are as follows:

GOD THE FATHER

“God a Father” p. 241

“God a Portion” p. 246

“God a Habitation” p. 250

JESUS THE CHRIST”

“Christ a Mediator” p. 314

“Christ a Surety” p. 318

“Christ a Bridegroom” p. 323

THE HOLY SPIRIT

“The Holy Ghost a Comforter” p. 492

“The Holy Spirit Compared to the Wind” p. 497

“The Holy Spirit Compared to the Oil of Gladness” p. 501

THE WORD OF GOD

“The Word of God Compared to Light” p. 526

“The Kisses of Christ’s Mouth” p. 567

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

"The Word of God Compared to a Net" p. 570

GRACES AND ORDINANCES

"The Girdle of Truth" p. 601

"The Breastplate of Righteousness" p. 605

"The Shield of Faith" p. 609

SIN AND THE DEVIL

"Sin a Thief" p. 894

"Sin a Debt" p. 897

"Sin a Heavy Burden" p. 905

"The Devil a Prince" p. 921

"The Devil a Hunter" p. 922

"The Devil a Fowler" p. 923

TYPES OF CHRIST

"Adam a Type of Christ" p. 972

"Noah a Type of Christ" p. 972

1705 Samuel Mather, *The Figures or Types of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed., 1705
Reprinted New York: Johnson Reprint Co., 1969.

1742 J. A. Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, Tuebingen: Williams and Norgate, 1742.
Republished in English in 1862.

According to Bullinger (1898), John Albert Bengel (1687-1752) was "the only commentator who has ever taken Figures of Language seriously into account as a key to the interpretation and elucidation of the Scriptures. This is what gives his commentary on the New Testament (which he calls *Gnomon*) such great value, and imparts such excellence to it, making it unique among commentaries." (Bullinger 1898/1968: viii) However, it was not translated from Latin into English until 1862.

John Welch writes:

Bengel is interesting because in 1742, he was perhaps the first to use the term chiasmus to describe the phenomenon in the Bible, yet his works had little influence on his contemporaries. . . . [He] mentions chiasmus in its glossary of literary devices found in the New Testament. Bengel includes 103 entries . . . the entry on chiasmus, being two and a half pages long, is one of the longest sections in his glossary. (John W. Welch, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?" *The FARMS Review* 15/1 (2003): 47-80, pp. 53-55)

1754 Robert Lowth, *Praelectiones Academicae de Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*. Oxford University, 1754.

Robert Lowth was born in Hampshire, Great Britain. In 1735, while still at Oxford, Lowth took orders in the Anglican Church and was appointed vicar of Ovington, Hampshire, a position he retained until 1741, when he was appointed Oxford Professor of Poetry. In 1754 he was awarded a Doctorate in Divinity by Oxford University, for his treatise on Hebrew poetry entitled *Praelectiones Academicae de Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum* (Academic Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews). This work was originally published in Latin. An English translation was published by George Gregory in 1787 as "Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews." Robert Lowth remained Bishop of Oxford until 1777 when he was appointed Bishop of London.

1769 Revised edition of the King James Version of the Bible.

In 1769, the Oxford University Press published a revised edited of the King James version in which a number of changes were made:

1. The type was changed from a formal “black letter” font to roman type. All the words of the translation which were originally supplied to make the sense clear were now put in italics.
2. A number of changes were made to the text (in addition to the obvious errors).
3. Spelling was modernized and standardized. (For example: &/and, borne/born, bin/been)
4. The use of capital letters was standardized.
5. Punctuation was reduced.
6. More marginal notes were added. Many of the references to the Apocrypha were deleted.

The editions of the King James version published in our century generally reproduce the Oxford edition of 1769 with or without the marginal notes. (Source: bible-researcher.com/canon10)

1783 Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 3 Volumes. Edinburgh, 1783.

After retiring from his position as Chair of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at the University of Edinburgh in 1783, Blair published his lectures. [These lectures] serve[d] as a practical guide for youth on composition and language, a guide that makes Blair the first great theorist of written discourse. . . . [Yet] one of Blair’s more radical ideas [was] the rejection of Aristotelian figures of speech such as tropes. . . . [Blair’s work] enjoyed tremendous success for nearly a century, as 130 editions were published in numerous European languages. [Wikipedia]

1787 Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, [*Praelectiones Academicæ de Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*], translated into English by George Gregory. 2 vols. London, England, 1787.
Reprinted in 1815.

An English translation of Robert Lowth’s book was published by George Gregory in 1787 as *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*. Lowth is given credit for being the first modern Bible scholar to notice or draw attention to the poetic structure of the Psalms and much of the prophetic literature of the Old Testament. In Lecture 19 he sets out the classic statement about parallelism as a key to understanding Hebrew poetry. He identifies three forms of parallelism: synonymous, antithetic and synthetic (i.e., a balance only in the manner of expression without either synonymy or antithesis). This statement has been influential in Old Testament Studies to the present day.

1806 John Quincy Adams becomes the first Boylston Professor of Rhetoric at Harvard.

1809 Samuel Knox, *A Compendious System of Rhetoric: Arranged in a Catechetical Format and Abstracted From Blair, Holmes, Stirling, &c. and the Best Authors on That Art*. Baltimore: Swain & Matchett, 1809.

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

In his 130-page book, written for the use of the students at Baltimore College, Principal Samuel Knox proposes and answers questions about Rhetoric and Language. He writes from page 31-130 about the various types of Figurative Language. After explaining each of 94 different types (most of which Greek names I was not acquainted with), he ends with a list from which I can cite only a few recognizable "Names." Furthermore, his "Meanings" seem overly brief and vague to me:

<u>Names</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
1. Metaphor	Translation
2. Metonymy	Changing of names
3. Synecdoche	Comprehension
6. Hyperbole	Excess
8. Allegory	Speaking otherwise
21. Anaphora	Rehearsal
22. Epistrophe	A turning to
24. Epanalepsis	Repetition
26. Epanados	A regression
28. Climax	A scale or ladder
41. Inversion	Inversion
94. Diaeresus	A division

On page 110 we find Knox's total comment on Epanados:

By *Epanados*, a sentence shifts its place,
Takes first and last, and also middle space.

Ex[ample].

Whether the worst, the child accurs'd, or else the
cruel mother?

The mother worst, the child accurst; as bad the one
as t'other:

1815 Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, [Praelectiones Academicae de Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum]. London, 1815.

There was a further edition of Lowth's *Lectures* issued in 1815. This was republished in North America in 1829 with some additional notes. However, the 1829 edition cites many of the scriptural passages and notes in Latin. Lowth seems to have been the first modern Bible scholar to notice or draw attention to the poetic structure of the Psalms and much of the prophetic literature of the Old Testament. Although the book contains thirty-four lectures by Lowth, perhaps the most important and most pertinent one is Lecture XIX [19].

The following is taken from an unabridged facsimile of the 1839 edition of Lowth's book, which was republished in 2005 by Adamant Media Corporation as part of their Elibron Classics series:

(p. 203) From the Jewish, the custom of singing in alternate chorus was transmitted to the Christian church, and was continued in the latter from the first ages: it was called “alternate or responsive.” (Plin. Lib. X. Epist. 97.—“They repeat alternate verses to Christ, as to a God.”)

(p. 204) [This alternation] pervaded the whole of the poetry of the Hebrews . . . among the Hebrews almost every poem possesses a sort of responsive form. . . . it prevailed no less in the Prophetic Poetry than in the Lyric and Didactic . . . [It is] evident from those very ancient specimens of poetical prophecy already quoted from the historical books.

(p. 205) The poetical conformation of the sentences which has been so often alluded to as characteristic of the Hebrew poetry, consists chiefly in a certain equality, resemblance, or parallelism, between the members of each period; so that in two lines, (or members of the same period,) thing for the most part shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a kind of rule or measure. This sometimes more accurate and manifest, sometimes more vague and obscure; it may, however on the whole, be said to consist of three species.

The first species is the **Synonymous parallelism**, when the same sentiment is repeated in different but equivalent terms. This is the most frequent of all, and is often conducted with the utmost accuracy and neatness: examples are very numerous . . .

(p. 210) The **Antithetic parallelism** is the next that I shall specify, when a thing is illustrated by its contrary being opposed to it. This is not confined to any particular form; for sentiments are opposed to sentiments, words to words, singulars to singulars, plurals to plurals, etc. . . .

(p. 211) There is a third species of parallelism, in which the sentences answer to each other not by the iteration of the same image or sentiment, or the opposition of their contraries, but merely by the form of construction. To this, which may be called the **Synthetic or Constructive Parallelism**, may be referred all such as do not come within the two former classes.

(p. 215) Nothing can be of greater avail to the proper understanding of any writer, than a previous acquaintance with both his general character, and the peculiarities of his style and manner of writing: let them recollect, that translators and commentators have fallen into errors, upon no account more frequently than for want of attention to this article; and indeed I scarcely know any subject which promises more copiously to reward the labour of such as are studious of sacred criticism, than this one in particular.

[Note* Lowth does not write about any of the rhetorical terms Keach used to identify the various forms of scriptural parallelism.]

1818 Thomas Hartwell Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*. 3 volumes. London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1818.
Reprint made in 2015 of the 1872 13th edition.

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

Thomas Horne was born in London. In his lifetime, he wrote more than forty works in Christian apologetics, Bible commentaries, and bibliographies. One of his best known works is the three-volume *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* that was published in 1818. This work enjoyed widespread circulation in Britain and North America and went through at least eleven editions during the nineteenth century. It was reissued in North America in 1970. (Wikipedia)

John Welch writes:

Horne's encyclopedic work covers a vast array of topics about the Bible, ranging from its history, culture, and contents to the original languages, manuscripts, editions, versions, variants, quotations, poetry, interpretation, metaphors, figurative language, typologies, morals, and inferential or practical readings. It contains a discussion of Hebrew poetry, based largely on the work of Lowth." An 1825 fourth edition would be printed in America and contain a discussion on chiasmus. He also produced a "Reader's Digest" version or "compendium" of the longer treatise. (John W. Welch, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?" *The FARMS Review* 15/1 (2003): 47-80, pp. 63-68)

1820 John Jebb, *Sacred Literature*. London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820.
Reprinted in 1828.

John Jebb was born in Ireland. He was educated at Trinity College Dublin, where he became a lifelong friend of theologian Alexander Knox. He was ordained in 1799, and rose through the ranks to become Bishop of Limerick.

The following excerpts are taken from a recent historical reproduction of the 1828 edition of *Sacred Literature*, published by Bibliolife, LLC of Charleston, South Carolina. The book is divided into 24 sections, of which I will quote some of the most pertinent of John Jebb's comments.

(Section 1, p. 1) It is the design of the following pages, to prove by examples, that the structure of clauses, sentences, and periods, in the New Testament, is frequently regulated after the model afforded in the poetical parts of the Old . . .

(Section 1, p. 5) Having thus briefly stated what the distinguishing characteristic of Hebrew poetry **is not**, it remains, that, with still greater brevity for the present, I should endeavor to state what it is. In one word, then, **it is** what Bishop Lowth entitles PARALLELISM; that is, "a certain equality, resemblance, or relationship, between the members of each period; so that, in one or more lines or members of the same period, things shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other, by a kind of rule or measure."

(Section 2, p. 23-27) I now proceed to illustrate more particularly the poetical parallelism; which I shall do in the words, and chiefly by the examples of Bishop Lowth; derived from his

Nineteenth Praelection [19th Lecture]. . . [Jebb then recapitulates and quotes what Lowth said]

(Section 4, p. 53) It is the object of the present section to produce, and sometimes to observe upon, certain varieties in the poetical parallelism, unnoticed as such by Bishop Lowth, or by subsequent writers on the subject.

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** . . . [Scriptural examples are given]

(Section 4, p. 65) The figure of speech, for such it may be called, the grounds and reasons of which I have here attempted to explain, has not been unnoticed by commentators and critics; several, indeed, have observed the phenomenon; but not one, that I am aware of, has hitherto explored the rationale of it. Some are disposed to maintain that it is purely classical; and it does sometimes occur in Greek and Latin authors; but it is so prevalent, and so peculiarly marked, in the Sacred Volume, that it may be justly accounted a Hebraism; and, as I am disposed to believe, a feature of Hebrew poetry. Rhetoricians have given it various names; for example, . . .

chiasmus, synchysis, epanodos; the last is its most frequent appellation.

(Section 5, p. 75, 77, 79) Again, it is to be observed, that, with the exception of a few partial failures, the character and complexion of Hebrew poetry have been very competently preserved in that body of Greek translations, composed at different times, by different persons, and known under the name of the Septuagint Version. Nor should it be omitted, that the Hebraic parallelism occurs also, with much variety, in the Apocrypha . . . And on this ground alone, we may reasonably conclude, that a manner largely prevalent in the Old Testament, cannot be relinquished in the New. . . . It is not easy to imagine a particular, in which our blessed Lord could have more safely become, like his great follower, to the Jews a Jew, than in the adoption of a manner, at once familiar to their understanding, agreeable to their taste, and consecrated, by a thousand associations, with their best and happiest religious feelings. . . . [Scriptural examples are given]

[Note* Here it seems that Jebb is struggling to admit that the study of Biblical rhetoric has merit.]

[Note: According to John W. Welch, Jebb's book was reviewed for British readers in December of 1820 and January of 1821. (See *British Critic* 14 (December 1820): 580-96; 15 (January 1821): 1-22 as quoted in John W. Welch, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?" *The FARMS Review* 15/1 (2003): 47-80)]

1824 Thomas Boys, *Tactica Sacra: An Attempt To Develope, And To Exhibit To The Eye By Tabular Arrangements, A General Rule Of Composition Prevailing In The Holy Scriptures, Volume 1*. London: Hamilton, 1824.
Digitized and Reprinted in 2010

John Welch writes:

Soon after Jebb published *Sacred Literature*, the Reverend Thomas Boys (M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, and Curate of Widford, Hertfordshire) pushed the theory of "mutual correspondence in the members of sentences," as he termed parallelism, even further. . . . Boys openly acknowledged his indebtedness to Jebb, considering it "satisfactorily proved [by Jebb], that the rule of composition, recognized as prevailing in the Old Testament, prevails also in the New."⁴⁹ He also displayed Jebb's six basic Old Testament examples of introverted parallelism, followed by twenty-nine New Testament examples that Boys himself had noticed.⁵⁰

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

In two separate volumes,⁵¹ Boys discussed and demonstrated the principles of correspondence, his appellation for the notions of parallelism. He sought to apply these principles to longer, complete prosaic compositions or books within the Bible, not just individual verses or short passages.

Not widely circulated,⁵² Boys's first volume, *Tactica Sacra*, consists mainly of hard-to-follow tabular arrangements—complete with parallel-columned Greek and English texts—of the epistles of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 2 Peter, and Philemon.

NOTES

49. Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, advertisement before p. 1.

50. *Ibid.*, 3-7.

51. Boys, *Tactica Sacra* and *Key to the Book of Psalms*.

52. BYU's Interlibrary Loan office was unable to locate either of these books in any library in the United States at the time I wrote my thesis. I first saw these volumes in the Bodleian Library when I was studying at Oxford in 1970-72. I am aware of no evidence that these books or any knowledge of them reached America before 1829, although in theory that is possible. Recently one of my assistants found that Harvard's Hollis Library holds *Key to the Book of Psalms* (no acquisition date available) but has no copy of *Tactica Sacra*, "which seems to be entirely unknown in America," according to Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 38.

(John W. Welch, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?," *FARMS Review* 15/1 (2003): 47-80, pp. 61-62)

Thomas Boys was born at Sandwich, Kent England in 1792. He attended Trinity College in Cambridge, receiving a degree in 1813. In 1816 he was ordained a deacon. He received a Masters degree from Trinity College in 1817. In 1822 he was ordained a Priest.

Thomas Boys established a reputation as a Hebrew scholar and was an avid writer. In 1824 he published his *Tactica Sacra*, detailing his ideas about the parallelistic format of the scriptures. In 1825 he published a *Key to the Psalms*. In 1827 he wrote *A Plain Exposition of the New Testament*.

In *Tactica Sacra* he writes the following:

[Part I. Introduction]

Plans [literary structures] without number of the various books both of the Old and New Testament are already before the public. Had they seemed to answer the purpose of developing any thing like regularity in the Sacred Writings, it is possible that the present work would never have appeared. . . (p. 1)

My principal object, in the present work, is to show that there prevails in the Scriptures a mode of general arrangement . . . (p. 1)

A friend put into my hands that interesting and learned work, "Sacred Literature," I was then but little acquainted with Bishop Lowth; and it is to "Sacred Literature" that I stand indebted for some of my first lights on the subject upon which I am now writing. Those principles which previous writers on parallelism have applied to short passages, are applied by me to long ones;

and I arrange chapter and whole epistles as they arrange verses. . . . what I have to offer is, in some measure, an extension of the principles of parallelism already before the public. (p. 1)

The following are the words of Bishop Jebb, who refers to Bishop Lowth:--

“In one word, then, it is what Bishop Lowth entitles Parallelism; that is, a certain equality, resemblance, or relationship, between the members of each period; so that, in one or more lines or members of the same period, things shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a kind of rule or measure.” (*Sacred Literature*, page 5) . . . (p 2)

Thomas Boys then gives a number of examples of simple parallelism, one such being:

- a. Seek ye Jehovah, while he may be found;
- a. Call upon him, while he is near. (Isaiah lv. 6.) . . . (p. 2)

Boys writes:

An account is given in “Sacred Literature” of another kind of parallelism, differing somewhat from the last. “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:-- (p. 3)

Boys then gives a number of examples, a couple of them are as follows:

- a. Make the heart of this people fat,
 - b. And make their ears heavy,
 - c. And shut their eyes;
 - c. Lest they see with their eyes,
 - b. And hear with their ears,
- a. And understand with their heart. (Isaiah vi, 10.) . . . (p. 3)

- a. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.
 - b. And immediately the man was made whole,
 - c. And took up his bed, and walked.
 - d. And on the same day was the Sabbath.
 - d. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day.
 - c. It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.
 - b. He answered them, He that made me whole,
- a. The same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. (John v, 8-11.) . . . (p. 7)

Thomas Boys then writes:

These examples I have given from the New Testament, in order to show that the introverted form of composition was familiar to those who wrote that part of the Sacred Volume. We find it

(Sources: *A Brief History to 1830*)

used by them, not only in doctrine and discussion, but in narration and dialogue; not only where we might expect to meet with something like stanzas, in imitation of the prophets of the Old Testament; but where poetry, according to our ideas of it, is out of the question.

Indeed parallelism appears in parts of the Old Testament that are strictly historical, as well as those that are regarded as poetical. So, that I entertain doubts whether parallelism can be properly called the essential feature of the Hebrew poetry, seeing that it is to be found in those parts of the Bible which all agree to regard as prose. . . . (p. 8)

And now, as to what distinguishes the present publication from others, it is this: that I propose, in the body of the work, to reduce whole Epistles to the form of single parallelisms. . . . to bring out the Epistle in the simple form of one introverted parallelism . . . [they] are arranged by me as introverted parallelism of four, six, four, and eighteen members, respectively. . . . (p. 8-9)

In offering an analysis of an Epistle, I call it a parallelism of so many members; say, an introverted parallelism of eight members, A., B., C. D., D., C., B., A.—In order to prove, then, that this representation is correct, I arrange the Epistle in the following form:

A.
 B.
 C.
 D.
 D.
 C.
 B.
 A. (p. 10)

In shorter parallelisms, the words or phrases answering to one another, have generally been called parallel terms. Thus, in the example already given,

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior:

“My soul” and “My spirit” are parallel terms; so are “Doth magnify” and “Hath rejoiced;” as also “The Lord” and “God my Saviour.” Sometimes the correspondence appears in the form of a strongly marked antithesis; as in the following example:--

A wise son rejoiceth his father,
But a foolish son is the grief of his mother. (Proverbs x. 1.)

Here “Every word hath its opposite: for the terms *father* and *mother* are as the logicians say, relatively opposite.” (Bishop Lowth on Isaiah, paged xxiv.)

The appellation “parallel terms,” I have not adopted: because, though it may apply very well in the case of shorter parallelisms, it seems to intimate a closer resemblance than we sometimes find in corresponding expressions used in corresponding members of such parallelisms as we are

now considering. As a general appellation, *corresponding terms* is that which I prefer. It serves to include every case of mutual reference, whether that of affinity or that of contrast. . . . (p. 11)

When a case occurs in which the correspondence is very close, the same words or nearly the same, being repeated, I call it a verbal correspondence. . . . (p. 11)

Correspondence lies sometimes in affinity, sometimes in antithesis, sometimes in words, sometimes in ideas, sometimes in construction. . . . (p. 12)

[Note In presenting his ideas on the various Epistles, Thomas Boys writes in divided columns. Where the correspondence (or parallelism) is simple, he writes in continuous columns. But when he writes of inverted parallelisms, he uses parallel columns with corresponding elements. He will have a two column page in Greek, and then a corresponding two-column page in English.]*

On page 21, after a number of pages of discussion and illustration, Boys writes:

The following is a skeleton of the Epistle [2 Thessalonians], in conformity with the arrangement given at length at pages I, ii, in Part the Second.

- A. i. 1, 2 Epistolary.
- B. a. i, 3-10. Thanksgiving.
 - b. i, 11, 12. Prayer.
 - c. ii, 1-12. Admonition.
- B' a. ii, 13-15. Thanksgiving.
 - b. ii, 16,--iii,5. Prayer.
 - c. iii, 6-15. Admonition.
- A' iii, 16-18. Epistolary. (p. 21)

On page 37, after a number of pages of discussion and illustration, Boys writes:

The plan [for 2 Peter] may be exhibited in the following manner:

- A. i. 1-4. Epistolary.
- B. i. 5-11. Exhortations.
 - C. a. i. 12-15, St. Peter.
 - b. i. 15-21. Apostles and Prophets.
 - c. ii. 1-22. The wicked, &c.
 - C' a. iii. 1. St. Peter.
 - b. iii. 2. Prophets and Apostles
 - c. iii. 3-13. The wicked, &c.
- B' iii. 14-18—, Exhortation.
- A' iii. 18. Epistolary. (p. 37)

On page 57, after discussion and illustration, Boys writes the following:

The form of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians may be thus displayed.

- A. i. 1. Epistolary.
- B. i. 2—iii. 13. Alternate parallelism of four members, followed by prayer
- B' iv. 1—v. 25. Introverted parallelism of four members, followed by prayer.
- A' v. 26-28. Epistolary. (p. 57)

(Sources: A Brief History to 1830)

On page 67, after discussion and illustration, Boys writes the following:

In the Epistle to Philemon we have a very remarkable specimen of the introverted parallelism. Its general character maybe thus exhibited:

- A. 1-3. Epistolary.
- B. 4-7. Prayers of St. Paul for Philemon. –Philemon’s hospitality.
- C. 8. Authority.
- D. 9, 10-- Supplication.
- E. –10. Onesimus a convert of St. Paul’s.
- F. 11, 12--. Wrong done by Onesimus, amends made by St. Paul.
- G. –12. To receive Onesimus the same as receiving Paul.
- H. 13, 14. Paul, Philemon.
- I. 15. Onesimus.
- I. 16-- Onesimus.
- H. –16. Paul, Philemon.
- G. 17. To receive Onesimus the same as receiving Paul.
- F. 18, 19--. Wrong done by Onesimus, amends made by St. Paul.
- E. –19. Philemon a convert of St. Paul’s.
- D. 20. Supplication.
- C. 21. Authority.
- B. 22. Philemon’s hospitality. Prayers of Philemon for St. Paul.
- A. 23-25. Epistolary. (p. 67)

Thomas Boys summarizes:

CONCLUSION

Some of the preceding arguments may be thought by the reader to have little force, and some of the observations to be irrelevant. If this be so I can but express a hope that after he has stripped away all that is unsatisfactory or inconclusive, the facts which remain will be found sufficient to establish that which I am endeavouring to prove: namely, that there does prevail in the Epistles brought forward as specimens, such a mode of general arrangement as I allege. . . . (p. 69)

Some again will say that more of the results of parallelism should have been given: more instances where parallelism illustrates the sense, fixes doubtful meanings, decides controverted points. Many such instances I am prepared to give. I apprehend however that in offering them in the first instance, I should be going off my ground. The first object is to establish the fact: to prove the prevalence in the Sacred Writings of this larger kind of parallelism which includes passages of considerable length and whole Epistles. Then come the minor parallelisms, which form the members of the larger. And lastly come the results and inferences, the facts being previously established. When I consider the importance of these results, thought and language fail me. I will only mention one: an entirely new and independent series of testimonies upon that all-important subject, the proper Deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: who with

ineffable glory unites in his person the two-fold name, Son of God and Son of man. As often as we repeat the word parallelism, we toll the knell of infidelity. At the very sound of parallelism, let the host of the Philistines tremble in their tents. Parallelism opens upon them from an unobserved and inaccessible eminence, that commands and rakes their whole position.

I know there are persons who will be disposed to regard the sort of discussions which the present work contains as uninteresting and unprofitable. They want something that will excite devotional feeling; and unless they can have this, they think their souls cannot receive benefit. I wish to speak of such sentiments with respect, for they do not entirely differ from my own. . . . (p. 69)

You delight in your Bible. You find nothing so edifying as the reading of that Sacred Book. Give me leave to ask then, when your Bible is before you, do you always know what you are reading about? I venture to answer, NO. You understand single verses and sentences; or can make out their meaning by the help of commentators. But of the general bearing and tendency of what you are reading, the topics which the Sacred Writer means to urge, the drift of the passage, in a word, what it is about, of this you are often ignorant. It is the object, then, of parallelism to show you this. Hitherto you have travelled on, like a man making his way through a thicket: arrested perhaps occasionally by a flower growing at your feet; but utterly ignorant of the general character of the country through which you are passing. But parallelism takes you up; first sets you on an eminence and gives you a bird's-eye view of all the adjacent country; and then carries you through it by an open path. . . . (p. 70)

This investigation I know and am certain is of the first importance to all who read their Bibles, to the whole church of Christ. . . . (p. 70)

I have never before derived so much solid benefit and satisfaction from the Scriptures as I now desire. I have never before found them as profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. . . . (p. 70)

At the same time it will be asked, and I have no objection to answer the question how far I have carried my inquiries, what portion of the bible I have examined, and how much of it I have reduced to parallelism. My answer is, I have not yet reduced any considerable portion of the Bible to the form of parallelism, much less the whole of it. Yet to confess the truth, I hope some day to see it done. The work however is slow, and requires much time or many hands to complete it. . . . I have however the whole of St. Paul's Epistles, except two, arranged entirely or in part. I have made considerable progress with the other Epistles: and some progress with other parts of the Scriptures. Though I have not yet carried a regular examination through the Bible, yet I have gone through the Old Testament as often as three or four times, and the New Testament as often as five or six times, with a constant reference to the subject of parallelism. And I have seen enough to convince me that parallelism prevails throughout: and constitutes, in fact, the biblical rule and method of regular composition. In the case, more particularly, of a construction so elaborate as that of the introverted parallelism, if we met with only a single instance we should feel inclined to call it the fruit of design. But I meet with instances, and that

(Sources: A Brief History to 1830)

on a cursory perusal, in every book and almost every chapter of the Bible. What can this be then but a prevailing rule of composition: especially if the closer I look, the more examples I find? (p. 70-71)

It may be asked, perhaps, What are the advantages of parallelism? What end is gained by making parallelism the prevailing rule of composition in the Bible? The advantages I answer are various. As a general observation it may be premised, that one great object of the alternate parallelism seems to be order; one great object of the introverted parallelism, energy or emphasis. . . . (p. 71)

If, instead of dividing parallelisms into alternate or continuous, and introverted, we choose to divide them into greater and smaller, according to the length of the passage which they include, we shall find that each of these kinds has its peculiar advantage—In the case of the smaller parallelisms, where there is any thing doubtful in a member, it may often be determined by something in that which corresponds to it. Thus when the parallelisms of the Bible have been properly investigated, and their nature and extent have been ascertained with some degree of precision, they will be found of incalculable service in recovering what is lost, in expelling what is superfluous, and in elucidating what is dark, in detecting what is hidden, in restoring what is perverted. If we have a new version of the Bible, it certainly ought not to be taken in hand till the subject of parallelism has been thoroughly sifted and settled. . . . (p. 71-72)

To conclude. Perhaps the best way of stating the principle of parallelism is this. So far as parallelism prevails in a book, every thing is double. Ideas are taken up twice over. The leading topic of a passage re-appears in another passage: with so much of variation, that there is no tautology; yet with so much of correspondence, that the mutual reference is unquestionable. Thus, whether the parallelism be a verse or two, or a whole epistle, it may always be reduced to the simple form of two passages parallel to one another. . . . (p. 72)

[Note Tautology is “the saying of the same thing twice in different words.”]*

Whatever be the length or form of the parallelism, its principle is that of repetition: or rather that of resumption: for repetition seems to imply tautology. . . . (p. 73)

If then it be asked what degree of benefit we are to expect from the study of parallelism, I answer that in the infancy of the subject it is impossible to say. . . . (p. 73)

Critical studies [of parallelism] will not lead us, as too often, to contempt of the Sacred Text, but to far stricter and juster views of its particular inspiration than are now commonly entertained or even tolerated. . . . **the study of parallelism will be acknowledged the best study of the Bible.** (p. 73)

[Note: According to John W. Welch, Thomas Boys’ Tactica Sacra would be reviewed in 1824 by two British journals. (See British Review 22 (August 1824): 176-85; and Eclectic Review 22 (1824): 359-66; as quoted

in John W. Welch, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?" *FARMS Review* 15/1 (2003): 47-80, pp. 70-71.)

- 1825** Thomas Boys, *Key to the Book of Psalms*. London: L. B. Seeley, 1825.
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John Welch writes:

Boys's second volume was entitled *A Key to the Book of Psalms*. Chapter 1 comprises a large portion of the book and deals with alternate parallelisms, although it also offers numerous examples of a-b-b-a and more complicated introverted arrangements in its lengthy introduction. Chapter 2 gives copious examples, including the Hebrew text, of short a-b-b-a word patterns in the psalms while suggesting a few larger patterns (usually involving large blocks of undifferentiated and unbalanced text). . . . The 1825 volume discussed only sixteen psalms.

(John W. Welch, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?," *FARMS Review* 15/1 (2003): 47-80, pp. 62-63)

- 1828** Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language: . . . By Noah Webster, LL.D. In Two Volumes . . .* New York: Published by S. Converse. Printed by Hezekiah Howe – New Haven, 1828.
- 1829** Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, [Praelectiones Academicae de Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum]. Translated by G. Gregory, new edition with notes by Calvin E. Stowe. Andover, Mass, 1829.