



Pattern Analysis Summary

An Innovative Approach to Literary Structures

A Structural-Rhetorical Methodology for Pericopes

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<https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/pattern-analysis-summary.pdf>

Note: This PDF works best when downloaded and opened with Adobe Acrobat

Abstract

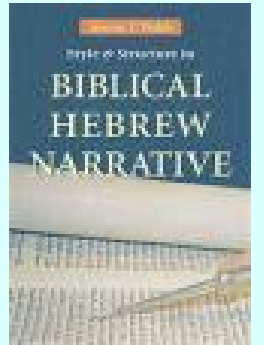
The study of [literary structures](#) in the Bible has been developing over several hundred years. Pattern Analysis is an innovative approach to literary structures that expands commonly held practices. The hope is for Bible students to someday prepare their own analyses and discern the Holy Spirit's emphases in each literary unit. Computer software – currently in prototype form on a laptop – organizes and presents each analysis. The methodology, based on 65% of the Bible or 20,000 verses, is consistent across all genres.

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Research Approach

The inspiration for this research project began with Jerome Walsh's *Style and Structure in the Biblical Hebrew Narrative* (2001). In applying his methodology to the entire Bible, it became necessary to somewhat modify the literary structure and rhetorical methodologies. Many of his techniques, such as forward symmetry and asymmetry, are well-founded. Pattern Analysis adds new techniques and presents computer software that aid the analyses.



Classical Approach to Chiasms

- A** I will not fail you or forsake you. (v5C)
- B** Be strong and courageous, be strong and very courageous (v6,7A)
- C** Be careful to obey all the law, so you have success (v7B)
- D** This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, (v8A)
- D'** You shall meditate on it day and night, (v8B)
- C'** Be careful to obey the law, so you will prosper and have success (v8C)
- B'** Be strong and courageous, do not tremble or be dismayed (v9A)
- A'** For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. (v9B)

Joshua 1:5-9, NASB 95

Some Problems with the Classical Approach

- Many chiasms are forced, not considering other literary devices
- The classical approach does not normally cover the entire pericope
- Too often the reason two elements are paired together is not apparent
- Portions of the text may have been altered, skipped, or relocated
- Many chiasms address micro-structures or entire books, not pericopes
- Some structures are nearly chiastic but have unexplained anomalies
- Emphatic locations occur that are not at the center of the chiasm
- The Holy Spirit's emphasis is rarely discussed

Organization of Structures in Pattern Analysis

Chiasm: an **a-b-c-x-c'-b'-a'** type of sequence

Chiasm (imperfect): a **chiasm** with an imperfection

Parallel Symmetry: an **a-b-c-a'-b'-c'** type of sequence

Parallel Symmetry (imperfect): a **parallel symmetry** with an imperfection

Immediate Repetition: an **a-a'-b-b'-c-c'** type of sequence

List: an **a-b-c-d-e** type of sequence

Frequencies: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-lettered-devices.html>

Basic Organizations in Pattern Analysis

Some distinctives:

- The entire pericope is presented
- The basic organization of each pericope is one of these:
 - [Chiasm](#) or [Imperfect Chiasm](#)
 - [Parallel Symmetry](#) or [Imperfect Parallel Symmetry](#)
 - [Immediate Repetition](#)
 - [List](#)
- The basic elements are the dominant organization of each pericope, identified by UPPER CASE letters: **A**, **C**, **D'**, etc.

Substructures in Pattern Analysis

Each element of a pericope may have a substructure, although many do not
A substructure enhances the understanding of its parent element

A substructure is organized as one of these:

- [Chiasm Substructure](#)
- [Parallel Symmetry Substructure](#)
- [Immediate Repetition Substructure](#)
- [List Substructure](#)

Substructure elements refer to the organization of each parent element, identified by lower case letters: **a**, **c**, **d'**, etc.

Frequencies: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-lettered-devices.html>

Imperfections (Asymmetry)

Asymmetry means there is a lack of perfect symmetry. It is rare for more than one of these devices to appear in a pericope:

- [Extra](#): An intentional insertion of an element where its pair is blank
- [Absence](#): An intentional omission of an element, indicates missing data
- [Transposition](#): A relocation of elements from their normal position
- [Variation](#): When two otherwise corresponding have different themes

Thirty percent (30%) of the chiasms and parallel symmetries are asymmetric

Frequencies: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-asymmetric-devices.html>

Elements and Themes

[Jeremiah 28:1-17](#) is an example of a completed analysis:

- An *element* is the biblical text: a verse, part of a verse, or multiple verses
- A *theme* is a brief paraphrase of an element
- On the dynamic web pages, the themes appear to the right of the text
- The themes of paired elements should show their relationship, either similar or antithetical
- Documentation of themes adds understanding and rigor for each analysis by causing exegetes to organize their thoughts

Non-lettered Devices

In addition to the lettered devices, other non-lettered devices can apply:

Demarcation: Beginning markers, sub-unit markers, and ending markers

Frames: A pair of elements that surround a parallelism

Preliminary: Background information normally located near the beginning

Opening Summary: Summarization near the beginning of a pericope

Closing Summary: Summarization near the end of a pericope

Substructure Summary: Summarization within a substructure

Frequencies: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-non-lettered-devices.html>

Rhetorical Model

The end result for each Pattern Analysis is not the structure – it is an understanding of the Holy Spirit’s rhetoric based upon that structure. It is a search for how the organization of each pericope persuades.

- *Analysis*: a good analysis of the structure leads to meaningful understandings of the Holy Spirit’s persuasion
- *Potential rhetoric*: potential structural locations are identified for review
- *Documentation*: the exegete describes each persuasive emphasis

Definitions with examples: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/literary-devices-rhetorical.html>

Potential Rhetoric for Lettered Devices

Basic structures and substructures have six (6) potentially emphatic locations:

Center Point of a chiasm, parallel symmetry, immediate rep, or list

First/Last elements of a chiasm, that is A and A'

First/First elements of a parallel symmetry, that is A and A'

Last/Last elements of a parallel symmetry

Corresponding Elements e.g., B and B' of a chiasm or parallel symmetry

Correlation of Sequences for $A-B-C$ with $C'-B'-A'$ or $A-B-C$ with $A'-B'-C'$

Frequencies: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-lettered-devices-rhetorical.html>

Potential Rhetoric for Asymmetric Devices

Walsh stated, “Asymmetry can be one of the most forceful stylistic devices in the biblical Hebrew narrative.” (Walsh 2001, 101.) This research found:

- The Extra, Absence, and Transposition elements consistently have strong rhetorical value
- The fourth asymmetric device, the Variation, sometimes has rhetorical significance

For those new to asymmetry, these imperfections may seem forced – their consistent emphatic value gives considerable evidence to their importance

Frequencies: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-asymmetric-devices-rhetorical.html>

Potential Rhetoric for Non-lettered Devices

Five of the six (6) non-lettered devices can have rhetorical value:

- Every Opening Summary, Closing Summary, and Substructure Summary was shown to have emphatic value
- The Preliminary device does not have emphatic value
- Frames often have emphatic value
- Some Parenthesis elements have emphatic value

Frequencies: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-non-lettered-devices-rhetorical.html>

Pattern Analysis Software

There are five (5) steps to this methodology including the Pattern Analysis Research Language (PARL) which was created for this process:

- *Download the Bible verses:* copy the raw text from the database
- *Prepare the structural analysis:* the text is marked up, using the PARL
- *Validate the structure:* catch many integrity issues, produce the HTML
- *Perform the rhetorical analysis:* document the rhetoric locations
- *Display the completed rhetoric:* show/print the completed web page

[Raw text](#) ➡ [Structure analysis](#) ➡ [Dynamic web page](#) ➡ [Rhetoric analysis](#) ➡ [Completed dynamic web page](#)

Validation Process

- Once the structural and rhetorical analyses have been entered in the computer, a *validation process* looks for numerous logical discrepancies:
 - Do all elements obey the identified basis structure or substructure?
 - Are substructures entered properly?
 - Has the sequence of verse numbers changed?
- When those and other validations are successful, a *dynamic HTML web page* is produced which indents the pericope, adds color changes as the cursor is moved, and allows substructures to be hidden or shown
- Validation produces a list of *potential locations* which shows where emphasis may be identified – there are normally many in a pericope

Requirements for Every Pericope

- *Use* a nearly-literal Bible translation (**NASB 95** was selected)
- *Include* every word of the Bible without deletion, relocation, or revision
- *Demarcate* every pericope clearly
- *Account for* those portions of the pericope outside the parallelism
- *Identify* the theme for each element: e.g. **A**, **b'**, **X**, or **SUM**
- *Document* the pericope's emphasis based on the structure

Current Progress

- At least **25%** of every book has been analyzed
- That is, 20,400 of the 31,000 verses (**65%**) of the Bible
- Every verse of the N.T. and Minor Prophets has been analyzed
- So far, *every verse conforms* to the pattern analysis methodology
- No verses are randomly placed, without a home

Books analyzed: <https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/books-analyzed.html>

Benefits of Pattern Analysis

- *Presents* the thematic understanding of each element
- *Adds* rigor to the structural analyses
- *Grasps* greater meaning
- *Models* the text consistently
- *Can be incorporated* into the exegetical process
- *Produces* attractive dynamic web pages through the software
- *Provides* compelling evidence through frequency charts that this methodology is consistent from Genesis to Revelation

Next Steps

Pattern Analysis has been developed without a mentor or any oversight. There is One who is infallible; I am fallible. I recommend that others become involved in various capacities:

- Gather comments about “Pattern Analysis Methodology,” and then revise it as appropriate
- Modify the Pattern Analysis Software so it can be used on the internet
- Locate individuals willing to review some or all the analyzed 20,000 verses
- Find people willing to analyze the remaining 10,000 verses