

Additional Notes on Line Forms and Word Forms

Additional Notes on Hebrew-like Word Forms

The following are some additional notes on Hebrew-like Word Forms.

A. WORD FORMS

(#18) **The use of a verb and a noun that derive from the same root:**

According to Donald Parry, the following are additional examples in the Hebrew text that have not been translated into the English text:

King James Version

Literal Rendering from the Hebrew Bible

Let the earth bring forth grass
when I bring a cloud
fell a lusting
swear an oath
It shall blossom abundantly
O Lord . . . cast forth lightning

Let the earth grass grass (Genesis 1:11)
I will cloud a cloud (Genesis 9:14)
desired a desire (Numbers 11:4)
swear a swearing (Numbers 30:2)
it will blossom blossoming (Isaiah 35:2)
O Lord . . . lightning a lightning (Psalm 144:5-6)

(Donald W. Parry, *Preserved in Translation: Hebrew and Other Ancient Literary Forms in the Book of Mormon*, 2020, p. 106.)

(#41) **The use of “and” as parentheses markers:**

According to David E. Bokovoy and John A. Tvedtnes, “since biblical Hebrew does not rely upon punctuation, the conjunction serves as a marker of parenthesis.” That is, “the words that would traditionally appear inside parentheses in English are preceded by the letter waw [“and,” “now,” “for,” “that,” “then,” etc.] in Hebrew. At the conclusion of this marker, the subsequent phrase is then introduced by the same conjunction.

In 1 Nephi 10:17, I have inserted modern parenthesis markers in orange font to highlight this word form. Notice also that by reinstating the phrase “And it came to pass,” which was taken out in the editing of the 1837 edition, the Hebrew word form is restored intact. (Testaments: Links between the Book of Mormon and the Hebrew Bible, 2003, p. 222-223)

Note* I have made a “rough” search of the 1920 edition of the Book of Mormon, and while the placing of parentheses was at the discretion of the printer in 1830, I have not compared the two texts.

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Nevertheless, this is what I found (I will use an asterisk if the parenthesis possibly fits what is described above):

1 Nephi Preface
1 Nephi 1:4
Mosiah 18:8*
Alma 8:17
Alma 14:23*
Alma 16:5*
Alma 19:37
Alma 24:11
Alma 30:2
Alma 34:29
Alma 37:16
Alma 42:11
Alma 46:13*
Alma 50:30
Alma 50:35
Alma 52:12
Alma 56:10
Helaman 1:4
Helaman 3:8
3 Nephi 3:19
3 Nephi 5:20*
3 Nephi 11:18*
3 Nephi 12:1*
4 Nephi 1:19
4 Nephi 1:21*
4 Nephi 1:37
4 Nephi 1:47
Mormon 1:5
Mormon 6:11
Ether 3:1
Ether 10:9
Moroni 3:3
Moroni 9:12*

I need to evaluate this further. I have not searched beyond the parentheses in the 1920

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or **whether** they [their works]
 were **bad**
 to **reap** _____ **eternal happiness**
 or [to **reap**] _____ **eternal misery**

Alma 4:19

and that he [Alma] to **stir them up**
 in **remembrance** of their **duty**
 might **pull down**

Alma 5:15

Do you look **forward** with an **eye of faith**
and view this **mortal body** **raised in immortality**
and [view] this **corruption** **raised in incorruption**
 to **stand** before **God**
 to be **judged**

Alma 5:40-41

I [Alma] say unto you

[A] that **whatsoever** is **good**
 [B] **cometh** from **God**
 [A'] and **whatsoever** is **evil**
 [B'] **cometh** from the **Devil**

Therefore

[A] **If** a man **bringeth forth** **good works**
 [B] [then] he **hearkeneth**
 unto the **voice**
 of **The Good Shepherd**
 [C] and he doth **follow** **Him**

[A'] but **whosoever** **bringeth forth** **evil works**
 [B'] **the same** **becometh** a **child**
 of the **Devil**

[C'] for he **hearkeneth**
 unto his **voice**
 and [he] doth **follow** **him**

Alma 7:6 I [Alma] trust
 that you do NOT worship **idols**
 but that ye do worship **The True**
 and **the Living God**

Alma 7:10-11 and [who shall] bring forth a son
 yea even the Son of God
 And He [the Lord]
 shall go forth

Alma 7:20 NEITHER hath He a shadow of turning
 from the right
 to the left
 or from
 that which is right
 to
 that which is wrong

Alma 7:22 that ye may walk **blameless**
before **Him**
 that ye may walk
after the **Holy Order**
 of **God**

Alma 9:28 if they have been righteous
 [then] they shall reap the salvation
 of their souls
 according to the power
 [and [the] deliverance
 of Jesus Christ
 and if they have been evil
 [then] they shall reap the damnation
 of their souls
 according to the power
 and [the] captivation
 of the Devil

Alma 13:10 [A] they choosing to repent
 [B] and [to] work righteousness
 rather than
 [A] [they choosing to] [NOT repent
 [B] and] to perish

(#20) Chiasmus (Extended Inverted Parallelism):

In 2020, in a well-written historical review of the criteria or standards that scriptural scholars have used to judge the merits of chiastic proposals, and after listing many of those criteria as they have been proposed over time by their various authors, including LDS scholar John W. Welch, Neal Rappleye summarizes and reduces the associated problems along with his solution as follows:

Clearly, there are a number of challenges within chiastic studies and the discussion about how to identify chiasms continues. But pointing out the many different lists of criteria floating around overstates the level of disarray and confusion. Even though there is no universally accepted set of criteria, several common threads run throughout the various proposals. Based on my survey of the literature, I have identified some of the most widely agreed upon criteria (shown in Table 11):

Table 11: Six Commonly Agreed on Criteria for Evaluating and Analyzing Chiasms

1. Chiasms should conform to natural literary boundaries.
2. A climax or turning point should be found at the center.
3. Chiasms should display a relatively well-balanced symmetry.
4. The structure should be based on major keywords, phrases, or themes.
5. Chiasms should manifest little, if any, extraneous repetition or divergent materials.
6. The chiastic order should typically not compete with other strong literary forms.

Does this list represent the very best set of criteria? Perhaps not. It does, however, represent the ideas that have proven to have broad utility in the eyes of several different analysts. As one set of criteria after another gets critically examined and replaced, these six criteria persist again and again in the literature, and some weight stands behind each of these criteria. . . .

It would seem that anything which accurately describes chiasmus can help to accurately prescribe chiasmus. But the catch is “accurately”—and this is where a deeper problem surfaces. In order to identify chiasms you have to know what a valid chiasm is. You can only know what a valid chiasm is, however, if you have identified valid chiasms to study. But you cannot identify valid chiasms without already knowing what a valid chiasm is and what it looks like. A certain amount of circularity exists in this process. . . .

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Generally, the desire for rigorous methods of identifying chiasms must be tempered with the reality that artistic expression is rarely confined to the rules outsiders wish to impose on it. How to be rigorous in identifying chiasms while allowing ancient authors the flexibility to use this literary form as they saw fit will no doubt remain a subject of continued discussion and debate as this tool of literary criticism continues to be refined and moves forward.

(Neal Rappleye, "Chiasmus Criteria in Review," in *Chiasmus: The State of the Art, 2020*, p. 289-309.)]

A Note About the Future:

As far as the future study of artistic “figures” in the text of the Book of Mormon is concerned, I will offer you a few thoughts penned over a century ago by E. W. Bullinger, and hopefully, we can liken them to ourselves at this point in time:

Jehovah has been pleased to give us the revelation of His mind and will in words. It is absolutely necessary that we should understand not merely the meanings of the words themselves, but also the laws which govern their usage and combinations. [p. v-vi]

The Word of God may, in one respect, be compared to the earth. All things necessary to life and sustenance may be obtained by scratching the surface of the earth: but there are treasures of beauty and wealth to be obtained by digging deeper into it. So it is with the Bible [and the Book of Mormon]. [p. xii]

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. [v-vi]

Man’s words are scarcely worthy of such study. Man uses figures, but often at random and often in ignorance or in error. But “the words of the Lord are pure words.” All His works are perfect, and when the Holy Spirit takes up and uses human words, He does so, we may be sure, with . . . infinite wisdom, and perfect beauty. We may well, therefore, give all our attention to “the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” [p. xvi]

(E[benezer] W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated*.
Originally published in 1898 by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, in London.
Reprinted in 1968 by Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.)

Although my “structuring” of the text of the Book of Mormon might seem overwhelming to some, I have only “scratched the surface.” Bullinger described and referenced hundreds of “figures.” He also testified that “no branch of [Scripture] study can be more important, or offer greater promise of substantial reward.” (p. vi) Yet the scope of this type of study goes beyond the reaches of any one man. It should beckon to all of us. **Thus, the challenge is laid before you.**

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