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BIBLICAL PARALLELISM AND ITS EARLY EXEGESIS

by

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Comparative Literature in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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CHAPTER ONE

להבין משל ומליצה

1. Biblical genres
2. Sharpness
3. Lowth's Categories
4. The Metrical Hypothesis
5. Parallelism in other languages
6. Fixed pairs, repetitive parallelism, and "self-contradictory parallelism"
7. The "distribution" reading
8. Parallelism in Biblical narrative
9. Relentlessly aphoristic
10. Post-Biblical parallelism
11. Summary

1.

There is no Biblical Hebrew word for poetry. The Bible contains a number of compositions of recognizable genres, some of which are in fact named: qinah (lament); mašal, hiddah, dabar, etc. (short, often gnomic, sayings and proverbs); b^erakah (blessing); q^elalah (curse); tol^edot (generation-list or accompanying tale); torah, mišpat, hoq, etc. (legal procedures, cultic ordinances); hazon, massa', etc. (prophetic vision, oracle); mizmor, šir, širah, etc. (songs, hymns); t^efillah (prayer); and many many more. Try as one may, one can find nothing in the Bible to indicate that these and other genres were classified or viewed as being either poetry or prose. On the contrary, in lists of literary genres such as Proverbs 1:2-6, recognizable prose types are mixed in with the "poetic" ones. Similarly, the distinction made about Solomon's opus (or repertoire, for the two were probably not quite so distinct as nowadays) in I Kings 5:12--

And he spoke three thousand proverbs [משל] and his song[s] [שיר] w[ere] a thousand and five

is probably one that hinges on the manner of performance (šir was sung, mašal apparently spoken); both would be described as "poetic" genres. The same sort of distinction, mizmor vs. mašal, is found in Ecclus. 44:5.

What all the genres mentioned so far have in common--indeed, their chief structural characteristic--is a general balancing of line-length and of meaning, a symmetry of sound and thought: Biblical parallelism. This is the central distinction in Hebrew, parallelism or its absence, and it is the only one which the present essay will invoke. For the greatest obstacle to a true understanding of parallelism is the notion that it constitutes the "poetry" of the Bible. It does, and it does not; but saying that it does has, for two thousand years, only produced confusion and misunderstanding. Indeed, when one considers all the errors into which Jewish and Christian exegetes have been led by measuring parallelism against a poetry standard--all the attempts to scan parallelistic lines for their meter or rhythm, or the efforts to classify different "types" of parallelism on the analogy to other poetic "devices"; or a corresponding inability for critics to see parallelism when it is used in "unpoetic" places--when one considers how much, in short, because of being confused with poetry, parallelism has been misread or overlooked, one must wish to cry out with the Psalmist: "Understand, oh foolish ones of the people; and simpletons, when will you have sense?"¹

¹The Psalm commentary of Father Dahood (Psalms II, New York, 1968; page 347) suggests that Hebrew ba'am here be connected with mm ("be strong, wise"), citing Ecclus. 10:1, שׁוֹפֵט יָסִיד עַמּוֹ "A wise ruler instructs his people," which translation accords with the LXX and Aramaic. I have indulged nevertheless in the old understanding of the verse for reasons of "sharpness" (see infra).

Every parallelistic line, like this last one, consists of two (or occasionally three) balancing statements: they are known by a bewildering variety of names: hemistichs, stichs, cola, versicles, half-verses, or (as I shall often call them) A and B.² It is not known how they were referred to in Biblical times; the earliest post-Biblical references speak only of "the beginning" and "the end" of a verse. Perhaps they did not need a name, for this balancing form, A + B, was as much a habit of mind as a formal prescription. It was part of a larger "balancing aesthetic," a predilection for seeing (and saying) things symmetrically, in twos. And it was on everybody's lips, commonfolk's and kings:³ rumors and facts, cures, rules of conduct, rules of thumb, things one heard and things one might make up spontaneously⁴--all were in the balancing style. It is best understood as the shape to which any particularly important or solemn utterance will conform, the shape of

²Terminology is important: obviously stich and hemistich analogize parallelism to poetry: colon and bicola were terms used in Greek rhetoric (i.e., prose as well as poetry). When Robert Lowth called his discovery "parallelismus membrorum" he was certainly aware that membrum was the standard Latin translation of Greek colon in all writings on rhetoric, but his term has since been grievously misunderstood to mean "the parallelism of all the members (= words) of A with the members of B"! Cf. W. F. Albright, Y. and the Gods of Canaan (hereafter YGC), p. 5n.

³See John Gray, The Legacy of Canaan, SVT 5 (Leiden, 1965), p. 304.

⁴Ibid., loc. cit.

formal speech. That shape consists only of two blank spaces separated by a caesura:

_____ // _____

For the caesura is the essence of parallelism.⁵ What one finds on either side of it varies. The A-half may match B word for word, in what might be called "strict" parallelism:

I will sing to the L-rd while I live // I will make
hymns to my G-d while I am alive
(Ps 104:33)

or the parallelism may be so loose as to disappear:

Blessed is the L-rd // He did not let us fall prey
to their teeth
(Ps. 124:6)

Which is to say that it is not the paralleling of meaning that constitutes the essence of the form, but the balancing, the pause between two roughly equal groups of words, and the fact that the two together make a whole.⁶ What

⁵ Cyrus Gordon, in his speculations about the pre-history of Greco-Semitic literary relations, suggests that the caesura is in fact an instance of early Semitic influence on Greek poetry. See Homer and the Bible [reprinted from Hebrew Union College Annual (HUCA) 26 (1955)] (Ventnor, N.J., 1967), p. 68; also Gordon, Before the Bible (London, 1962).

⁶ This view of parallelism, although it may seem a bit extreme in its formulation, is hardly original. T. H. Robinson expressed it in his sensitive and moderate review, "Hebrew Poetic Form: the English Tradition" (Vetus Testamentum Supplements 1[1953]). Note especially: "Every line is divided into two parts . . . It often happens that each part is a complete sentence in itself [and] that we

could be simpler? Now of course "loose" parallelism alone tends to lose its shape, just as strict parallelism becomes monotonous line after line. And so while most one-line sayings and short compositions are "strict," longer works such as narrative and songs tend to contain both strict and loose lines. Never, however, does the caesura or balancing disappear.

2.

Parallelism is an infinitely interesting formal requirement. It is so simple and so complex. For the mere juxtaposition of A and B implies a relationship between them. They are equivalents, we understand. But how?

The most common relationship is for B to restate A's general idea, to "mean the same thing."

All your works, O L-rd, will give You thanks // and
your faithful ones will bless you

have what Gray called 'complete parallelism,' and it is evidently lines of this kind which have led to Lowth's adaption of the term [parallelismus membrorum]. In some ways this is unfortunate for it suggests to the casual reader or hearer that there is always some more or less exact correspondence in thought between the two parts of the line; indeed, the second may be taken to be a simple repetition of the first. It is, however, comparatively seldom that we meet with so perfect a correspondence, and some word like 'balance' might more accurately describe the fact . . . In any case, the outstanding fact is that the caesura is a real break, both in the sense and in the sound."

Common to both halves is the notion of grateful acknowledgment ("give thanks," "bless") to G-d. But the statements do not quite mean the same thing. First of all, "bless" is a particular kind of giving thanks;⁷ and "faithful ones" is certainly different from "all your works" (angel, man and beast).⁸ And so the two are equivalents, but different. Now the fact that B comes after A always makes it in the nature of a completion of A, or a comment on it, or a gloss. By similarity or contrast it expands A's meaning, so that the two make up a single assertion, one that folds neatly in the middle.

Of course, sometimes this adding is rather mechanical. Thanks to recent researches,⁹ it has become clear that a certain stock of "answering" terms existed not only in Hebrew but also Ugaritic parallelism: "mountains" - "hills"; "be joyous" - "exult" etc. These announced or

⁷Originally it had to do with bending the knee. In the Bible it is often associated specifically with worship; it is spoken, pronounced solemnly, etc.--all this a new nuance added to the A-half's.

⁸ **לְעַמָּו** really means "offspring" or "creatures" here, cf. Pss. 8:7, 103:22, 104:24; Proverbs 31:31 (!); Job 14:15, 34:19.

⁹H. L. Ginzberg and A. Mazar, first in "Semiticized Hurrians in Syria and Palestine" in *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* 14 (1934), pp. 248-9; thereafter *JPOS* 15 and *Orientalia* 5 (1936). Dahood (*Psalms* III, p. 455 ff.) lists 157 word-pair common to Ugarit and the Psalter. See also Cassuto, *The Goddess Anath* (Jerusalem, 1971), pp. 25-31; Moshe Held in *Leshonenu* 18 (1953), 144-60.

solidified the parallelism. Their apposition itself did not "add" much--on the contrary, the interesting part of the verse would rest precisely in the less obviously parallelistic terms:

אִשֶּׁר בִּידֵיהֶם זָמָה // וַיִּמְיֶנָם מְלֹאָה שָׂחַד
(Psalm 26:10)

But whether the parallelism was stock or striking, it was the nature of the form to be read as a single statement, with B completing or commenting on A.¹⁰ This is a habit of mind that a modern reader must willfully acquire.

For example, Proverbs 10:1

A wise son makes his father glad // but a foolish son
is his mother's sorrow

The two halves are in every way equivalent: "wise" is the opposite of "foolish," "makes glad" the opposite of "is . . . sorrow," and "father" the opposite of "mother." The two can thus be read as "meaning the same thing." But I do not think this is how they were read, or heard, in Biblical times; they were a single statement--"A wise son makes his father glad, but even a mother is grieved if her son is a fool." This reading makes the proverb somewhat more subtle,

¹⁰ Again, others have said the same thing. Thus James Muilenberg, "Hebrew Rhetoric: Repetition and Style" in VTS 4 (1956), p. 98: "Parallelism is in reality very seldom precisely synonymous. The parallel line does not simply repeat what has been said, but enriches it, deepens it, transforms it by adding fresh nuances and bringing in new elements, renders it more concrete and vivid and telling."

and perhaps (therefore) the worthier of its reputed author: it says the exacting father's demands will somehow always be satisfied in a son who is clever, but even the unquestioning love of a mother will not remain undisturbed by a foolish son's conduct; she imposes fewer conditions, but his foolishness seeks her out and brings her sorrow.¹¹

This sort of understanding B over against A is not only a potentially fruitful reading of mašal; sometimes it is the only reading possible.

Better a name than good oil // and the day of death
than the day of birth.

(Eccles. 7:1)

The first half of Ecclesiastes' verse is difficult to argue with: who would deny that a man's reputation is more important than any material possession? And sound adds its approval to sense, for the line is a near-perfect chiasmus, especially if one recalls the doubled s hides an elided n: Tob šem min šemen tob. The second half, however, seems eminently arguable: birth is always a happy occasion, and death always occasion for mourning--so in what sense could the latter be considered "better"?

In precisely the same sense. For the trouble with precious oil (as Ecclesiastes mentions later, 10:1) is that

¹¹This reading is, of course, depending on its precise differentiation of paternal and maternal affection. Besides the testimony of what seems to be the common wisdom on the subject, there is some support in the Bible itself, e.g., Genesis 25:27-8.

it is extremely fragile and spoils easily. What is of obvious value one day is completely worthless the next. The value of a name is quite the opposite: intangible, it is thus protected from the physical decay of the world. Now the newborn child is like the precious oil in that he is entirely physical¹²--no qualities, no character, in fact, no name, at least not for a while. As he grows he gains these less tangible attributes; then, as he ages, his physical existence begins to decay. On the day of his death, all that will remain is the intangible, the šem; that day will be "better" in that on it the process of building the name (which only began at birth) will be complete.

The mašal exists in the form A + B. But its "and" is not a simple connective. The two halves are a single conceit--"Just as (the unarguable) A, so (the initially very arguable) B." There was no need to state their relationship; it is implied in the form itself.¹³

¹²Perhaps, incidentally, also because he is proverbially samen (fat), although there are no Biblical usages to reinforce this reading; and perhaps the two are associated because oil is useful on babies; Gordis takes up this idea in Koheleth: The Man and his World (New York, 1968), p. 267.

¹³One might single out the waw as implying comparison, the so-called waw adaequationis, but then that is the whole point: "A . . . w B . . ." is the form. There are, however, parallelisms of obviously comparative intent in which the waw is not present:

נָזַם זָהָב בַּעֲף חֲזִיר אִשָּׁה יִפְתָּה וְסִרְתָּ טָעַם
(Proverbs 11:22)

The much-explicated Isaiah 1:3 is another example:

ידע שור קנהו וחמר אבוס בעליו
ישראל לא ידע עמי לא החבוננו

If Biblical parallelism were merely coordinative, the meaning of this verse would be: an ox knows its owner, and an ass its masters' feed-trough; Israel does not know, my people has not considered. Any reader would, of course, be aware that some sort of unflattering comparison is being made. But in the light of what has been seen about the "A over-against B" reading, this verse can better be understood as a progression. How is the first element different from the second? The same verb, "know, obey"¹⁴ governs both halves. The animal of the first was hardly considered the most praiseworthy of beasts; nevertheless "ox" is in several significant respects considered superior to its frequent pair, "ass."¹⁵ More important, parallel to the "owner" of the first is "masters' trough" in the second. The cumulative effect of these differences is the establishment of a climactic descent: An ox recognizes his owner,

¹⁴"Obeys" or "is attendant to" is what it means in the first half-verse. For this meaning cf. 1 Sam. 2:12, Hos. 5:4, Prov. 1:29, 2:5; Job 18:21, 21:13.

¹⁵In ritual purity, and in matters dependent on it, such as redemption. While šor and hamor are an oft-repeated pair in the Bible, that they are not interchangeable is attested by the immutability of their order. Here, however, I think the prophet is thinking of the simple matter of obedience; hamor's inferiority in this respect is well known.

and [even] an ass [who may not be very obedient or attentive, at least knows where to stand to be fed, i.e., knows] his masters' feed-trough; but Israel does not know [(or obey) even this much; in fact] my people does not even begin to understand."¹⁶

Now it may be that we have some clue as to how the ancient Hebrews saw this subtle relationship of "B over-against A," especially where it is most common, in proverbs and sayings. For one of the characteristics most often associated with Hebrew proverbs is the quality of "sharpness." Thus Proverbs 26:9

A thorn came by chance into the hand of a drunkard //
And a proverb (mašal) into the mouth of fools.

The sense of this verse is: you may hear fools citing words of wisdom, but they have gotten them without understanding their real meaning, by chance, like a burr that sticks into the hand of a groping drunkard. The proverbist's image is, however, significant: he associates mašal (a proverb or, originally, any parallelistic line) [See Additional Note 1.1] with something sharp. A similar image appears in Ecclesiastes 12:11

דברי חכמים כדרבנות וכמשמרות נטועים בעלי אספוח

¹⁶The hitpa^{(el} is used here to convey the sense of "becoming." Note also in the passage the divine overtones of קנהו and בעליו .

The words of the wise are as goads // and as nails
firmly planted those used in assemblies.¹⁷

Dibrei hakamim (words of the wise) is a (late) pair of
m^ešalim (cf. Proverbs 1:6). Here again, then, these brief
proverb-like utterances are sharp. The recurrent phrase,
l^emašal w^elišninah (Deut. 28:37; I Kings 9:7; II Chron.
7:20; Jer. 24:9) is an idiom meaning "as a by-word or
proverb" (especially as a warning); the second noun is from
the root *šnn, which means to be sharp or pointed. Now one
might conclude from this that mašal was "sharp" in that it
spurred to action or pricked the conscience of the listener.
But if this meaning is at all present, it is (I believe) an
adaptation of an attribute of mašal already well known. An

¹⁷ Again, let us read B against A. The sharpness of
דרבנות ("goads," from drb "be sharp," cf. Arabic درب) exists
in potential; it needs an object, something to be goaded.
משמרות נטועים, "stuck-in nails," are already having their
sharpness put to advantage; this is the nuance B adds.
The somewhat obscure phrase מפני אספנות represents "words of
the wise" that have found their mark, either a) because
they have been incorporated in established collections
(אספנות), or b) because academy teachers (מפני אספנות) with
many students are certain of having their words understood
and preserved properly (as opposed to other hakamim whose
words may be lost or misunderstood. On the latter point
see Judah Goldin on העמידו חלמדים הרבה in "The End of
Ecclesiastes," A. Altmann (ed.), Biblical Motifs (Cambridge,
1966), p. 135 (it is a pity he did not connect his remarks
to this verse!) and in general Gordis, Koheleth . . . , pp.
353-4 and 411. The superiority of teacher-to-student trans-
mission over learning from the written word alone-- על פי.

--נותרו מפני אספנות remained a central Jewish
principle; see Profiat Duran's introduction to מעשה אדם
pp. 20-21. On the existence of such wisdom schools:
J.P.J. Olivier, "Schools and Wisdom Literature" in Journal
of Northwest Semitic Languages 4 (1975), p. 49.

older strand may be discernible in hiddah, which comes from another root meaning "sharp" and which is often paired with mašal (Ezek. 17:2; Psalms 49:5, 78:2). Whatever a hiddah is (it is often translated as "riddle") its sharpness has nothing to do with spurring to action: as Samson's hiddah (Judges 14:14) and Sheba's (I Kings 10:1) show, it was a test of wits or verbal showmanship of some sort.

I believe the sharpness of hiddah and mašal is more likely the quality already described, the delight in balancing B against A so as to expand the meaning of the verse. "Sharpness" represented the potential subtleties hidden inside the apposition. This in any case is what I shall mean by that term in the following pages; it is the highest advantage taken of the parallelistic style, one might even say, the genius of the form.

3.

That genius was not well understood by the modern expositors of parallelism, however.

Robert Lowth is the man generally credited with the "discovery" of Biblical parallelism. His study, De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum (1753; revised somewhat 1763) coined the phrase parallelismus membrorum ("the parallelism of the cola," i.e., A and B; see Note 2) and established the general lines of the modern critical approach to parallelism in the Bible. Lowth did understand something of the

relation between the two halves of a Biblical line--for example, that they are written so as to constitute a single whole. ("ut plena comprehensio in suas partes fere aequaliter distribuatur"). But he focused his attention solely on parallelism of meaning, and insisted--this is in many ways the most historically significant part of his exposition--on classifying the different possible sorts of such parallelism. He distinguished, in fact, three varieties: synonymous, antithetical, and synthetic. This classification, far from illuminating, simply obscured the potential subtleties of the form: everything now fell into one of three boxes.

It was soon recognized that the third, at least, was defective, a sort of catch-all; but the first two terms are still alive today.¹⁸ Now the trouble with "synonymous" as a classification is that it leads to the view that B is essentially a restatement of A (though Lowth himself, to judge by his choice of examples, may not have had so narrow an idea in mind).¹⁹ Parallelism, then, became "saying the same thing twice"; classified as "synonymous parallelism," our verse from Isaiah becomes only "An ox knows its owner,

¹⁸For example, they are used by Gordon and Gray in describing Ugaritic parallelism.

¹⁹See T. H. Robinson, op. cit., p. 130.

and an ass its masters' food-trough,"²⁰ without any sense of the whole. What the "synonymous" reading, a drastic sort of leveling, lacked was a recognition of the fact of B's afterwardness. It conceived of the two as happening simultaneously, and consequently failed to see that B must inevitably be understood as A's completion: A, and what's more, B; not only A, but B; not A, not even B; not A, and certainly not B; just as A, so B; etc.

Lowth's "antithetical" parallelism was a distinction without a difference. It was another way for B to balance-and-complete A. Just as synonymous is inappropriate, so is antithetical--indeed, it was in order to preserve the synonymy of "synonymous" that antithetical parallelism was devised: it drained off a whole class of parallelism in which B's differentness from A was all too obvious.

Now the relationship of A to B in Lowth's antithetical examples, e.g.

נִאֲמָנִים פִּעְעֵי אוֹהֵב וְנִעְתָּרוֹת נְשִׁיקוֹת שׁוֹנֵא

(Proverbs 27:6)

is hardly antithetical. Saying this only repeats the synonymous reading's error, for here, too, A and B would then become independent (opposite) versions of the "same

²⁰ See, for example, the discussion of this very verse as "synonymous" in R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the OT (Grand Rapids, 1969), p. 965; as well as the translation of it in Newman and Popper, Studies in Parallelism (Berkeley, 1918).

idea," rather than a single statement. But single statement they are. A translator might render the relationship A:B here as:

Just as the wounds suffered from a friend are long-lasting // So are the kisses of an enemy fleeting.

or even more explicitly, in the spirit of "You know A, now understand B" (already seen in Ecclesiastes 7:1)

You know how a friend's reproaches sting // Understand how short-lived will be an enemy's compliments.

Of course, none of this spelling-out of the relationship A:B is necessary in Hebrew--it is implied in the form; but in the light of it "antithetical" is shown to be a misleading concept.

In none of Lowth's examples of antithetical parallelism did B differ from A by being a negative complement, but this rather common sort of parallelism has, since Lowth, been associated with the antithetical category, and compounded the problem. Hebrew is fond of using negatives to reinforce (גל וְלֹא חָכָם "foolish and not-wise people" Deut. 32:6); as here, so in longer phrases

The L-rd saves the life of his servants // and those who trust in him will not fall

(Psalm 34:23)

the negation does not create contrast, but agreement.

Here is nothing antithetical whatsoever.²¹

²¹See also, K. Koch, The Growth of the Biblical Tradition (New York, 1969), p. 92 on our Prov. 10:1.

Now why Lowth should have imposed this classification system onto Biblical parallelism is an interesting question; I suspect it has to do with his misapprehension of parallelism as a device, a poetic resource,²² rather than, as suggested, something closer to a turn of mind, an overall form with myriad possibilities. This, in turn, probably reflects his own preoccupations (it is rarely noted that Lowth--later Bishop Lowth--did not have his post at Oxford in Old Testament or in Semitic languages, but poetry) and the state of literary scholarship in England at the time; but this topic will have to wait for more extensive treatment elsewhere.²³ Suffice it to say that the whole notion of classifying different types of parallelism, introduced by Lowth in De Sacra Poesi, has had a disastrous effect on subsequent criticism. Parallelism of meaning became all, sharpness was lost, and the real nature of the balancing style was henceforth condemned to a perpetual

²²Lowth never abandoned the notion that Hebrew "poetry" was written in meter (the rules of which, however, he felt could not be ascertained); again see T. H. Robinson, p. 131. Given this notion, what then is parallelism? At best it shares its structural role with the meter--it becomes, in other words, analogous to rhyme; and just like rhyme this "device" can then be analyzed as to its alternatives (just as masculine and feminine rhymes, "rime riche," etc.; so synonymous, antithetical, and synthetic parallelism). Cf. S. Mowinckel's term for parallelism, "thought-rhyme."

²³Luis Alonso-Schökel is sensitive to the situation of Biblical criticism within literary traditions; see Estudios de Poetica Hebraica (Barcelona, 1963), pp. 8-54.

"falling between two stools."

Lowth was only one of many investigators of Hebrew "poetry" in England and on the Continent during the eighteenth century. (Actually, the surge of interest in the subject began with Renaissance Hebraists such as Johannes Reuchlin [1455-1520], author of the first grammar of Hebrew written by a Christian, the Rudimenta Hebraica, 1506; Eobanus Hessus [1488-1540], author of a metrical translation of the Psalms; and Gilbert Genebrardus [1537-97], archbishop of Aix and an impressive translator of medieval Hebrew. During and after the Reformation and on into the eighteenth century, there was unabated interest in the "poetic structure" of the Psalter and other books, both for the sake of re-translation into the vernacular to create Protestant liturgical pieces, and for the research's own sake.) Among Lowth's predecessors and contemporaries, the question of meter was the dominant one. Fr. Gomarus' Davidis Lyra (1637) was an enormously complicated (and utterly erroneous) scansion system which had wide influence;²⁴ others--Augustus Steuchus, J. J. Scaliger, G. S. Vossius, and George Wither²⁵--attacked quantitative systems in favor of accentual theories. Lowth's chief theoretical

²⁴ Israel Baroway, "The Lyre of David" in ELH 8 (1941).

²⁵ I. Baroway, "The Bible in the English Renaissance," Journal of English and German Philology 32 (1933), p. 475.

antagonist was another scanner, F. Hare, whose Psalm theory (1736) he attacked in a satirical essay.²⁶ It is not surprising, then, that Lowth never denied the existence of some metrical system in Hebrew, nor, consequently, that the full implications of his writings about parallelism began to be investigated only much later. Those who came immediately after him and well into the nineteenth century (E. Meier, Bickell, Ley) were primarily metricists.²⁷ The consequence of this emphasis on meter--it is a theme of this study--is that attention to parallelism suffered.

Lowth's categories were expanded at the end of the last century by C. A. Briggs, who added three more: emblematic parallelism (e.g., Psalm 42:2), in which the relationship "Just as A, so B" prevails; stair-like parallelism (Psalm 29:1), where part of A is actually repeated in B; and "introverted" parallelism (Psalm 30:9 ff), where words or verses are joined in a chiasmus.²⁸ This was definitely a mixed bag, "emblematic" being in reality one possible kind of "synonymous" parallelism, and the other two focusing on particularities of surface. Briggs' terminology

²⁶T. H. Robinson, op. cit., p. 128.

²⁷Of course Lowth's ideas were discussed, and, for example, played a significant role in Jebb, Sacred Literature (1820), F. B. Kusters, Die Psalmen (1831) and others. The whole period is discussed in Alonso-Schokel, op. cit.

²⁸See R. K. Harrison, op. cit., p. 967 ff.

was never widely adopted, despite his own high standing as a scholar and exegete. (Nevertheless, the same multiplication of categories continues after him.)²⁹

The next important discussion of the relationship of A and B after Lowth was George Buchanan Gray's The Forms of Hebrew Poetry (1915).³⁰ Gray objected to Lowth's three-fold classification, focusing on the third element of the scheme, "synthetic" parallelism, which he felt to be the "vulnerable point." On the one hand, he noted, some of the verses distinguished by Lowth as synthetic were really synonymous or antithetical in their meaning--it was only the absence of one-to-one correspondence of the words in the two halves which prevented Lowth from fitting them into his first two categories. On the other hand, there were verses in which the second half-verse was in every way different from the first, verses "in which the second line consists entirely of what is fresh and additional to the first; and in some of these examples the two lines are not even parallel to one another by the correspondence of similar grammatical terms."³¹

²⁹"Parabolic parallelism" (see Koch, op. cit., p. 93), "particularizing parallelism" Th. Jakobsen JNES 12 (1953), 162, note 5.

³⁰Apparently the book, because of World War I, was remaindered early and its influence was initially quite restricted (Robinson, p. 136). It has recently been reissued (New York, 1972) in facsimile with an introduction by D. N. Freedman.

³¹Gray, op. cit., p. 50.

Gray's solution to the classification problem was radical: he proposed classifying verses as "complete" or "incomplete" depending on whether the word-for-word parallelism was perfect or not. He then went on to discuss different strategies for each type--variations in word order, and "compensation," which has since resurfaced in Cyrus Gordon's discussion of "ballast variants."³² Gray was suspicious of rhythm as a principle in Hebrew ("Parallelism is unmistakable; meter in Hebrew literature is obscure"),³³ but his new classification system led him to believe it nonetheless had some role. For while he noted that in cases of "complete" parallelism, in which, for example, the three words of the first half-verse

A . B . C .

are paralleled by three "synonymous" words in the second half-verse

A' . B' . C' .

the 3:3 rhythm of the stressed syllables may be seen to have been imposed by the requirement of parallelism; nevertheless, where there was "incomplete" parallelism of meaning, or no parallelism at all, Gray noticed that there still was a tendency to construct rhythmically similar verses

³²See Ugaritic Manual, *Analecta Orientalia* 35 (Rome, 1955), p. 112.

³³P. 47.

A . B . C .

A . B . C .

A . B . C .

A'2 . C

A' . D . E .

D . E . F .

In other words, he quite correctly perceived that (what he called) parallelism (= parallelism of meaning) was not the only factor in the composition of parallel verses. Unfortunately, he was unable to incorporate this perception into a general theory of balancing; he, like Lowth, was wedded to too rigid a notion of metrical regularity.

Gray's terms, complete and incomplete parallelism, have been sporadically applied since, but so have Lowth's synonymous and antithetical. Indeed, his destruction of Lowth's "synthetic" category has turned attention from the one instance where the narrowness of Lowth's other two categories might have been exposed. For synthetic parallelism,

Sing to the L-rd another song // for He has worked
wonders

(Ps. 95:1)

was often just the balancing style without the parallelism of meaning; though Gray was dissatisfied with "synthetic" as a category, his dissatisfaction did not lead him to re-examine the validity of the other two. "Complete" and "incomplete" implicitly accepts the parallelism of meaning as the ground-rule of Biblical "poetry." Although he aimed at a radical clarification of Lowth's system, Gray only succeeded in perpetuating its basic misreading of B as the simultaneous twin of A.

4.

Allusion has already been made to the notion that Hebrew contains "poems" that are written in a fixed metrical or rhythmical scheme. This is an idea which has been expressed since Josephus, and one that underwent a complicated elaboration through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Indeed, it is still with us. The last two centuries of Biblical criticism have given rise to competing schools of metricists, and their disputes have at times over-shadowed parallelism in the on-going discussion of Biblical "poetics." For although parallelism can, theoretically, exist within the framework of a regular rhythm or meter (just as, for example, rhyme can), in some sense the two are competitors for the role of organizing principle in Hebrew songs and proverbs. It is, therefore, not inappropriate here to explore the relationship of our notion of parallelism with these various metrical theories.

Neither Josephus, nor Philo (another early asserter of the "metrical hypothesis") wrote poetry in Hebrew (so far as we know). In fact, here is the first difficulty with the metrical idea: those who were in a position to explain meter (if meter there was) are mute on the subject. Indo-European poets are fond of alluding to their craft; they mention their meters, they write artes poeticae, they even describe the process of composition. In Hebrew there is

nothing comparable. The Bible and Talmud list musical instruments and discuss singing arrangements, antiphony and cantillation; but there is nothing about meter. An elaborate system, nay three systems, were developed to punctuate the Biblical text, and these were quickly adapted for a kind of singing notation (this is described in the next chapter); but nothing in the systems indicates that the texts so punctuated had metrical patterns, or even a regular rhythm.³⁴ This impressive argumentum a silentio is broken only in one place, the "epitaph" at the end of Ecclesiastes (12:9), which says of Koheleth:

ואזן וחקר חקן משלים הרבה
בקש קהלת למצא דברי חפץ וכחוב ישר דברי אמת

Now not only 'izzen, but also higqer, carries the specific sense of "measure" or "weigh" (in the former verb it is clear; for the latter see I Kings 7:47, 2 Chron. 4:18; Job 36:26). True, this phrase could refer to purely abstract weighing and balancing (viz., considering), but it is more reasonable to suppose it refers here to the

³⁴I am unconvinced by what is, however, an ingenious attempt to read Massoretic "violations" of the rules of lenition in Hebrew as indications of separations of Psalm lines into poetic feet; see Jerzy Kuriłowicz, Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics (Warsaw, 1972), pp. 167-77. The trouble is the evidence is too fragmentary, there are too many exceptions which must then be explained away, and most seriously, the failure of the Massoretic te'amim to indicate the metrical scheme that the Massoretic pointing supposedly illustrates! The study also suffers from a completely unrealistic attempt to separate the "phonic" question of meter from the "poetic" matter of parallelism. (p. 176).

process of composition, all the more so when one considers two extra-canonical sources, Ben-Sirah 44:4-5:

חבמי שיה בספרתם ומושלים במשמרותם

חוקרי מזמור על חוק נושאי נושל בכתב

and a line from the Qumran hymns IQH I 28-9³⁵

וחשב דברים על קו ומבוע רוח שפחים במידה

In Ben-Sirah higger seems to have the meaning of "composing," and hoq ("rule") even implies some systematic arrangement (though its presence here is partly due to a punning expansion on hqr). But of what sort? The Qumran verse stipulates middah, "measure," and its apposed qaw ("line") suggests other parallels, e.g., Isaiah 28:10-13. But none of these references implies that meter is what was intended. They all could (and I think probably should) be taken as references to the balancing style of mašal. Furthermore, there is the problem of their lateness. Written in a period when foreign contacts had already introduced the notion of metered poetry to the Hebrew world, these lines may, consciously or otherwise, impose an alien concept onto native songs and sayings (this idea will be developed further in the third chapter).

But, of course, there is a simpler argument against the meter theory. It is, as Cyrus Gordon and others have

³⁵ I owe this comparison to Ernest Vogt, cited in the additional notes to Eissfeldt's OT: An Introduction (Oxford, 1965), p. 732.

pointed out already,³⁶ that none of the scansion proposals thus far can be consistently applied without large-scale emendation of the text. In order to prove his meter right, in other words, the metricist must argue that the text is wrong.

The earliest attempts at a metrical scansion in Hebrew were quantitative, that is, they attributed to Hebrew long and short syllables and attempted then to find some regular pattern in their distribution along the model of Greek and Latin poetry. These continued well past the days of Robert Lowth, but have gradually given way to various stress-accent systems, either: a) with a fixed number of stresses per "colon" or "stich" and a variable number of unstressed syllables; or b) an isosyllabic system such as exists in Syriac poetry, that is, with alternating stressed and unstressed syllables.

It should be pointed out that both these theories have an enormous enemy/ally in the consonantal writing system of the Hebrew alphabet. For, in effect, no one knows for certain how Biblical Hebrew was pronounced, how many syllables a word had, if it was stressed or not, and where the stress fell. One critic, for example, will maintain that Hebrew had penultimate stress,³⁷ others that

³⁶ UM, p. 108.

³⁷ See I. Gabor, Der Hebräische Urrhythmus (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 52 [1929]).

stress fell on the last syllable. Was mlk a one-syllable noun, or two-syllable? Did construct nouns receive a single stress, or two, or did it depend on the length of the construct (i.e., if we accent ben-bayit only once, does the same hold true for beit-ha^asurim?) While these uncertainties have no doubt proven troublesome to would-be scanners, it is also true that they have occasionally served to rescue a floundering system.

One of the first important studies of the metrical problem since the days of Lowth was K. Budde's article on Lamentations³⁸ (a favorite text for metrical analyses because its alphabetical lines afford a sure delineation of where a verse begins and ends). Sticking to the basic principle of parallelism of the members, Budde noticed that the A part of the verse was almost always longer than the B. Seeking to isolate the independent (selbständige) terms on each side of the caesura and assuming each such term received one stress in performance, Budde found that A usually had three stresses (but sometimes four), while B usually had two (though sometimes three). This would make for a truncated, "limping" gait (here the classical analogues are uncomfortably obvious) appropriate to a dirge; the qinah (lament) meter was born. Budde remained admirably sceptical about all other metrical hypotheses that sprang up in the wake

³⁸"Das Hebraische Klagelied" in ZAW 2 (1882), pp. 1-52.

of his article. It has since been pointed out that this 3:2 line (as it has been styled, as well as "Funfer" for the total number of stresses) characterizes many other Hebrew compositions which are not the least bit dirge-like.³⁹ Moreover--to this point we shall return--the exceptions are such that the term "meter" can only be tolerated as an analogical usage.

Budde was followed by Eduard Sievers. Sievers was interested in the metrical problems surrounding Old English and German verse; he wrote a classification for syllabic patterns first in *Beowulf*,⁴⁰ then for Old German poetry in general.⁴¹ In these systems, which, in modified form, are still in use today, Sievers attributed stresses to the most important words in the line according to a hierarchy determined by grammatical classification. At the end of this hierarchy--that is, those words without stress--came pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, demonstratives and articles. Based on this system, he was able to isolate five basic patterns of arranging stresses in Old English.

In Hebrew, Sievers approach was much the same. Attributing stress to the most important words in each half-verse, he came up with three different "meters":

³⁹See G. B. Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 116; Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

⁴⁰In BGSL 10 (1885), p. 209.

⁴¹*Altgermanische Metrik* (1893).

- 1) 3:3 ("Doppeldreier"--i.e., three stresses per half-verse), a system that often left two unstressed syllables between the stresses. It was, therefore, "anapestic" (- - '), but "iambic" and even monosyllabic "feet" were common. Furthermore, the 3:3 pattern allowed for the following variants: 4:3, 3:4, and 2:2:2.
- 2) 3:2 (Budde's Qinah-meter), in which Sievers allowed for the variants 2:3 and 2:2
- 3) 4:4 ("Doppelvierer"), a long line, but with the same possible variants as the Doppeldreier (4:3, 3:4, and 2:2:2)

To this classification system two objections arise immediately. First, as a description of Hebrew meter it is extraordinarily general: a line (= A + B) can have as few as four and as many as eight accented syllables, and while in any given meter one pattern must predominate, exceptions are tolerated. The meters, translated into words, are not very specific: "in this text A and B are generally of the same length, and are on the whole longer than A and B in that text; in a third text, A is usually longer than B, though there are exceptions." To the extent that these are rhythmical facts (as G. B. Gray pointed out) it may simply be that the rhythm is imposed by the pattern of

the parallelism. Now the second objection is that in fitting these patterns to longer texts, such as his scansion of Genesis and part of Exodus, Sievers frequently violated obvious instances of parallelism within the narrative in order to make his scansion work. In other words, in his scheme, meter assumed a primary importance; compared to it, parallelism was only a secondary and intermittent feature.

Sievers was opposed by G. Holscher, who objected on neither of these grounds, but because of the fact that Sievers' scansion made Hebrew rhythm too "anapestic."⁴² His solution, since followed by others,⁴³ was--on the model of Syriac poetry--to make Hebrew rhythm alternate between stressed and unstressed syllables. This made it essentially "iambic," although syncopation was also possible, whereby two stresses would appear side-by-side (in which case the first ought to be prolonged in performance).⁴⁴ What had been in Sievers' scansion a 3:3 line here became 4:4. Sievers' 4:4 meanwhile remained 4:4. For the essence of Holscher's and Sievers' difference was in

⁴²"Elemente arabischer, syrischer und hebraischer Metrik" in BZAW 34 (1920), p. 93.

⁴³S. Mowinckel, "Zum Problem . . ." in Bertholet *Festschrift* (1950), p. 379; Segert, "Problems of Hebrew Poetry" in VTS 7 (1960), p. 283.

⁴⁴S. Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship (PIW) translated by D. R. Ap-Thomas (New York, 1962), vol. II, p. 264.

attribution of the stresses. In order to achieve alternation, the isosyllabic system had to allow two stresses in a single word, and indeed even occasional accents on syllables vocalized by the Massoretes with a š^ewa.

Since Holscher, debate about meter has proceeded largely along these same grounds, pure accentual vs. isosyllabic. This notwithstanding, several recent writers about metrics have tended to resurrect the simple syllable-count (based on various notions of pre-Massoretic vocalization) to a position of importance, relying on it to indicate line-length equivalence.⁴⁵

To all these metrical systems the Psalmist's words have a resonant applicability: "They do not know, they do not understand, they walk about in darkness." One trouble is that they all seem to lose sight of the limits of our knowledge. It would be fine to theorize that this or that accentuation or syllabification existed in ancient Hebrew if, upon applying it to texts, there resulted a metrical system of some reasonable regularity. This has not happened. Even with the great liberties allowed by our ignorance, none of the scansions has a regularity or consistency such as to lift it out of the category

⁴⁵ See D. N. Freedman, "Acrostics and Metrics" in *Harvard Theological Review* 65:3, pp. 367-92; M. Dahood in *op. cit.*, passim.

of "free verse."⁴⁶ Even the would-be scanners admit they doubt the Hebrew "poets" themselves actually counted syllables as they wrote.⁴⁷ And, indeed, we have little evidence to suggest that anything like a concern for accentual regularity governed even the unconscious decisions of the Hebrew "poet." While Gray noticed a regularizing that could not on its face be attributed to the presence of parallelism,⁴⁸ one may also find a disturbing number of lines of above- or sub-average length which might easily have been modified to conform to the prevailing pattern, had this been a concern.⁴⁹ In other words, we do not even know what the aesthetic intentions of our compositions were.

Comparison with Semitic analogues is equally unencouraging. Ugaritic presents quite the same difficulties as Hebrew; despite some initial optimism, researchers have

⁴⁶On this, see Alonso-Schökel, op. cit., who agrees with the "analogical" use of the term "free verse," p. 163.

⁴⁷"It is not likely that the Israelites counted syllables carefully, or even accents for that matter, when composing their poetry." D. N. Freedman, "Archaic Forms of Early Hebrew Poetry" in ZAW 72 (1960), p. 101. "While early Israelite poets in all probability did not count syllables, their verses nevertheless were carefully balanced." F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, "The Blessing of Moses" in Journal of Biblical Literature (JBL) 67 (1948), p. 197.

⁴⁸Op. cit., pp. 113-16.

⁴⁹See on this, Perry Yoder, "Biblical Hebrew" in W. K. Wimsatt (ed.), Versification: Major Language Types, p. 61.

been unable to establish a regular rhythm.⁵⁰ Akkadian is more regular, but has frequent exceptions; Arabic ʿaj, analogous in its use of parallelism, is unmetrical.

Many parallelistic compositions were performed with musical accompaniment, and it is conceivable that this fact might have imposed a more regular accentual scheme. One notices, for example, in the Hallel Psalms, occasional repetitions which might exist to lengthen out a line, i.e., metri causa:⁵¹

לא לנו ה" לא לנו כי לשמך תן כבוד (Ps 115:1)

השמים שמים לה" והארץ נתן לבני אדם (Ps 115:15)

For the parallelism of meaning would work as well without them. At the same time, what delight in even rough metrical equivalences can be perceived in the exceptionally long line (verse 9) of the (obviously antiphonal) Psalm 136?

את הירח וכוכבים לממשלות בלילה כי לעולם חסדו

⁵⁰G. D. Young, "Ugaritic Prosody" in JNES (1950), pp. 124-33. Note also, that while Akkadian has markers to indicate the parallelism and, where possible, has the line coincide with the presumed rhythmic unit, no such regularity exists in the Ras Shamra tablets.

⁵¹The first might be "repetitive" parallelism, except that the repetition does not serve the interests of parallelism since it occurs in a single half-verse. Another repetition (though this is perhaps Albright's phenomenon) is Psalm 96:13 לפני ה" כי בא כי בא לשפם הארץ
Cf. also Ps. 130:6 נפשי לא-דני משמרים לוקר שמרים לוקר

We know the Song of the Red Sea (Exodus 15) was sung, also antiphonally (Chapter 2); yet its half-verses vary in length far more than many texts that were probably not sung, proverbs and short speeches.

Hebrew certainly underwent marked sound shifts from the time of the earliest Biblical texts down to Ben Sirah; relatively few metricists take these into account to the extent of suggesting that their different scansion systems be tried first on "poems" of one period or another. Perhaps this is because even here the evidence is contradictory. Ecclesiasticus has a remarkably regular stress pattern, but the Qumran hodayot are as irregular as any part of the Bible.

The heart of the matter is again the question of parallelism. It must be recalled that by "parallelism" is really meant the "balancing style" of which parallelism of meaning is but a favorite recourse. The expectation of the "parallelistic turn of mind" is that it will be struck with the balancing of A and B, struck indiscriminately by whatever this predisposition causes it to find: meaning, alliteration, line-length, word order, etc. To answer Gray's observation: parallelism always causes metrical symmetry (or consistent patterns of asymmetry), if by parallelism one understands the "balancing style."⁵² The

⁵²Cf. N. K. Gottwald: "Meter, insofar as it exists in Hebrew poetry, is actually the rhythmical counterpart of parallelism of thought. Rhythm is not due to

inability of Hebrew metrics to set anything but the broadest limits to the stress patterns of parallelistic compositions should convince us that more precise metrical formulae are in vain. The Hebrew "poet's" ear was tuned to balancing, but the number of words, or syllables, or accents was only one factor; it might be sacrificed as easily as another. In the rhythmically regular Psalm 103 one suddenly has

וְחָסֵד ה' מַעֲוֹלִים וְעַד עוֹלָם עַל יִרְאָיו וְצִדִּיקוֹ לְבֹנֵי בָנִים

Again we see that critics have trapped themselves with the whole notion of Hebrew poetry and the expectations it has brought with it. What exists in Hebrew is that high formal speech common to proverbs, songs, prayers, oratory, etc. Making its presence the "tip-off" that one is looking at a poem has proven fatal to metrical theories, since some of these compositions (e.g., Job) exhibit a great deal of rhythmical balance, while others (Ex. 15) much less. We should do better in the future to limit metrical judgments to individual works, and to contain them within the parentheses of our ignorance of the pronunciation of ancient Hebrew and, on the other side, all that we have said here about rhythm as a balancing resource, one among many. In something like this spirit one linguist and metricist has

syllabic quantities but to the less definable instinct of balancing parts whose exact accentual values are not measurable and probably never were." The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible (New York, 1964), III, p. 834.

observed,

Tomashevskij⁵³ . . . considered meter merely as an auxiliary device, the measure of equivalence of verse lines . . . The poetry of the Hebrew Bible--a "natural" free-rhythmic system--is built basically on this principle. A "line" consists of two (or seldom three) simple groups, usually parallel, or partially parallel, in their syntactic and semantic structure. These basic units are not equal; all attempts to correct the text in order to achieve strict numbers make no sense from any textual point of view. (The same is true of attempts to reconstruct exact strophes.)⁵⁴ But there is no need for this. The rhythmic impression persists in spite of all "irregularities."⁵⁵

5.

Since Lowth and Gray, most of our understanding about parallelism has come from Biblical archeology and the comparison of the relation of the verse-halves in Hebrew with that in other literatures.

The impulse to look elsewhere for analogous uses of parallelism is found even in the earliest days of what can be called Biblical criticism, among Hellenized Jews

⁵³Boris Tomaševskij, Russian Formalist critic, about whom see V. Erlich, Russian Formalism, 's-Gravenhage, 1955.

⁵⁴He is referring to the attempts (begun in the last century) to see a strophic or stanzaic structure in passages of the Prophets and in Psalms. As Hrushovsky observes, previous research has not met with reportable success. See Eissfeldt, OT, pp. 63-4; Robinson, 131-2.

⁵⁵B. Hrushovsky, "On Free Rhythms in Modern Poetry" in T. A. Sebeok (ed.), Style in Language (Cambridge, 1960), p. 189.

and the Greek Church Fathers. And, indeed, parallelism as a general phenomenon can be found in a variety of literatures, prose and poetry; it has been analyzed as a form of "coupling," which one critic sees as the principle behind nearly all poetic structure.⁵⁶ It is not surprising, then, that parallelism as an organizing principle exists in literatures unrelated to Hebrew, for example, Chinese⁵⁷ and Japanese;⁵⁸ the runon kerto or Finnish form of parallelism has often been compared to Biblical parallelism.⁵⁹ But the most interesting comparisons, understandably, are those between Hebrew parallelism and similar phenomena in the literatures of other Near Eastern civilizations, for here there is evidence of a common origin.

⁵⁶ Samuel R. Levin, "The Conventions of Poetry" in S. Chatman (ed.), Literary Style (1971) and Levin, Linguistic Structures in Poetry (Janua Linguarum series no. 23, 's-Gravenhage, 1962), pp. 30-41. Parallelism is also discussed by Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics" in Sebeok, op. cit., p. 369.

⁵⁷ See Newman and Popper, op. cit., pp. 68-74.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 75-6.

⁵⁹ See, for example, G. B. Gray's discussion of the Kalevala in op. cit., p. 38, as well as the extended discussion in Newman and Popper, pp. 61-8. In my view, however, all these comparisons are somewhat superficial in that they focus on no more than the fact of paralleling. Furthermore, the analogy is complicated by the presence of a definite alliterative pattern in the Finnish line as well as a kind of meter. See P. Kaparsky, "Metrics and Morphophonemics in the Kalevala," in D. C. Freeman, Linguistics and Literary Style (New York, 1970), pp. 165-81.

Until the end of the eighteenth century, all that was known about ancient Israel and its neighbors came from the Bible and a few other scattered accounts; but beginning at that time, archeology began to reveal something more of the region's history. The first decipherment was of Old Persian (by G. F. Grotefend in 1802), a discovery which led to the further decipherment of Elamite (the ancient language of an area in southwestern Iran) and what is now called Akkadian (i.e., the language of Akkad or Agade, the ancient civilization of what is now Western Iraq; Akkadian was also called Assyrian and Babylonian); the decipherment of Akkadian was not completed until 1857, and, of course, work has proceeded since on the language's vocabulary and structure, as well as on the vast store of literary and other texts. In 1877, E. de Sarzac unearthed the first remains of Sumerian civilization, and this and subsequent finds provided further information about the origins of Near Eastern literatures. (Sumerian is not a Semitic language--in fact it is an agglutinative language and has no known cognate--but its civilization is closely connected with Babylon's; there are a great many Sumerian loan-words in Akkadian--and vice versa--⁶⁰ and much of Babylonian mythology and indeed their script, religion and other

⁶⁰ Even in the earliest known texts; see S. N. Kramer in JAOS 63, p. 71, note 4.

aspects of their culture come from Sumer.)⁶¹

As these literatures became available it was observed that a form of parallelism existed in hymns, proverbs and epics throughout the ancient Near East. In fact, the parallelism of the verses in some of the texts was even indicated in the writing, by means of spacing and/or a vertical "verse-divider" mark (in Akkadian) and the so-called "verse-points" in Egyptian.⁶² Perhaps stimulated by the gains of archeology, writers about parallelism turned their attention to resemblances between Hebrew and the oldest strains of Arabic literature; following the work of I. Goldziher⁶³ Gray and Newman adduced the resemblance of saj⁶⁴ ("unmetered poetry," later rhymed, it is regarded as the earliest form of Arabic poetry)⁶⁴ to Biblical

⁶¹This whole subject is discussed in S. N. Kramer, History Begins at Sumer (New York, 1959), and Kramer, "Sumerian Literature: A General Survey" in G. E. Wright (ed.), The Bible and the Ancient Near East. Sumerian was a dead language by 1500 B.C., but continued to be cultivated in Babylonian priestly circles all the way until Christian times (W. F. Albright, History, Archeology and Christian Humanism/HACH/ [New York, 1964], p. 111.)

⁶²The verse-points were a New Kingdom invention, but the principle of division into thought-couplets, each couplet forming a unit of grammar, rhetoric and thought, is certainly older. See, J. L. Foster, "Thought Couplets in Khety's 'Hymn to the Inundation,'" JNES 34 (Jan. 1975), pp. 14-15.

⁶³Abhandlungen zur Arabische Philologie (Leyden, 1896); he already had made comparisons with Hebrew "poems" such as the Balaam oracles (p. 42).

⁶⁴See R. A. Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs (London, 1930), p. 74. Note also Saadya's descriptions of saj⁶⁴, rajaz and hatba in his discussion of the forms of poetry in N. Allony (ed.) האגדה והאגדה (Jerusalem 1968), pp. 79-81.

parallelism. D. H. Mueller had already shown the existence of bits of parallelism in the Qur'an.⁶⁵

Apart from the fact of parallelism's existence elsewhere, however, these comparisons were not particularly enlightening. The archeological finds had yielded a great deal of information about literary genres (as well as vocabulary, subject matter, stylistic traits, and so forth) which could be applied to Biblical texts; but about parallelism they did no more than indicate its widespread use.⁶⁶ Early on, evidence was adduced to show that Akkadian texts were written with a regular rhythmical structure of four beats per line (its regularity was somewhat overstated). Furthermore, vertical division marks were found on one tablet which not only set off the parallelism, but subunits as well. Applying this marking system to the opening lines of the Enûma éliš one obtains:

⁶⁵Newman and Popper, op. cit., p. 102.

⁶⁶One of the observations made at this period [by Moulton, Smith, both cited in Newman and Popper, pp. 94, 136; see also H. Zimmern in *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* (ZA) 8 (1893), p. 123; 9 (1894), 338-9] was that "prose" texts often contained "poetic" fragments in their midst. This had obvious implications for the Bible--see infra on narrative parallelism--but their significance was missed, indeed, still is. Albright (YGC), p. 30, Myers (The Literary and Linguistic Form of the Book of Ruth, Leiden, 1955) attribute the presence of such "poetic fragments" in Biblical narrative to some ancient "poetic version" of the Pentateuch stories. See, also, John Gray, The Legacy . . . , pp. 307-8.

enûma / éliš / lâ nabû / šamâmu
 šápliš / ámmatum / šúma / lâ zâkrat

The divisions were read as metrical,⁶⁷ and the resulting sub-units termed metrical "feet."⁶⁸ This, in turn, strengthened the case of those who, rightly perceiving meter and parallelism as rivals for the organizing principle of Hebrew "verse," sought to diminish parallelism's importance and make it essentially a "color of rhetoric."⁶⁹

But parallelism's fortune's were to rise again with what has been by far the most significant archeological find for the study of Hebrew thus far,⁷⁰ the excavation of the ancient city of Ugarit at Ras Shamra on the north Syrian coastline above Latakia. The story of the excavation, which was accomplished by C.F.A. Schaeffer starting in 1929, as well as the general significance of the tablets found there, has been described in numerous books and

⁶⁷H. Zimmern in ZA 8, pp. 121-4; ZA 10, pp. 1-20; also A. Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis (Chicago, 1942), pp. 15-16. However, the regularity of this meter is undeniably interrupted: see "La métrique de l'épopée babylonienne," Cahiers du groupe François-Thureau-Dangin I (1960), pp. 145-52.

⁶⁸Zimmern, loc. cit.; also, F. Delitzsch, Das Babyl. Welterschöpfungsepos (Leipzig, 1896), pp. 60-68; E. Sievers in ZA 38 (1929), pp. 1-38.

⁶⁹See Hölscher, "Elements arabischer . . ." BZAW 34 (1920), p. 93.

⁷⁰With the stated reservation concerning the Ebla finds.

articles⁷¹ and there is no need to repeat this material here. Let it suffice to say that Ugaritic (as the language of the tablets was called) proved to be a Northwest Semitic language quite close to Hebrew, and its hymns, epics and other material offer the closest analogue yet discovered to the songs and narratives of the Bible.⁷² Specifically, Ugaritic has brought out three interesting aspects of Hebrew parallelism: the use of certain "fixed pairs" of parallel terms (mentioned briefly already); the phenomenon of repetitive or climactic parallelism; and "proto-logical" parallelism. Each of these ought to be re-examined here in the light of what has been said about "A over-against B."

⁷¹John Gray, The Legacy , pp. 1-10; Dahood's introduction to Psalms I.

⁷²Dahood's claim that Hebrew and Ugaritic are both "dialects" of "Canaanite" must be qualified; see C. Rabin, "The Origins of the Subdivisions of Semitic" in Hebrew and Semitic Studies (Driver Festschrift), p. 110; also, Gordon, UM 5.16 (p. 26). Dialect vs. language arguments are sometimes polemics masquerading as linguistics; as B. Pritzak, a professor of Ukrainian history, once remarked, "After twenty years I have finally understood the difference: a language is a dialect that has an army." Indeed, the major flaw of Dahood's Psalms commentary is that he is incapable of rejecting any possible Ugariticism that suggests itself to him in the text. But the two tongues are at least as different as Spanish and Italian.

6.

The discovery of "fixed pairs" in the parallelism of Ugaritic and Hebrew⁷³ was a sensational find, for the fact that Ugaritic shared with Hebrew a store of conventionally apposed terms ("earth" - "dust"; "enemy" - "adversary"; "head" - "pate"; "cup" - "goblet", etc.) indicated an essential community in their literatures.⁷⁴ Furthermore, the pairs show again about parallelism that it is not so much a matter of matching the meaning of entire half-verses as establishing the feeling of balance between A and B; in many of the verses, the "pair" is the only joining element:

בדי שאל חרדנה אם יחד על עפר נחה

[איוב י"ז:טז]

⁷³See note 9.

⁷⁴Of course, this observation must be tempered by another, that every language, even those without parallelistic writings, has its stock of conventional synonyms and antonyms; especially in the case of a pair which appears only a few times in the Bible, it would be difficult to know whether to assign the recurrences to poetic convention or something still more basic in the language. Cassuto suggests that the pairs only developed little by little into conventions through repeated use, i.e., that certain natural pairs "gradually distinguished themselves by their versatility and became standardized." See his מספרות

מספרות Tarbiz, 14, p. 1.

The pairs themselves were stereotypical even as to their order, the first word being in general the more common, the second "literary"--though the order was reversible.⁷⁵

Their cliché-like character ought not to be overstated, however. Originality, at least as we conceive of it, is a modern concern; as in medieval, so in Biblical aesthetics, it was the slight differences within a conventional framework that pleased.⁷⁶ This is an important point, for in the existence of parallel pairs some have wished to see evidence that the "poets" of the Psalms and other parts of the Bible composed "on their feet"⁷⁷ in a manner analogous to the "poet-performers" described by Parry and Lord in Yugoslavia.⁷⁸ But conventional language of this sort does not in the slightest indicate that the verses were composed extemporaneously.

⁷⁵ See Boling, "'Synonymous' Parallelism . . ." in JSS 5 (1960), pp. 221-55.

⁷⁶ See on this Cassuto, The Goddess Anath "Stereotyped Formulae", p. 35 ff, as well as D. Pagis המקורות והמקוריות (Jerusalem, 1971).

⁷⁷ Stanley Gevirtz, Patterns in the Early Poetry of Israel (Chicago, 1973), p. 10.

⁷⁸ See Albert Lord, The Singer of Tales (Cambridge, 1960). For writings about "oral theory" in Hebrew see Gevirtz, op. cit.; R. C. Culley, Oral Formulaic Language . . . (Toronto, 1967); also his articles in VT 13 (1963), p. 113 and Interpretation 28 (1974), p. 165. His Studies in the Structure of Hebrew Narrative (Philadelphia, 1976) does not deal with pair-words, but continues the oral theory in "prose"; cf. D. M. Gunn in VT 24 (1974), p. 286. I disagree entirely with the point of view of these articles and books.

Unfortunately, the discussion of parallel pairs has often focused attention on them to the detriment of the line as a whole. Thus, a standard trope-of-beginning for a song or speech in Hebrew is the summoning of the audience's attention. This is usually accomplished through a pair such as "hear . . . listen . . .":

Listen O Heavens and I will speak // and hear O
Earth my words
(Deut. 32:1)

Hear O Heavens, listen Earth // for the L-rd has
spoken
(Is. 1:2)

Hear the word of the L-rd, rulers of Sodom // listen
to the teaching of our G-d, people of Gomorrah
(Is. 1:10)

Hear O Kings, listen Princes // I of the L-rd, of
the L-rd I sing
(Judges 5:3)

Hear my prayer, O L-rd, and my cry // listen to
my tears
(Psalm 39:13)

Hear this all peoples // and listen all dwellers
on Earth
(Psalm 49:2)

Hear this, O priests // And hearken, all Israel //
And hear me, you of the royal palace
(Hosea 5:1)

Hear my words, wise men // And you knowing ones,
listen⁷⁹
(Job 34:2)

⁷⁹ Many other examples could be adduced for this pair; in addition, other pairs, e.g., *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי וְיָדַעְתִּי*, exist. Other main tropes of beginning in Hebrew are "I will sing . . . I will tell . . ." (or "shout," "rejoice," etc.); "Praise . . . shout . . ." "Sing ye . . . Rejoice . . ." etc.; "Let us sing . . ." etc.; note also the legal "Speak to the Israelites [etc.] . . . and say to them . . ."

Now in all of these, to focus on the fixed pair "hear . . . listen . . ." is to consider precisely the part of least interest to the ancient Hebrew ear.⁸⁰ It is, as I have said, a trope of beginning, and utterly predictable.

What is interesting in these lines are the subtle variations --including, of course, who is being summoned: Heaven and Earth (i.e., I am about to sing a song of eternal scope), kings and noblemen, nations and peoples, etc.--these are what tell the story. Fixed pairs only serve to establish the parallelism of two verse-halves; just because of their fixity they are the element that takes the least advantage of the parallelism. This point is important, for in the enthusiasm following the discovery of the pairs, the differences between A and B have occasionally been overlooked. Let one example stand for many: the war-boast of Lamech (Gen. 4:23-4). One student of the pair phenomenon⁸¹ has sought to explain the passage as "synonymous" parallelism; this leads him to suppose that the line which he translates:

כי איש הרגתי לפצעי וילד לחברתי

"For I have slain a man for my wound // Even a boy for my hurt"

⁸⁰See Gevirtz, op. cit., p. 27; Cassuto, op. cit., p. 38.

⁸¹Gevirtz, op. cit., pp. 25-34.

refers to a single incident, and that "man" and "boy" are, in fact, a "pair," i.e., references to one and the same person. He finds this man-boy pair a "deliberate rejection of the traditional 'man - son of Man [sic]' parallelism" which must, therefore, be explained as a striking attempt to underscore the youth of the "upstart would-be hero." The writer is so caught up in the synonymity of word pairs he sees them even where they do not exist.

Of course, there is no need for any of this, and even he finds troubling the question "why should Lamech boast of having slain a boy, a child?" Actually, the verse should be read:

Ada and Şillah hear my voice // Women of Lamech
listen to my words

I would kill a man for [i.e., to avenge] my wound //
in fact a boy for a bruise

If [as is said]⁸² Cain is avenged seven-fold //
Then Lamech seventy-seven!

The qtl forms of the second line are conditionals, not past (cf. Gen. 42:8, Judges 9:9 and ff), as they are usually mistranslated. Initial ki is an indicator for this conditional sense and its presence here is otherwise difficult to explain. "Man" and "boy," far from being synonyms, instead work to create a "sharp" crescendo of unequal retribution: I would kill a man for only wounding me, in fact, an innocent boy (there is no reason to suppose the child is

⁸²Gen. 4:15.

actually the inflictor of the wound--if Lamech is such a fierce warrior the image is on the contrary somewhat trivializing and difficult to imagine) to avenge a bruise; Cain's retribution is already grossly, proverbially unfair --but mine will be far worse!

Another development to come out of Ugaritic research was a renewal of interest in what was now styled "repetitive" or "climactic" parallelism, which Briggs had called "step-like" parallelism because it halted at the caesura, then repeated part of A as an increment of B:

Who is like Thee among the Mighty, O L-rd
 Who is like Thee made great in holiness
 Awesome of praise, working wonders
 (Ex. 15:11)

Actually, this particular form of parallelism had been noticed by Lowth in his discussion of "synonymous" parallelism;⁸³ he designated it a special class of the synonymous group, distinguished by "iteration of the former member." Among the examples he listed were Pss. 94:1 and 3; 129: 1 and 2; Judges 15:16, Isaiah 15:1; Nahum 1:2; he also noticed cases in which the A half is left with "something wanting," supplied after the repetition in the B half (Ps. 105:20; Isaiah 49:7). Before Lowth, the phenomenon had been described by Rashi's grandson, Rashbam, in his commentary on Exodus 15 (see Chapter 4).

⁸³Lowth, Lectures on the Sacred Poetry (1787), vol. II, p. 39.

This same form of parallelism was found in abundance in the Ras Shamra tablets:⁸⁴

y _t br hrn ybn	May Haran break, my son
y _t br hrn r'ešk	May Haran break your head
(_t trt šm b(_l qdqdk	Attarat the Name of Baal your pate

Indeed, striking resemblances were discovered between Ugaritic and Hebrew passages:

For behold, Thy enemies, O L-rd.
 For behold, thy enemies will perish
 (Ps. 92:10)

h _t 'ebk tmhs	Behold, you will strike your enemy
h _t tšmt šrtk	Behold, you will subdue your adversary ⁸⁵

Because it had been isolated in texts of reputed antiquity in Hebrew, and because the Ugaritic texts were of ascertainable antiquity, an attractive hypothesis presented itself: traces of this "repetitive parallelism" in Hebrew are confirmation of the text's antiquity, and may, in fact, become the basis for dating different texts' age. This practice, "stylistic sequence dating," was set forth by the Biblical archeologist W. F. Albright and his students;⁸⁶

⁸⁴W. F. Albright had re-recognized the phenomenon along with proposing a hypothesis about its early date ("The Earliest Forms of Hebrew Poetry" JPOS 2 [1922], pp. 69-82) even before H. L. Ginsberg described its existence at Ugarit (see note 9). The latter article thus seemed to come as a confirmation of the former.

⁸⁵Gordon, UM 68:9.

⁸⁶See YGC, chapter 1.

according to this theory, repetitive parallelism (as exemplified in Judges 5, Exodus 15, etc.) gradually gave way to paronomasia (as in the Blessing of Jacob, Gen. 49). This was a fundamental shift in Hebrew aesthetics carried out over some period of time; where we find repetition in untrammelled abundance, as in the Song of Deborah, we, therefore, have a text close to the old, pan-Canaanite style:

Judges 5:6	בימי שמגר בן ענת	בימי יעל חדלו ארחזה
5:7	עד שקמתי דבורה	שקמתי אם בישראל
5:12	עורי עורי דבורה	עורי עורי דברי שיר
5:20	מן שמים נלחמו הכוכבים	ממסלוחם נלחמו...
5:21	נחל קישון גרפם	נחל קדומים נחל קישון
5:23	אורו מרוז אמר מלאך ה'	ארו ארור ישביה
	כי לא באו לעזרת ה'	לעזרת ה' בגבורים
5:24	חברך מנשים יעל	אשת חבר הקיני
	מנשים באהל חברך	
5:27	בין רגליה כרע	נפל שכב
	בין רגליה כרע נפל	
5:30	שלל צבעים לסיסרא	שלל צבעים רקמה

This theory has been found less than entirely convincing,⁸⁷ for the reason that other instances of "repetitive parallelism" have been discerned in a wide variety of Biblical texts, including those of reputedly late periods. The

⁸⁷ See John Gray, The Legacy . . . , pp. 303-5.

latter, including "Songs of Ascents" and other parts of the Psalter, have been dismissed as "archaizing" by proponents of the Albright thesis;⁸⁸ later instances of the repetitive style are supposedly characterized "by a formal and stilted repetitiveness"⁸⁹ not present in the old style. This is a distinction difficult to grasp. In addition to texts in Psalms and the Prophets, one may adduce examples from the very latest elements of the canon:⁹⁰

הבל הבלים אמר קהלה	הבל הבלים הכל הבל
הנך יפה רעיתי	הנך יפה עיניך יונים
אחי מלבנון כלה	אחי מלבנון תבואי
לבבתי אחתי כלה	לבבתי באחד מעיניך
באחד ענק מצורניך	
גן נעול אחתי כלה	גן נעול מעין חתום

If this repetitive style indeed has any particular significance other than that of being simply one more way to achieve the balancing of A and B--a way which avoids the use of epithets, pair-words, etc., and hence, a source of variation--one might as easily seek to explain its abundance

⁸⁸ See Dahood, Psalms III, pp. 194-5.

⁸⁹ Frank Cross, Studies in Ancient Y. Poetry (his dissertation under Albright), Baltimore, 1950, pp. 23-4.

⁹⁰ See Additional Note 1.2 for Albright's ideas on repetition in Song of Songs and a brief refutation of them.

in Ugaritic and certain parts of the Bible (such as--as shown above--Songs of Songs) by factors other than age--geography, for example, or the existence of a particular scribal school, or genre traditions.⁹¹

A third set of observations about Ugaritic poetry also have been enlightening about the nature of parallelism in Hebrew. Again, they have to do with the relation of A and B.

W. F. Albright remarked on what he called "self-contradictory description" in Ugaritic and Hebrew parallelism, in which the second half verse "seems to correct" the first:

For instance, the first half line says that a god "drank wine from a cup of gold," the next half-line that he "drank it from a flagon of silver." A variation on this theme is that a god is given "a cup in one hand, two flagons in both hands." Obviously he could not have held both simultaneously. Evidently these poets, following ancient stylistic tradition, were unconsciously trying to create a vague, changing outline in order to make the picture shimmer, so to speak, in the mind of the listener. Whether this stylistic device made the resulting text sound more sacred, or simply more poetic, we cannot say because we cannot fully penetrate this mentality.⁹²

By way of disagreeing with this last judgment, it is appropriate to adduce here another feature common to the Bible and Ugaritic parallelism, the numerical

⁹¹On this, Dahood, loc. cit. on the term שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹחַ

⁹²Albright, HACH (New York, 1961), p. 95.

saying:⁹³

There are three things that astound me, and four things I do not know: the way of the eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship deep at sea, and the way of a man with a woman.

(Prov. 30:18-19)

For three things the earth trembles, and for four it cannot endure: For a slave who dominates, for a fool who's had his fill, for the hated wife when she is sought, and for the handmaid who is heir to her mistress.

(Prov. 30:21-3)

These two phenomena, "self-contradictory description"⁹⁴ and the numerical sayings are in principle the same phenomenon; their modern misunderstanding derives from the idea that A and B "mean the same thing," for we have lost the Biblical habit of reading B as A's completion. Their relationship here is really "A--and what's more, B" "A, and as a matter of fact, B." "There are three things I do not understand, indeed, four things"--and, of course, in this

⁹³ This topic is explored in W.M.W. Roth, "The Numerical Sequence X/X+1" in VTS 12 (1962), 300-311.

⁹⁴ I should note here my disagreement with Albright's reading of Judges 5:26 as self-contradictory. The tradition is that Yael grabbed both implements--and why not? Similarly, Joshua 10:12-13 makes good sense. The tradition espoused by both the "prose" and "poetic" versions is that a cosmic (not historical) miracle took place--both sun and moon held still. There is no need to assert these were later "misreadings" of an ill-understood poetic tradition, especially when (as above) Albright claims it is not fully penetrable by modern man. What is all too penetrable is the rationalizing intention of his reading.

proverb, four is the privileged position.⁹⁵ The same is true of "one cup . . . two flagons . . ."--no impossibility, just a vivid instance of the "I'll go you one better" mentality of parallelism. This is also true of "a cup of gold . . . a flagon of silver"; here B also adds onto and goes beyond what A stated (it helps to remember that "flagon," in Ugaritic as in English, is the "literary term"⁹⁶ and that silver may have been at times more valued than gold.⁹⁷

None of these expressions are "primitive" or "protological."⁹⁸ What makes them seem so is the notion that A and B are simultaneous: to be sure, a cup cannot be simultaneously gold and silver, any more than the number of things be simultaneously three and four. But that is just the point. B always comes after A, not simultaneously; so B always completes, comments on, explains, particularizes, or, as here, "goes one better."

⁹⁵ That is to say, the proverb is about "the way of a man with a woman," the three others being versions of that.

⁹⁶ See Boling, op. cit.

⁹⁷ Hence, e.g., the Hebrew kesep w^azahab, which, like sor w^ehamor, may be a hierarchical expression. For a parallel of this verse's order, see Proverbs 8:19:

טוב פריי מחרון ופז // וחבואתי מכסף נבחר

⁹⁸ Albright, HACH, p. 95.

7.

An important principle in the reading of parallelism is what has been called (by Theodore of Mopsuestia, who noticed it already in the fifth century) "distribution." In this reading, the parallelism of A and B is "seen through" and recognized as a mere formality: instead of being two independent, parallel assertions, A and B are read as a single idea. That Lowth was aware of this principle has already been alluded to; his example was from Song of Songs (1:5);

I am black and comely, daughters of Jerusalem //
Like the tents of Qedar, like the tent-dwellings of
Solomon

Lowth understood this verse as really meaning "I am black as the tents of Qedar but as beautiful as the tent-dwellings of Solomon."⁹⁹ Leaving aside the merits of this translation,¹⁰⁰ let us note that the same sort of "distribution" is noticed by modern commentators, though not in any systematic way. Thus, D. N. Freedman says of Psalm 135:5

For I know that Y. is great // Our L-rd [is greater]
than all gods.

⁹⁹See op. cit., II, p. 46.

¹⁰⁰The trouble with it is Lowth's "but," which led him to see "tents of Qedar" as somehow opposed to Solomon's tents. Actually, the former were probably known for both their blackness and their beauty.

"We observe that the poet has successfully rearranged the words of a simple declarative statement to produce a poetic couplet. Written as prose the sentence would be:

For I know that our Lord Y. is greater than all the gods."¹⁰¹

Mowinckel, writing about Psalm 90:16 (יראה אל)

(עבדיך פעליך // וחדרך על בניהם)

According to the rules of the "thought rhyme" in Hebrew poetry, there is no question here of two different things, as if "thy servants" . . . may see his "work," but "their sons" see his glory; the two parts express the same thought: let thy servants and their sons see thy work and thy glory, i.e., thy glorious work of salvation; let the present, as well as the coming generation, experience thy grace and thy salvation.¹⁰²

Similarly, in Psalm 72:1

G-d, give your statutes to the king, // and your righteousness to the son of a king

he sees as a single request, for statutes and righteousness.

What all these readings have in common is that they "pierce the parallelistic veil." This is proper insofar as it denies that A and B mean the same thing. "Statutes" is different from "righteousness," "servants" from "[servants'] sons," and Qedar's tents from Solomon's; all recognize that B is not simply marking time by saying the same thought in different words, but adds something

¹⁰¹Freedman, "Prolegomenon" in G. B. Gray, op. cit., p. xxx.

¹⁰²Mowinckel, PIW II, 102.

new, and in this sense making A and B a single assertion. But in such a reading one must guard against blurring the caesura, as Mowinckel has done. To repeat, it is in the nature of the form to understand B as A's completion. "Their sons" seeing G-d's glory is in a "what's more" relationship with A (not because of any distinction between G-d's "work" and "glory," but because of the distinction between the men themselves and their sons, i.e., "not only thy servants, but also their sons . . ."). The same is true of Mowinckel's second case. Here "king's son" is not to be taken as a different person from "king"; the distinction rests on the difference between "statutes" and "righteousness." The line is in truth a play on words, which cannot be understood without the next line after it:

אלהים משפטיך למלך חן	וצדקתך לבן מלך
ידיו עמך בצדק	וענייך במשפט

The ruler who has your mišpateika will be able to judge with sedeq, and if he has your sēdaqah he will treat the case of the poor "b^emišpat." This whole chiasmus rests on distinguishing the shades of meaning between A and B.

Finally, D. N. Freedman's example suffers from its "prose" restatement in that all the "indeed" falls out of it. If the implications of the parallel form are to be preserved, his statement should read: "I myself know that G-d is great, yea, our Master is greater than all the mighty."

To sum up: the "distribution reading" is better than the "restatement reading" in that it recognizes that the differences between A and B are significant; but it fails to understand in what relation B stands to A, it does not take the caesura seriously. As we will see in the next chapter, the rabbinic reading of parallelism was quite the opposite. It was "sharp" to a fault. And so, as Mowinckel quite correctly infers, the parallelism in Psalm 90 was read so that "thy servants" would not be able to see G-d's "glory" but only their sons--hence it was taken as a reference to the Israelites who died in the desert before crossing into the Land. (This, he theorizes, is why the Psalm is attributed to Moses.) Similarly, in the "king" - ~~"king's son"~~ apposition the second term was understood not as "royal personage" (on the model of, e.g., son of man = human being), but literally, "a king who is also the son of a king"; the Psalm was ascribed to Solomon.

8.

The categories "poetry" and "prose," it has been asserted, are inappropriate in a discussion of parallelism, for no such distinction appears to operate in the Bible itself. Certainly, the presence of parallelism ought not to be taken as evidence of "poetry," lest all sorts of things--genealogies, laws, cultic procedures--be forced

under a rubric utterly inappropriate to them. But another alternative ought to be vigorously opposed as well: the assertion that there is a "prose" parallelism as well as a "poetic" kind, i.e., the elevating of some other structural feature such as rhythm to be the deciding criterion for the distinction between poetry and prose, while accepting parallelism as an ornament of style common to both. To oppose this view the foregoing analysis of the role of rhythm is crucial: rhythm, even at its most regular in Hebrew, is only roughly regular, and from here to near-total irregularity (= "prose") are parallelistic compositions of all grades and shades. Judged on its rhythmic organization, is Psalm 23 a "poem" or a "prose meditation"?

ה" רעי לא אחסר

בנאזה דשא ירביצני על מי מנחות ינהלני

נפשי ישובב ינחני במעגלי צדק למען שמו

גם כי אלך בגיא צלמות לא אירא רע כי אתה עמדי

שבטך ומשענתך חמה ינחמני

תעך לפני שלחן נגד צררי

דשנת בשמן ראשי כוסי רויה

אך טוב ואחסר ירדפוני כל ימי חיי

ושבתי בבית ה" לארך ימים

To repeat: rhythm is only an aspect of the "balancing style" in Hebrew, one that was easily stretched or sacrificed, for example, in the interests of the balance of meanings.

The case of Biblical narrative points up sharply the short-comings of the prose-or-poetry approach, for it has been largely overlooked in discussions of parallelism, partly because it lacks the parallelism-of-meaning of Lowth's parallelismus membrorum, and partly because of a greater variety in the length of clauses. Yet there are passages of unmistakable balance, "parallelistic narrative" in every sense. About this large body of material a few general observations may be made:

1. The most important stylistic feature of Biblical narrative is the waw-conversive (also called the waw-consecutive). Its grammatical function, the attributing of perfective meanings to yqtl verbs in a sequence of successive actions, is well known, and various theories about the origins of this function have been advanced.¹⁰³ But the waw-conversive serves another, most important purpose: it marks the beginning of a new line, or half verse, in parallelistic narrative. That is to say, the narrative line in Hebrew often falls into roughly balancing clauses, A and B, which, however, do not echo each other in meaning,

¹⁰³ See Moran, "The Hebrew Language in its Northwest Semitic Background" in G. E. Wright (ed.), The Bible and the Ancient Near East, p. 65; also, C. Rabin, op. cit., p. 110. To the latter's examples of Judges 5 and Deut. 32 as texts which "still used free yqtl perfectively" might be added our texts Pss. 105 and 106, where one finds free yqtl used perfectively (e.g., 106: 11, 19); wa(n?) + yqtl used perfectively; and, of course, pairs of qtl verbs used perfectively.

but present a sequence of different actions. In this the particle waw, prefixed most often to verbs, but also to other elements, serves to punctuate the narrative. It compensates the absence of strict parallelism of meaning. It is, therefore, not at the near-absence of waw-conversives in Ugaritic narrative that one might wonder,¹⁰⁴ but rather at their superabundance in the Bible. And this, in turn, should lead one to conclude that--whatever their origin--their use here is essentially a feature of style in the service of a narrative which does not proceed by repetitions or strict parallelism of meaning, but by a looser balancing which, therefore, has need of some external to mark its line-divisions.

In other words, what might be called the "waw-style" in narrative is--far from being "prose"--a development particular to Hebrew) of the parallelistic brand of narrative common to Hebrew, Ugaritic, Akkadian and other Near Eastern literatures.

2. A number of compositions clearly identified as psalmic in character (Pss. 78, 105, 106; Deut. 32) contain brief narratives in the "waw-style," amidst verses of the more conventionally parallelistic sort. Psalm 106 will serve as an example. It begins with verbs balancing each other

¹⁰⁴Gordon, UM, p. 121.

in parallel clauses, much as in Ugaritic¹⁰⁵

חטאנו עם אבותינו העוין הרשענו

אבותינו במצרים לא השכילו נפלאותיך לא זכרו את רב חסדיך

then it switches to the waw-style

וימרו על ים בים סוף ויושיעם למען שמו

להודיע את גבורתו

ויגער בים סוף ויחרב ויוליכם בתהמות כמדבר

וישיעם מיד שונא ויגאלם מיד אויב

ויכסו מים צריהם אחד מהם לא נותר

ויאמינו בדבריו ישירו תהלתו

Most of the lines in this Psalm exhibit the balancing of meaning observable in other parallelism. There are even pair-words (שונא-אויב). But some lines already give hint of greater independence, for example, those beginning . . . וימרו and . . . ויאמינו above. Here one action balances another only in the most general way, with B being A's sequel in the story. There are other lines later, for example

וימירו את כבודם בתבנית שור אכל עשב 106:20

ויחזו אוחם לרחמים לפני כל שוביהם 106:46

where the caesura all but disappears.

Deut. 26:5-10 served a cultic function: it was solemnly chanted (וְנִיחַ וְאָמַרְתָּ) at the offering of the First Fruits. This short song shows a more sequential use

¹⁰⁵ See additional note 1.3.

of the waw-style:

אֶרְמִי אֶבֶד אֲבִי	וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרַיִם
וַיֵּגֶר שָׁם	בְּמַחֲתֵי מַעֲטָה
וַיְהִי שָׁם לִגְזֵי גְדוֹל	עֲצוֹם זָרָב
וַיִּרְעוּ אֲחֵינוּ הַמִּצְרִיִּם	וַיִּשְׁנֻנוּ
וַיַּחֲנוּ עֲלֵינוּ	עֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה
וַנִּצְעַק אֶל ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ	וַיִּשְׁמַע ה' אֶת קִלְנוּ
וַיִּרְא אֶת עֲנֵינוּ	וַאֲת עֲמַלְנוּ וַאֲת לַחֲצֵנוּ
וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ ה' מִמִּצְרַיִם	בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה
וּבְמֶרָא גְדֹל	וּבְאַחֲזוֹת וּבְמַפְתִּיִּם
וַיַּבְאֵנוּ אֶל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה	וַיַּחֲנוּ לָנוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת
אֶרֶץ זֶבֶת חֶלֶב וְדִבְשׁ	

Here the rough balancing of A and B is not reinforced by a strict parallelism of meaning, save in a few cases; B's action on the contrary simply succeeds A's, i.e., completes it sequentially rather than adding more detail: "He went down . . . he dwelt . . . he became . . . The Egyptians persecuted . . . tortured . . . and put . . . We cried . . . He heard . . ." Note, also, that A and B usually share a common subject for their verbs; verse 7, . . . וַיִּשְׁמַע ה' . . . וַנִּצְעַק is an exception to this rule, though obviously here B's action is a consequence of A's. Finally, it should be noted that while all the lines begin with waw, not all are waw-conversives: וּבְמֶרָא is a simple connective.

3. Now in this same balancing style one finds various parts of the Bible generally recognized as being in "prose." Thus, for example, the Exodus account of the birth of Moses:

וילך איש מבית לוי	ויקח את בת לוי
ותהר האשה	ותלד בן
ותרא אחו	כי טוב הוא
ותצפנהו שלשה ירחים	ולא יכלה עוד הצפינו
ותקח לו תבת גמא	ותחמרה בהמר ובזפת
ותשם בה את הילד	ותשם בסוף על שפת היאר
ותתצב אחתו מרחק	לדעה מה יעשה לו
ותרד בת פרעה	לרחץ על היאר
ונערתייה הלכת	על יד היאר
ותרא את החבה	בתוך הסוף
ותשלח את אמתה	ותקחה ותפתח
ותראהו את הילד	והנה נער בכה
ותחמל עליו	ותאמר
מילדי העברים זה	

The parallelism has some echoing elements: "beit lewi" - "bat lewi"; watispenehu" - "has^espino"; and "wattasem" - "wattasem." But the actions are generally of the sequential sort; where B has a waw-conversive of its own, it does not echo A's action, but moves on to the next item in the sequence. Note how A and B are related:

A Levite went out // He took a Levite woman

She conceived and had a son // She saw how good he was

She hid him three months // She could not hide him more

She took a gomeh-box // She smeared it with pitch and slime

She put the boy in it // She put [it] in the reeds by the river

His sister stood far off // To find out what would happen to him

Pharoah's daughter went down // to wash by the river

Her maidens were walking // alongside the river

She saw the box // amidst the reeds

She sent her servant-girl // She grabbed it and opened

She saw the child // and look! a boy crying

She had pity on him // She said

"This one is from the Hebrew children."

4. When, in the midst of such a narrative, direct conversation breaks the narrative sequence, the conversation will look, to adepts of parallelismus membrorum, like a stray bit of "poetry" amidst the "prose." The common observation that Biblical narrative contains such poetic fragments ought to be reexamined in the light of the waw-style. For example, W. F. Albright asserts of Exodus 14:3 (בְּוֹכִיטָהּ) :

(בארץ // סגר עליהם מרבו) : "In the midst of the condensed account in Exodus, we find th[is] good poetic bicolon [whose meter is]

3.3."¹⁰⁶ This leads him to suggest that the line is a fragment of "obvious antiquity" left over from some now-lost "poetic" saga of the patriarchs. But the lines that follow are equally "poetic." It is just that they are in the waw-style:

וּחִזְקָאִי אֶת לֵב פֶּרַעַה וּרְדָף אַחֲרֵיהֶם
וְאֶכְבְּדָה בַּפֶּרַעַה וּבְכָל חֵילוֹ וַיִּדְעוּ מִצָּרִים כִּי אֲנִי ה'
וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כֵן
וַיִּגְדּוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ מִצָּרִים כִּי בָרַח הָעָם
וַיִּהְיֶה לֵב פֶּרַעַה וְעַבְדֵּיו אֶל הָעָם
וַיֹּאמְרוּ מַה זֹּאת עֲשִׂינוּ כִּי שָׁלַחְנוּ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִעַבְדָּנוּ
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶת רִכְבּוֹ וְאֵת עַמּוֹ לָקַח עִמּוֹ

The same phenomenon may be observed in the internal citation of Psalm 78's narrative:

וַיִּנָּסוּ אֶל בָּלְבָם לִשְׁאֹל אֶכֶל לִנְפֹשׁ
וַיְדַבְּרוּ בֵּאלֵהִים אָמְרוּ
„הֵי יֹכֵל אֵל לַעֲרֹךְ שְׁלַחַן בַּמִּדְבָּר
„הֵן חָכְמוֹת אֲזָרוּ וַיִּזְוּבוּ מִיָּם וַנַּחֲלִיהֶם יִשְׁטָפוּ
„הֵם לֶחֶם יֹכֵל חֵת אִם יִכְיֹז שְׂאֵר לַעֲמֹ
לִבּוֹ שִׁמְעָה ה' וַיַּחְעֲבֵר
וְאֵשׁ נִשְׁקָה בִיעָקֵב וְגַם אֶף שָׁלַח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל

¹⁰⁶YGC, p. 33.

5. Most of the waw-style narrative in the Bible is a good deal more irregular than that cited; nevertheless, the same attention to balancing is observable--and has been observed. Sievers, after all, undertook to scan Genesis and Exodus because he perceived them to be "poetic" (the same may be said of Arvid Bruno). Even if the scansion is wrong, the fact of that initial perception is still a strong assertion. The same perception was made by G. B. Gray. He found Biblical narratives to lack the metrical regularity which he, too, felt a prerequisite of "poetry," and narrative lines he observed to be "sequential" rather than moving in pairs. Still, these sections did not seem to be "prose" either, and he asked:

Had then the ancient Hebrew three forms of composition--metrical poetry and plain prose, and an intermediate type differing from poetry by the absence of metre, and from prose by obedience to certain laws governing the mutual relations between its clauses--a type for which we might as makeshifts employ the terms unmetrical poetry or parallelistic prose?¹⁰⁷

In the light of what has been said about the "balancing aesthetic," Gray's classification problem seems unimportant; what remains is his observation of the presence of parallelism. In this same vein, the testimony of the Massoretic te'amim is also a strong assertion. For here is not just what is often described as a "punctuation of the text"; it is a punctuation which insists that every line in Hebrew

¹⁰⁷Op. cit., p. 46.

divides at the caesura ('etnah), and that these halves, in turn, often subdivide into halves. It is thus a prescription of the general shape a Hebrew line will take: it assumes balancing of some sort as the natural condition of the Hebrew line. The same assumption (it seems to me) underlies the Talmudic injunction that the Bible always be read with a "melody" (Megilla 32a), i.e., that some regular, flexible chant existed for the entire text. This seems to presuppose a regular, or "regularizable" structure to each verse, so that the melody can periodically "touch base" and resolve itself. This is, in fact, how all the various Hebrew chants in existence work, by following the t^e(amim and so melodically dividing and subdividing the lines into roughly balancing units. Both these topics will be taken up in the next chapter.

6. What has been said about parallelism in narrative is equally true of the legal material of the Pentateuch. The strict parallelism of certain legal formulae

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דָּם הָאָדָם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דָּם הָאָדָם (Gen. 9:6)

has long been observed; the difference between law and proverb is not clearly drawn.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, law was not confined to "the gates":

¹⁰⁸ On this point see Eissfeldt, OT, pp. 69-76; S. McEvenue, The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer (Rome, 1971), pp. 70-71 n.

Your laws have become my songs within my dwelling-place

(Ps. 119:54)

They were known, and cited, and their form was (as only might be expected) the "high style" of balanced speech. This is so as well of the complicated "casuistic" law¹⁰⁹ brought in the Pentateuch, and here the waw-style again appears:

ונחנו ה' אלהיך בידך	כי תצא למלחמה על איבך
אשר יפת תאר	ושבית שביו וראית בשביה
והבאתה אל תוך ביתך	וחשקת בה ולקחת לך לאשה
ועשתה את צפרניה	וגלחה את ראשה
וישבה בביתך	והסירה את שמלת טביה מטליה
ירח ימים	ובכתה את אביה ואת אמה
והיתה לך לאישה	ואחר כן תבוא אליה ובעלתה
ושלחתה לנפשה	והיה אם לא חפצת בה
לא תתעמר בה	ומכור לא תמכרנה בכסף
תחת אשר ענייתה	

¹⁰⁹See G. E. Mendenhall, "Ancient Oriental and Biblical Law" reprinted in The Biblical Archeologist Reader III (New York, 1970), p. 9.

Notice how the parallelism serves to divide the law into its different phases, each set in balancing clauses:

This is the Case:

1. When, having won a war, you see amongst the captives a beautiful woman whom you decide to take as your wife

Here is the Procedure:

2. She must shave her head, pare her nails, change from her prisoner's garb and mark a month's mourning for her parents
3. After this she can become your wife.

Proviso:

4. However, you may not subsequently sell her as a slave.

There is certainly no mistaking the Hebrew for anything other than parallelism--indeed, there is even a parallelism of meaning

You shall not sell her for money // you shall not use her for gain

The waw-style, here as in a narrative, brings out that balancing, and makes the sequence a symmetrical, memorable whole.

9.

No survey of Biblical parallelism would be complete without mention of the overall effect produced by successive lines of parallelism. This is an unmistakable feature of Hebrew: its songs and psalms and speeches are

relentlessly aphoristic. That is to say, a line of strict parallelism closes with the click of an epigram. The two halves make a pair, a unit. Like any other tight pairing system, say, Pope's rhyming couplets

Men, some to Business, some to Pleasure take;
But every Woman is at heart a Rake:
Men, some to Quiet, some to public strife
But every Lady would be Queen for life 110

so Biblical lines slam shut. One has often the impression--certainly in the Wisdom psalms, but in other songs as well--that one is confronted not with a unified work, developed from beginning to middle to end, but with a collection of individual m^ešalim strung together on some vaguely common theme. Now that impression is partly correct: one does often find a marked discontinuity--for example, the well-known Shepherd image of Psalm 23, elaborated over six lines, is suddenly interrupted by "You set a table before me . . . You annoint my head with oil . . . ," actions hardly appropriate for a shepherd to perform on behalf of his sheep! But the impression comes as well from the nature of the form. For, given the "click" of each parallelistic pair, an idea or development too large for a single pair can "overflow" in only a few ways. One is well known, the tendency for parallelistic lines to work by "external"

¹¹⁰ Alexander Pope, Moral Essay II, 215. The reader unfamiliar with Pope may object that I have chosen an isolated aphorism; the point is, this is how Pope used his couplets time after time.

as well as internal parallelisms, in other words, for two or more pairs to form themselves a larger parallelism:¹¹¹

As high as the sky is over the earth // so is His
love supreme over his worshippers

As far as the east is from the west // so far has
He cast our sins from us

(Psalm 103:11-12)

More common than this is to preserve the form of "end-stopped"¹¹² lines while developing a single theme. For example, Psalm 133 is essentially a single attribution--of earthly comfort and peace--to Heaven. This theme is pursued in a series of images; peace is

Like good oil [poured] on the head // falling onto
the beard

The beard of Aaron that falls // to the opening of
his vestment

Like the dew of Hermon that falls // on the hills
of Zion

This is about as interconnected as parallel lines can be (and the device is that 'Northern' development, repetitive parallelism). The Psalmist wishes to convey the notion of Heavenly blessings dripping down by stages, so he chooses two images, one of oil and the other of dew. Both of these are typoi of b^erakah, well-being. (See Gen. 27:39 for

¹¹¹See Robinson, op. cit., p. 137.

¹¹²I use this term imprecisely, since by definition a parallelistic pair cannot be enjambed on the next pair. The meaning will be clear in what follows.

Esau's b^erakah, where he is promised the "fats" [= oils] of the earth and the dew of Heaven.) Now obviously, what has attracted him is the notion of stages. In the first, the anointing oil, above the head, is poured down, then goes from head to beard, from beard down to the collar of the vestment. In the second, the dew--which was felt to fall from Heaven just like rain (see above, also Deut. 32 following)--that falls on the lofty Hermon drips as well onto Zion "for there the L-rd has ordained the blessing." In both, it may be observed that as the descent continues, the holiness is specified: the beard becomes Aaron's, indeed, Aaron dressed in officiant's garb;¹¹³ Hermon becomes Zion's hills, whose divine connection is then made explicit. But the point is how this is done. The first line, "Like good oil [poured] on the head falling onto the beard" is a line unto itself. When the Psalmist continues he does not say "And from there . . ." etc.; he introduces an entirely different conceit, "[Like] Aaron's beard falling down to the opening of his garments," another image of luxuriant abundance. That this beard and the last are connected is obvious, but unstated (note the absence of a "like" introducing the second line). It is as if the two units existed independently.

¹¹³ See Dahood, Psalms III, ad loc.

Similar is the opening of the song in Deut. 32:1

Listen, O Heavens, and I will speak // And hear,
Earth, my words

The first line is, as we have seen, a trope of beginning: but the apposed poles, Heavens and Earth, will be taken advantage of in what follows. For in the next line

Let my lesson drop as rain // my speech flow as dew
the Prophet's words are compared to waters that flow from Heaven to Earth; rain and dew are (as we have just seen) symbols of Divine blessings that fall from the skies to man's dwelling-place, and more precisely, a model of prophecy (cf. Isaiah 55:10-11). The next line

Like storm-drops over grasses // and like soft drops
over vegetation¹¹⁴

will be seen to have introduced another element into the simile--the grasses nourished by rain and dew, i.e., those who listen to "my speech." The third line thus completes what is essentially a single image which depicts prophecy's flow from Heaven to Earth, its beneficial character, and those to be nourished by it. But each line exists as

¹¹⁴ I have translated this way because I think a "sharp" distinction is intended. שְׁעִירִים is being associated with סָעָר "storm" because some of the prophetic discourse is to be דְּבַר חִוּכָה ("reproach"); but the ending is comparable to gentle dew (for the association between רִבְבֵי חַיִּים and dew see Mich. 5:6, Ps. 72:6) in that they are נַחֲמָנִים ("consolations"). Both were standard prophetic genres. Incidentally, for the connection between reproach and hard rain, cf. the folk etymology for the rain called yoreh (Deut. 11:14) as coming from horot "teach." See Ta'anit 6a and Rashi, ad loc.

as separate unit. Even the third has been presented as if de novo: new pair-words have been found for rain and dew, the particle k- has been repeated twice more--it is as if a whole new comparison were being offered, instead of the original one elaborated.

A number of related phenomena may all be grouped under the general observation of Hebrew's string-of-m^ešalim method. The first is the phenomenon of duplicate lines. The Psalter, for example, contains numerous lines that appear in two or more Psalms, sometimes in slightly altered form. As noted already, the concepts of authorship and of originality were not so finely honed as today; there was nothing shocking in these duplications. But it is most revealing about the method of the composition of psalms and songs. Were they not put together line by line, drawn indiscriminately from what came to the Psalmist on his own, and what was known to everybody? One critic has most convincingly demonstrated the use of interior citations in the book of Ecclesiastes,¹¹⁵ and it is an analysis whose bounds ought to be extended. After all, the Qumran texts and other post-Biblical sources show a pattern of Biblical citation and allusion which is unmistakable; its prototype, within the Bible itself, was no doubt the citing of, and expansion upon, well-known one-line sayings, Divine

¹¹⁵Gordis, op. cit.

commandments, and so forth. It seems plausible, for example, that Psalm 126:

Those who sow in tears // will reap in rejoicing
was a common saying (cf. Ps. 30:6) which the Psalmist
then glosses to his particular purpose

He who walks weeping // bearing the seed-corn

Surely returns joyful // bearing his sheaves

which contrasts the enormity of the reward-to-come with the small weight of present suffering.¹¹⁶ Were "Those who sow . . ." not a common proverb at the time this Psalm was written, there would be little reason for its inclusion at all, still less for its not being "He who sows . . ." so as to more closely be continued by the following verses.

A number of such citations occur with specific attribution--for example, Ezekiel 12:22-3, I Sam. 24:13--where they are commented upon and developed, but there are doubtless others without attribution.¹¹⁷ Pithy sayings originated by the prophet himself are developed and glossed in the same way. Indeed, while the notion of exact stanzaic construction in the Bible has never been satisfactorily demonstrated, what is ascertainable is the presence of certain ruling images--a brief, mašal-like statement which

¹¹⁶I like Dahood's reading, here as elsewhere, of such passages as having to do with the world-to-come.

¹¹⁷On this tendency in Ecclus. see Baumgartner, Poésie gnomique juive (Geneva, 1886), pp. 38-9.

is then elaborated in subsequent verses. Such is consistently the case in Job; for example, his opening plaint (3:3),

יֵאבֶד יוֹם אֲוִלְדִּי בֹן וְהַלִּילָה אֲמַר הָרָה גִּבֹּר

is then elaborated for the next 22 lines. Similarly, Isaiah 60:1 states in one line the theme and imagery of the entire chapter. It seems to me likely that these lines were regarded as keys; like any mašal, they condensed a great deal of hokmah into few words, whose implications were then spelled out in subsequent lines. The procedure is no different in the great Hebrew exegetical tradition known as midraš, wherein a single verse (quite often from the Hagiographia when it is a Pentateuchal text which is being explicated) is adduced, then elaborated, often in the most fanciful manner, until all its implications have been explored.

These observations are all made by way of pointing to the aphorism as the heart of parallelistic compositions. Many psalms, it has been noted, seem like strings of mēšalim. Perhaps the single most striking proof of this is the curious case of Psalm 68, which W. F. Albright, in a famous article,¹¹⁸ maintained was actually no "psalm" at all but a catalogue of some thirty different psalm incipits --in other words, a table of contents mistaken for a

¹¹⁸"A Catalogue of Early Hebrew Poems (Psalm 68)" in HUCA 23 (1950-51), p. 1.

psalm! Whether he is right or not is immaterial to our point: there is indeed often very little continuity from pair to pair in parallelistic compositions. But even those that are relatively connected present their chain of meaning in individual, seemingly independent, links; the act of putting together is left to the listener. This, in turn, leads us back to mašal^v. For seeking out the subtleties of the relationship A:B is the delight of mašal^v, the prowess of Solomon and the "sharpness" mentioned in wisdom literature; it is how riddles are solved:

From the eater came food // and from the strong, sweet
(Judges 14:14)

So, similarly, the connection between whole lines is left unelaborated, sometimes, so it seems, because there is nothing to elaborate--there is a series of single lines without nearly the same thematic continuity that one would expect in the songs and poems of other literatures; but even when the connection is there, it is the nature of the parallelistic form to pass it over in silence. This Biblical reticence has, in another context, been found to be typical of the difference between Hebrew and Greek writing;¹¹⁹ so in the parallelistic style there is no possibility for compound-complex sentences whose clauses are all set in explicit relationships by a host of

¹¹⁹ Erich Auerbach, Mimesis (New York, 1957), pp. 5-12.

informative conjunctions and adverbial phrases. In Hebrew it is "A is so, and B is so; A is so, and B." All the relations are unstated. Sensitive critics since Lowth have attributed to the mašal a generic importance unknown in Western literatures¹²⁰ because, I think, they have realized that where there is parallelism in the Bible, there is bound to be found the one-line aphorism, the sharp remark, the image that summons up a paragraph. The form

_____ // _____

uniquely fosters the epigrammatic, and in Biblical parallelism the spirit of mašal pervades the whole. Larger parallelistic units do not overcome the singleness of their basic building-block.

10.

Finally, mention ought to be made of the use of parallelism apparent in writings in Hebrew and other languages since the close of the Biblical period. There has been no comprehensive study of this subject. G. B. Gray surveyed it briefly in The Forms of Hebrew Poetry,

¹²⁰ Among modern critics see Eissfeldt, op. cit., who allocates most of the "poetic types" to sayings of various sorts. Note also Mowinckel's term, the "mashal meter."

noting the use of parallelism in the Apocrypha,¹²¹ the New Testament,¹²² and the Talmud.

Indeed, the "balancing style" is found in abundance in the Mishnah and Gemara. It is in no sense an organizing principle, but even as a "habit of mind" affects the general contour of the legal discourse.¹²³ Beyond this, one does find a number of parallelisms in the Biblical manner. Such is the Mishnaic tractate Abot,¹²⁴ a collection of rabbinical aphorisms in which the play of parallelism is a prominent feature:

כדי שיצא רצונך כרצוני עשה רצוני כרצונך
בטל רצונך מפני רצוני כדי שיבטל רצון אחרים מפני רצונך
[אבות ב:ד]

Legal principles are often borne in parallelistic aphorisms

¹²¹Gray mentions the prayers of Tobit, Menasses; the latter part of Baruch; of course Ecclus.; sections of Maccabbees; Psalms of Solomon (see also Mowinckel, PIW II, 117-20 as well as Baumgartner, p. 15); Judith 16.

¹²²On the Magnificat (Luke 1:46), see Tannehill, "The Magnificat as Poem" in JBL 93 (1974), pp. 263-75. On Matth. 25:31-46, see W. F. Burney in Journal of Theological Studies (JTS) 14 (April 1913), pp. 414-24. See, also, PIW II, 123 for the hymns of Zacharias and Mary in Luke and hymns of praise in Revelations.

¹²³See, e.g., Ber. 1:4.

¹²⁴Baumgartner, op. cit., 16-17; cf. other works cited there.

מעלין בקודש ולא מורידין

As happens with any proverb, such sayings are not always applied appropriately;¹²⁵ for example, the high^{(il} form of the above implies its original meaning was some thing that is used for a holy purpose may not then be profaned, but it was adapted to mean, e.g., one proceeds through obligations in ascending order of sanctity. There are also many parallelistic sayings and proverbs of a general nature, cited in Aramaic

סבא בביתא פאחא בביתא

סבא בביתא סימא בביתא

[ערכין י"ט.]

ממחדורי מילי ומסמרטוטי כלמי

[ברכות נ"א:]

and Hebrew

נכנס יין יצא סוד

[ערובין ס"ה.]

The Talmud also contains a short parallelistic dirge on the death of one Hanina:

¹²⁵For example, I have heard the Arabic saying 'al fadi ba(amal qadi explained: 1) sometimes when you are doing nothing special you accomplish a great deal (viz., the work of a qadi); or 2) the race is not to the swift ("an idler gets to become judge.").

ששון ויגיון נדבוקו שמחה לתוגה נהפכה
 בעת חנינחו אבד חנינו בעת שמחתו נאנה
 [מועד קטן כ"ה:]

A much neglected-source of parallelistic material from this period are the prayers still in use today in the Jewish liturgy. A number of them, indeed, date from before the destruction of the Second Temple;¹²⁶ the use of parallelism in the amidah, which forms the core of every synagogue service, has been noted. But, in fact, all the rabbinic benedictions and supplications are parallelistic. The very formulae for berakot as prescribed in the Talmud, e.g.,

(opening)	אלקנו מלך העלם	ברוך אתה ה'
(body)	[attribution]	אשר, ש-ה-וג'
(conclusion)	[attribution]	ברוך אתה ה'

is necessarily parallelistic. And, indeed, the berakot from this period are all parallelistic,

אלקנו מלך העולם	ברוך אתה ה'
יוצר אור ובזרא חשך	עשה שלום ובזרא את הכל
המאיר לארץ	ולדרים עליה ברחמים
בטובו מחדש בכל יום	מעשה בראשית
ברוך אתה ה'	יוצר המארות

Alphabetical acrostics, combined with parallelism of meaning, were a favorite Biblical device (Psalms 9-10, 25, 34,

¹²⁶A. Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy (New York, 1932), p. 24.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 315.

37, 111, 112, 119, 145; Proverbs 31:10; Lamentations 1-4) and continued to be used afterward, sometimes with startling skill and beauty

אל ברוך גדול דעה	הכין ופעל זהרי חמה
טוב יצר כבוד לשמו	מאורות נתן סביבות עזו
פנות צבאות קדושים	רוממי שדי תמיד
תתברך ה' אלסנו	בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת
על כל שבח מעשי ידיך	ועל מאורי אור שיצרת
חמה יפארוך סלה	

תכנת שבת	ראית קרבנותיך
צוית פרושיה	עם סדורי נסכיה
מענגיה לעולם כבוד ינחלו	טועמיה חיים זכו
וגם האזהבים דבריה	גדלה בחרו
אז מסיני נצטוו	צווי פעליה כראוי

I have cited only a few of dozens of liturgical parallelistic compositions which are in every way the inheritors of Biblical parallelism, a worthy subject of study.¹²⁸ Some of this parallelism is "strict," but for the most part Jewish liturgy is as the foregoing, and written with remarkable flexibility of line-length.

¹²⁸ Apart from a few brief mentions (in Newman and Popper, op. cit., Delitzsch, Geschichte der jüdischen Poesie, Leipzig, 1836) the parallelism of the siddur is largely neglected. I find no real recognition of its character in Idelsohn, op. cit., p. 34, nor in the following:
 "א" לוי יסודות התפילה (תל-אביב 1967); "א" לוי חזרה התפילה (תל-אביב 1961); "י" יעקבסון נחיה בינה (תל-אביב 1964)

The same is true of those other prayers, the Qumrun hodayot ("Thanksgiving Hymns")¹²⁹ among the Dead Sea Scrolls. They are essentially liturgical compositions exhibiting the interweaving of original material and Biblical citations which, in one form or another, was to remain the hallmark of Jewish prayer and religious poetry through the Middle Ages and into modern times. The hodayot were no doubt musically rendered, chanted or sung. They show a number of "poetic" features,¹³⁰ including a general balancing of line length and rough parallelism of meaning. But the latter tends to be drawn out over relatively long groups of words, which may sometimes subdivide into halves. Thus the hymn (number six by Licht's reckoning) IQH 3:19 ff--

אודכה א-דוֹנִי

כי פדיתה נפשי משחח ומשאול אבדון העליחני
לרום עולם

ואתהלכה במישור לאין חקר
ואדע כיא יש מקוה לאשר יצרתה מעפר
לסוד עולם

¹²⁹ First published by E. L. Sukenik, The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University (Jerusalem, 1955). Related to them in this discussion are the liturgical fragments and blessings found in Cave 1 (see Milek, The Dead Sea Scrolls Cave I, Oxford, 1955: pp. 153-5, 118-29).

¹³⁰ J. Licht, (1957 י-ב) מגילה ההודיות, p. 12 ff.

מִשְׁעֵר רֶבֶב	וְרוּחַ נְעוּזָה טָהֳרָתָהּ
עִם צִבְיָה קְדוּשִׁים	לְהִתְצַב בַּמַּעֲמָר
עִם עֲדָת בְּנֵי שָׁמַיִם	וּלְבֹא בִיחָד
עִם רוּחוֹת דַּעַת	וְתַפֵּל לְאִישׁ גּוֹרֵל עוֹלָם
בִּיחָד רִינָה	לְהִלֵּל שְׁמִכָּה
לְנֹגֵד כֹּהֵל מַעֲשִׂיכָה	וּלְסַפֵּר נִפְלְאוֹתֶיהָ

Here is nothing resembling the "strict" parallelism of, say, Job and most of the Psalter; no theory of the metrical nature of parallelism would get far with the hodayot. Yet it is undeniably parallelism,¹³¹ and it no doubt had its place alongside the Psalms in the worship of the Qumran community. Indeed, the first-person trope-of-beginning "I will give thanks" used in each hymn is, as noted, a standard feature of the Psalms,¹³² leaving little doubt as to their generic filiation. Now it does little good to characterize the metrical irregularity of these compositions as a "dis-integration"¹³³ of the Biblical style. Certainly, most modern-day readers of the Hebrew Psalms could counterfeit their style tolerably well, and there is no reason to suppose the author of the hodayot could not also have done so if this were his aim. What we have then is a development of the Biblical style, and another instance where the rigid notion of parallelismus membrorum breaks down. Their similarity to the prayers of the siddur is striking;

¹³¹Note especially the use of waw to indicate line beginnings.

¹³²E.g., Pss. 9:2, 111:1, 138:1,2.

¹³³PIW, p. 121.

whether the relative looseness of the paralleling in both is a concomitant of the genre of "learned psalmography" or a more general stylistic development cannot be stated with certainty.

11.

Because certain aspects of Biblical parallelism are still contested or ignored, this survey of the subject has unavoidably had to assume the character of a prise de position, placing emphasis on those points not now generally recognized while dealing with matters on which there is agreement in less detail. But with the main elements of that position established, it might now be appropriate to bring them together into an overall description of parallelism in the Bible.

1. Parallelism is the "high speech" of the Bible. It organizes discourse into roughly symmetrical, balancing units ("A and B").

This balancing operates by various means: approximate equivalence of the length of A and B; the use of syntactically similar phrases in both; repetition in B of words or phrases from A, or the parallel use of paired concepts in both ("by day . . . // at night . . .") or of proper names and their corresponding epithets, or of

paronomasia, alliteration, etc.;¹³⁴ or even a word-for-word echoing or answering of meaning in the verse-halves. The impression of balance or correspondence is the aim of the parallelistic style; all the aforementioned are marshalled in service of this goal, but no one of them is so consistently used as to constitute in itself the "organizing structure" of this style. The (polymorphous) balancing is the structure.

Furthermore, there is an obvious interrelatedness in the factors cited. Syntactic similarity will make for rough equivalence of line-length. The goal of equivalent line-lengths may lead to the use of repetitions, epithets, "ballast variants," etc. Parallelism of meaning usually entails syntactic similarity. None of these considerations comes first; they are all aspects of the balancing.

2. The balancing style springs from an even broader phenomenon, a "balancing aesthetic" observable in units larger than a single line.

3. On its face, the relationship of the verse-halves (A and B) is one of coordination: typically, two syntactically independent assertions are connected by an "and." But the essence of the balancing style is that B is not

¹³⁴ See on these last two the chapters so headed in Alonso-Schökel, op. cit.

independent of A: it is A's correspondent, enlarging on A's meaning, continuing it, echoing it, or reflecting back on it. What looks like coordination is therefore very often subordination, wherein the connective "and" (or indeed the absence of any connective) really stands for a subordinating phrase. (Sometimes the subordination is spelled out, but it need not be.) Once the mind is attuned to subordination as a possibility, "mere" coordination starts to lose ground; every B is scrutinized for whatever nuances may set it "over-against" A.

The proper approach to parallelism is thus not one that sees A and B as independent, coordinated statements, nor yet one that "sees through" the coordination and re-distributes the elements of A and B into a single assertion ("the distribution reading"). Instead it is one that is constantly aware of B's "afterwardness" and reads it as a potential addition to, a going-beyond, A--though, to be sure, what B adds is not always a significant nuance, but simply the pleasure of a parallel, corresponding statement.

4. In some verses the relationship A:B is, it seems, deliberately elusive; this is the "sharpness" of hiddah, mašal, dibrei hakamim. In rabbinic times, as we shall see, this "sharp" reading was carried to its logical limits.

5. In Hebrew narrative in the balancing style, A and B often do not exhibit a parallelism of meaning, but

describe successive actions in the sequence of events. The use of the waw-consecutive here serves the balancing style, the waw usually marking the beginning of each new line. The same is true in legal passages.

6. The balancing of A and B makes for rough regularity of rhythm in some compositions. That this regularity was deliberately cultivated here and there in the Bible seems highly probable; at the same time, it was only rough, and always only an aspect of the balancing style. To attribute to Hebrew certain metrical patterns, accentual, syllabic, or other, is utterly misleading, a fortiori to amend the text metri causa.

7. The parallelistic pair, or triplet, is the building-block of songs, blessings, curses, oracles, prayers, sermons, etc. Its singleness does not easily blend into the larger composition; this makes for a relentlessly aphoristic style. The mašal was much prized in ancient Israel, the vehicle in which Divine and human wisdom went abroad. It characterizes much of the writings of the Jews in the early post-Biblical period.

If this be a reasonable summary of Biblical parallelism, the question might arise as to why it has not been common knowledge for centuries--indeed, how could such a straight-forward and obvious structure have been

"forgotten" in the first place? Did not the Jews who practiced it preserve its rudiments in the voluminous body of exegesis and commentary amassed since the close of the biblical period? And could not the Fathers of the Church, inheritors of the Hebrew Scriptures and founders of an equally voluminous exegetical tradition, immediately perceive Biblical parallelism for what it was? Where did the first insights into Biblical parallelism originate? These are the questions with which we shall be concerned in the remaining chapters of this essay.

CHAPTER TWO

דברי חכמים

1. Talmudic reading of parallelism
2. The T^e(amim
3. Antiphony
4. Stichography
5. The invention of poetry

1.

Prominently featured in the Pentateuch are its numerous laws and descriptions of legal procedure. By long tradition it is said to contain 613 Divine commands incumbent on all Israel; these are the basis of Jewish religious practice. So much do these Divine laws characterize the whole that the Pentateuch was termed torah ("teaching," but specifically of a legal procedure), and every part of it was read with an eye to deducing legal principle or rules of conduct. Other parts of the Bible, though lacking the same legal force, were similarly scrutinized--indeed, torah appears in rabbinic literature as a synonym for the entire Scripture.¹

Interpretation of the textus receptus was thus from earliest times a preoccupation and an everyday legal necessity. In Talmudic times various hermeneutical systems succeeded one another: the seven rules of Hillel were amplified into the thirteen principles of R. Ishmael;² still later came the thirty-two rules of Eliezer b. Yose haGelili. Most of the rules in these systems

¹See Tal. Ber. 5a.

²Sifra intro. 1:7 and 5.

involve the comparison of two different texts within the Pentateuch: an apparent ambiguity in one place may be clarified by looking elsewhere.

There emerged, for example, the hermeneutical tool called in Hebrew g^ezera ^vsawa (roughly, "similar passage").³ Thus, in Exodus 21:2 the text states "When thou shalt buy a Hebrew slave six years shall he work and in the seventh go free." Now the phrase "Hebrew slave" is ambiguous, for it might mean "a slave who is a Hebrew," or it might mean "a slave of a Hebrew." The ambiguity is clarified by comparison with Deut. 15:12, where an allusion to the same law uses the phrase ahika ha⁽ibri, "thy Hebrew kinsman," in the place of "Hebrew slave." The latter thus must mean "a slave who is a Hebrew."

This is a rather simple g^ezera ^vsawa. A more characteristic example is Numbers 9:2, where the phrase b^emo⁽ado ("in its time") is used in the law that requires

³ Because the word g^ezerah has the Biblical meaning of "decree" (Daniel 4:4, 14 // pitgam) it has been suggested that this hermeneutical device was originally limited to the comparison of laws. Later, it came to have the broadest sort of application, though in legal matters certain restraints were imposed: the g.s. must not be invented but based on authentic tradition (Pes. 66a), both passages must come from the Torah (BK 2b), and the words compared must be mufneh ("available"), i.e., their presence in the passage is not necessary for any other purpose, and can best be explained as a specific indication that a g.s. was intended. R. Akiba, who was a zealous picker-up of the slightest textual hints, disagreed with this last condition (Yer. Yoma 8:3); for his zeal in hermaneutics and conflict with R. Ishmael, see BK 41b, Sanhedrin 51b, 64b.

Israelites to offer a special sacrifice on the Passover. Later interpreters fixed on this phrase as a proof that the Passover sacrifice could be made even when it falls on the Sabbath (although it requires work which would normally be forbidden on the Sabbath), for the same phrase b^emo⁽ado occurs in Numbers 28:2 in regard to a sacrifice which is offered daily, including the Sabbath. If "in its time" means, in the latter case, "including the Sabbath," then why should the same phrase have been used in the Passover law if not to teach that the Passover sacrifice's "time" also includes the Sabbath?⁴

This sort of comparison is the bread-and-butter of the Talmud, but, of course, as a process it is much older. Thus, the so-called "Damascus Document" of the Qumran scrolls contains Sabbath strictures not found in later Jewish legal material: they are apparently all based on the ambiguous phrase dabber dabar in Isaiah 58:13, which was interpreted by means of a g^ezera šawa to refer to demanding payment for debts on the Sabbath, judging matters of property or gain, or speaking idle or vain words.⁵

⁴Pes. 66a.

⁵Based on uses of the word דַּבֵּר in Deut. 15:2; 17:8, and 32:47. See E. Slomovic, "Exegesis in the DSS" *Revue de Qumran*, 25 (Dec. 1969), pp. 9-10.

But the g^ezerah šawa is none too distant from what we have seen to be a still older tradition: the comparing-contrasting which is at the heart of Biblical parallelism. The essence of the latter is, after all, that A and B are not independent equivalents, but that they can only be understood, or understood most fully, in relation to one another: just as A, so B; not A, not even B; A, and what's more, B; A, and more precisely, B; etc. In all these cases, the "and" which connects two assertions is read into and interpreted as a more complex connective: their juxtaposition, instead of being attributed to mere chance or the requirements of rhetoric, is read as significant.

Now in matters of law, this "sharp" reading is often used by the Talmud as a way of defining a general precept. For example, the admonition of Lev. 19:3

You shall each respect mother and father // and
you shall keep my Sabbaths

A "restatement" reading of the verse would see both commandments as parallel specifics of the general command that precedes them (Lev. 19:2), "Be holy because I am holy." The Talmud, however, sees the second half-verse as setting out the limits of the first: you shall respect mother and father so long as this respect does not cause you to violate the Sabbath (i.e., it understands the last clause as "And you shall all keep my Sabbaths, parents and children"--Yeb. 5b).

Rabbinic exegesis even expanded on the general technique of "sharp" reading. Hegges ("comparison") is used in the Talmud⁶ to describe the situation of, for example, the Passover law of Deut. 16:3

Thou shalt not eat any leaven with it⁷ // seven
days thou shalt eat unleavened bread with it . . .

Of course the Talmud sees here not one commandment, but two: 1) No leaven may be eaten; 2) unleavened bread must be eaten (rather than, for example, seeing the second clause as a restatement of the first, viz. "do not eat leaven; when, during the seven days, you want to eat bread, take care that it be unleavened"). But it goes even farther. It understands from the juxtaposition that women, too, are required to eat unleavened bread (although they are normally exempt from this class of law, called "time-dependent positive commandments"); the fact that the positive commandment is juxtaposed to the negative indicates to the Talmud that the positive is meant to have as wide an applicability as the negative, i.e., women are included in it.

Similarly, two verses are called by the Talmud s^emukim ("juxtaposed") when the fact of their proximity becomes the basis for an interpretive point. Thus Exodus 22:17-18

⁶See Pes. 43b.

⁷The paschal sacrifice.

Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live. Anyone who lieth with an animal shall surely be put to death.

The Talmud deduces from the apposition of these two laws that they are somehow similar offences. Consequently, since the penalty for the latter is known to be death by stoning, it may be inferred that the former is also punishable by stoning. Now what is particularly interesting to us about this example is that the two verses may be read as twin halves of a parallelistic statement:⁸

מכשפה לא תחיה כל שכב עם בהמה מות יומת

where the alternation "not let live" and "surely die" seems peculiarly parallelistic. The same is true of other verses read in the s^emekut manner, e.g.,

לא יקח איש את אשת אביו ולא יגלה בנה אביו

Let a man not take his father's wife .. and let him not uncover his father's covering⁹

Where the second clause is taken to refer not to the father's wife, but to a woman seduced by him (and is even extended, by the s^emekut method, to include a woman taken by force, because of the proximity of Deut. 22:28-9).¹⁰

⁸ Rather than two apodictic (hence not parallelistic) laws. See A. Alt, Essays . . . (New York, 1966), pp. 81-132.

⁹ Deut. 23:1.

¹⁰ See Ber. 21b, Yeb. 3b-4b, the latter the locus classicus of s^emekut readings. Playful use of s^emekut: Pes. 118a.

Such extensions of the law's apparent meanings are so close to the "sharp" readings already seen in different Biblical texts that one might suggest that the parallelistic "mentality" is at the origin of Talmudic interpretations by heqgeš, s^emekut and the like. It is in any case true that, confronted with parallel halves, the Talmudic reaction is (under whatever rubric) to read them "sharply" and search out some relationship beyond restatement. Yet, it is precisely this reaction which helped to erase awareness of parallelism as the organizing structure of Hebrew verses.

This is no paradox. We have seen that the "unsharp" reading of a parallelistic line

An ox recognizes his master // And an ass his
owners' food-trough

sees the two hemistichs as equivalent statements. The second means the same thing as the first. Its raison d'être, then, is not difficult to see: it is intended to parallel the first. It has no apparent purpose beyond the parallelism. However, as soon as we introduce the "sharp" reading

An ox recognizes his master // And even an ass his
owners' food-trough

the second half-verse has a new raison d'être, it becomes a continuation of the first because its meaning goes beyond the first. The fact of its parallelism is thus in danger of being obscured by the additional significance it has

acquired.

The situation is somewhat comparable to the formal requirements of poetry. An awkward poem, one that tramples rhythm and perhaps good sense in its struggle to rhyme, will have no difficulty in making the reader notice the fact of its rhyming; a more subtle poet will meet the requirements of form without letting them take over the poem, and unless we are looking for them, these formal elements will tend to recede into the saying.

It is thus hardly an exaggeration to assert that to the extent to which the Bible took "sharp" advantage of the parallelistic form, to that extent did it help diminish awareness of this formal element. But the rabbinic genius went beyond what most texts might conceivably intend in the way of sharpness. In effect, rabbinical exegesis simply does not recognize the possibility of restatement.

There are two reasons for this. The first is theological. The words of the Pentateuch are, after all, the words of the living G-d, the instructions given to a prophet with whom G-d has spoken "mouth to mouth" (Numbers 12:8). It is inconceivable to the Talmud that any of those words should owe their existence solely to the mechanical principle of parallelismus membrorum. The purpose of the Torah is to teach: if a statement is parallelistic in form, that statement must be examined to reveal its full

meaning--everything must be read, in other words, as potentially "sharp." And what is true of the Torah can hardly be less true of the Prophets, the inspired teachers whom the Torah itself prescribes (Deut. 18:18) as the arbiters of the later age, nor even of the Hagiographia.

The second reason derives from the first and is (for want of a better word) temperamental. If the Torah teaches, it is our duty to learn. Now what one learns from it--it is as true nowadays as ever--depends on what one looks for. The rabbis, who, of course, knew the Bible quite well, were inclined to "attribute greatness" to G-d wherever they read His name (Deut. 32:4); what they looked for in the text was its highest reading. To say that this or that verse has been written for the purpose of parallelism ends discussion. It is really no different from arguing that this or that line of a poem appears metri causa; rabbinic exegesis shares with literary criticism the recognition that this argument is a dead end.

And so the rabbis searched. By common reckoning the two middle words of the Pentateuch are daroš daraš ("he searched carefully", Lev. 10:16) and this later became the text's own approval for their most imaginative exegetical efforts. R. Akiba, already mentioned as a gifted exegete and daršan, consistently sought out a homiletical explanation even for the word et (a

grammatical particle indicating the accusative).¹¹

When, in accordance with normal Hebrew style, a "doubled verb" (that is, the required verb form preceded by its infinitive as a form of emphasis, e.g., Gen. 31:30, 40:15, or the daroš daraš just cited) appears, it is not seen as merely an emphatic form: the Rabbis seek in the precise circumstances of its occurrence a clue to some further teaching. Thus, the doubled form of the verb "cut off" in Numbers 15:31 is read as an allusion to the doctrine that not all are destined to be resurrected: "cut off in this world, cut off in the world to come."¹² To this exegesis R. Ishmael objects with the sobering "The Torah spoke as human beings do,"¹³ but this concession to the exigencies of rhetoric and emphasis does not extend to Biblical parallelism. Faced with Exodus 3:15

This is my Name forever // And this is my appellation for all generations

Rabbinic exegesis sees not equivalent statements, but two different names.¹⁴ Instances could be multiplied for pages, for such readings are not an occasional feature of rabbinic exegesis, but its regular modus operandi. There is no doubt the rabbis knew, in some form, of

¹¹B.K. 41b.

¹²Sanh 64b.

¹³Ibid., loc. cit.

¹⁴Pesahim 50a.

parallelism--as we have seen, prayers of Rabbinic origin were written in accordance with its principles. But Scripture was another matter: if some correlation between parallel halves could be sought, it was. And so what might be called the "d^eraš mentality"¹⁵ came to oppose the recognition of parallelism as a structural feature of Biblical Hebrew. Because lines were always parallel for some reason or other, parallelism itself ceased to be a reason. It did not exist.

2.

The Bible contains many references to the public reading of various of its parts (e.g., Deut. 31:10-13) and it is probable that this "reading" contained some musical elements--that it was more a chant than a flat "reading voice." In this regard one ought to cite the famous

¹⁵In later times, d^eraš came to mean the figurative or fanciful sense of the text, as opposed to the p^ešať or literal meaning. (In Kabbalistic times these became two of the four levels of reading, p^ešať, remez, d^eraš and sod, corresponding somewhat to the literal, allegorical, tropological and anagogical levels of Bede and, later, Aquinas; the Hebrew words were so arranged as to spell out pardes--orchard, or paradise--a Rabbinic word of special significance. See Talmud Hag. 14b; G. Scholem, The Kabbalah and its Symbolism, New York, 1969; pp. 57-62. But d^eraš was originally not opposed to p^ešať. In The Dead Sea Scrolls it is apparently used to mean "careful exegesis" (Manuel of Discipline 8:12-16; Damascus Document 8:29-30). Likewise, p^ešať does not mean literal meaning: see Talmud Sanh. 100b, Ketub. 111b. (R. J. Loewe, "The 'Plain' Meaning of Scripture . . ." in Annual of Jewish Studies [London], p. 140.)

injunction mentioned in Talmud Megilla 32a,

Anyone who reads from the Bible without a melody or recites the Mishna without a tune, to him applies the verse (Ezek. 20:25) "And I also gave them laws which were not good."

The Rabbis were understanding this Ezekiel verse "sharply": that is, in what sense were G-d's laws said to be "not good"?! Why in the sense of the second hemistich of the verse (not cited above) "and statutes they will not live by." Through a grammatical ambiguity, this last clause might also be understood "and statutes which will not abide with them," i.e., which will be forgotten. Such, the Talmud is asserting, will be the fate of any laws learned without melody, for only the mnemonic reinforcement of music guarantees a text long life.¹⁶

Perhaps it is fruitless to speculate on what sort of chant was used. The systems of cantillation now in use are all elaborations of relatively recent vintage. No doubt there originally existed different chants for different books or sections within books (e.g., Deut. 26:5-

¹⁶Rashi consistently identifies the melody referred to here and elsewhere with the ta'amim: the melody used was not to be improvised but was to follow the textual accents. (See Sh. Geshuri, על התלמוד "הנגינה בפירושו של רש"י" על התלמוד, in Sinai, vol. 39, p. 315.) Is this fact evidence that he was aware of some other possibility? (See following.) Note also that he does not call this melody by its non-Hebrew name "trope" except once, in regard to the Kohanim (Kidd. 71a). [Ibid.]

10); perhaps something like modes or maqāmāt¹⁷ governed the chant rendition, applied according to the text or the occasion. Whatever the case, one can imagine a relatively unadorned chant pattern with a melodic pause at the caesura:

¹⁷ A set of conventions in traditional Arabic music determining: scale, characteristic motives and their placement within the scale and their sequence within the melodic structure; tempo; and the association of certain rhythms with certain themes or genres. There are no fixed melodies: maqāmāt are rather musical "modes" (comparable to the ragas of Indian music) which provide the basis for each improvised performance. Twelve to fifteen maqāmāt have been catalogued. Idelsohn found a correlation between certain maqāmāt and the cantillations used by various Eastern Jewish communities (i.e., the maqāma "sigah" characterized the chant used for the reading of the Torah, the 'Amidah of the Ten Days of Penitence and certain other texts; bayyāt was used for the Prophets and Lamentations; nawa for the Sabbath morning; etc. (See Idelsohn in MGWJ 57 (1913) and Chailly in Acta musicologica 28 [1956]). The maqāmāt also played a role in Hebrew poetry. In his collection of poems (published in Safed 1587) the poet Israel Najara declared that all his songs were constructed "along the lines of the musical modes of Arabia and Turkey, and other tunes." At the beginning of each song he designates a non-Hebrew song to which his contrafact may be set, and groups the songs by mode. Nor was he the first to do so; three other collections from earlier in the 16th century employ the same system, and the oral assigning of modes must go back far earlier. See H. Avnary, השיר הנכרי במקור השירה, in Proceedings of the Fourth Congress for Jewish Studies, II, 383-4. Saadya discusses the rhythmic modes in Chapter 10 of Beliefs and Opinions, and describes (his own imposition) a system of eight modes used in the Temple (see Werner-Sonne, "Medieval Jewish Musical Theory" HUCA 1941, p. 295); the idea was repeated in Ibn Latif (ibid., HUCA 1943, pp. 551-2) and in Bahya b. Asher's Torah commentary (H. Avnary, "Saadya's Psalm Preface and its Musical Aspects," HUCA 1968, pp. 160-1).

הַחֲמִשָּׁה אֲחֻזָּה וְהַחֲמִשָּׁה שְׁנוֹאֵה

כִּי תִהְיֶינָה לְאִישׁ שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים

הַחֲמִשָּׁה וְהַשְּׁנוֹאֵה

וַיִּלְדוּ לוֹ בָּנִים

There could hardly be a fixed melody, for the differences in line-length, however measured (i.e., whether by syllables, stress accents, words) are too great; but psalmodic¹⁸ rendering of the parallelism would carry the sense of regularity through the varying lines. The relatively florid musical effects at Israel's disposal were saved for psalms or songs like Deut. 32 (divided into six parts, it was rendered by the Levites in the Temple). But publicly "read" texts were probably chanted, for if present-day cantillation patterns of the Torah and the Prophets were a later development, they were probably not a completely fresh departure. In the current Yemenite or Baghdadi chant one may be hearing a fossilization of what once was a simpler and more fluid improvisational form.¹⁹

¹⁸ See Werner, The Sacred Bridge (SB), New York, 1959, pp. 128-66; 347. Also, E. Werner, "The Church Fathers and Hebrew Psalmody" in Review of Religions (May 1943), p. 340.

¹⁹ S.B. 427-8. The earliest system of $t^e(amim$ in Yemen marked only the caesura. Y. Kafih theorizes this may reflect the earliest stage of the development of $te(amim$ (rather than, say, incomplete transmission to Yemen of a more complex system); later came the zagef (minor pause), and only after that was established did the others come. See his article נְקוּדַת טַעֲמִים וּמְשׁוּרָה בְּחִימָן in Sinai, vol. 29, p. 263 and note 4. Melodically, the Yemenite cantillation is far "simpler" than other, e.g., tilsha, shofar hafuk, dirga, azil, ma'araka, and shofar holek are the same.

At a certain point this chant met up with the phenomenon called in Hebrew t^e(amim ("accents"). These were originally a system of graded pauses--a kind of punctuation of the text that indicated full-stops (analogous to the period), caesura-stops (= semi-colon) and occasional short pauses (= comma); unlike punctuation, however, the t^e(amim were not necessarily written down with the text, but could be indicated on-the-spot to the reader through various hand-gestures (cheironomy).²⁰

The necessity for such a system to complement the scroll of the Pentateuch is obvious. For example, Deut. 9:2 reads

עם גדול ורם בני ענקים אשר אתה ידעת ואחיה

שמעת מי יחיצו לפני בני ענק

Depending on where the caesura falls one has either "A great and tall people, the Anakites, that you have known and heard about; who can stand up against the sons of Anak (proverbial giant)?" "A great and tall people, Anakites (of the sort) you have known; and you have heard (the saying) 'Who can stand up against the sons of Anak?'" "A great and tall people, the Anakites; and as you know and have heard, 'Who can stand up against the sons of Anak?'"

²⁰ This is deduced from Berakot 62a, and see Werner, SB, 107-10. However, the cheironomy was necessary for public reading of the Torah because the scroll is not permitted to contain any markings other than the consonantal text. The existence of cheironomy does not, therefore, mean that a written system did not exist simultaneously.

Nor is the caesura the only issue. Depending on where one puts a minor pause in the first hemistich of Isaiah 1:5

על מה חכו עוד חוסימו סרה

one may render "Why should you be further stricken, you will only continue to act sinfully," or "Why should you be stricken, you will only continue further to act sinfully."²¹ A famous question revolves around the Massoretic division of Isaiah 40:3--

קול קורא במדבר פנו דרך ה'

According to the t^e(amim, the verse should be understood not in the Christian manner, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness . . ." but, "A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness make a highway . . .'" So even if one learned Scripture "with a melody," i.e., some sort of loose chant with a caesural pause, potential ambiguities remained. Especially in legal matters, these little differences could be significant. Instruction in the t^e(amim was a kind of polishing of the scriptural text, the final stage of learning; at first it may not have been deemed necessary

²¹For a Talmudic example of how the t^e(amim convey shades of meaning, see Hagiga 6b. Rashi attempts to apply knowledge of teh t^e(amim to explicate Deut. 11:30, but his comments, at least as they have been handed down, appear incorrect (the ta'am called rebi a is more disjunctive than pasta, consequently, the pause that occurs between the words aharei and derek is not nearly so great as between hayyarden and aharei.

to all, but was a kind of expertise.²²

Three systems of annotating $t^e(amim$ onto written texts in Hebrew have come down to us, known as the Palestinian, Babylonian and Tiberian systems. The Tiberian is the most detailed and the most recent; it is the system currently in use.²³ It was perfected by the Masoretes of Tiberias, who also developed the current vocalization of the Biblical text--indeed, the two activities were seen as co-ordinate, both being notational systems clarifying potential ambiguities in the written transmission of the text.²⁴ The Palestinian system, which is probably the earliest, consists of a series of dots written under, above or next to the accented word. Only the strongest disjunctions (pauses) are consistently indicated; unlike

²²In Talmud Ned. 37a, R. Yohanan is of the opinion that the general principle of not accepting any form of payment for instruction in the Pentateuch does not apply to the teaching of pisuq $t^e(amim$. One may conclude from the subsequent discussion that the $t^e(amim$ were the first thing taught to children learning a new passage (hence the teacher might be guilty of receiving payment for work done on the Sabbath if he began a new section on that day). But this reflects teaching practice at a later date. On the contrary, R. Yohanan's remark probably indicates the $t^e(amim$ were then still considered a non-essential and post-Mosaic addition.

²³See on this, SB 102-23, 410-28. Earlier students of this subject include ibn Bilaam (11th century) and, more recently, Wickes, Spanier, and Kahle.

²⁴Of the two activities, if one aspect is older it is probably the $t^e(amim$; the Samaritan hexateuch also has $t^e(amim$ and vocalization, but while the names of the vowel-marks are Arabic, the $t^e(amim$ have Aramaic names. (EJ 16: 1433)

the Tiberian system, there are no conjunctive accents.

Before the systematic development of the $t^e(amim$, in the days of our "Ur-sprechgesang," a precise reader might draw out a syllable here or there to emphasize its disjunction; perhaps even some sort of melodic phrase or trill was improvised. This probably continued to exist as the punctuation of the text was being developed. But at a certain point the two came together. Melodic phrases began to be associated with the different grades of disjunction distinguished by the $t^e(amim$; patterns of conjunction similarly developed. In time, a system for indicating the text's pauses had become a series of melodic prescriptions: the $t^e(amim$ became "notes."²⁵

The significance for parallelismus membrorum of the emergence of the $t^e(amim$ was two-fold. Within a given line, the binary structure, which under a loose and improvised chant had been obvious (the main and most melodically emphasized pause falling at the caesura)²⁶ was now lost in a series of elaborations at minor pauses (the caesura now became one of the most drab pauses from the standpoint

²⁵ The connection between $t^e(amim$, specifically the Babylonian system, and the Greek neumes has long been known to scholars, and is discussed in Werner, p. 110. Indeed, it is theorized that the Greek term comes not from *neuma* ("nod"), still less *pneuma* ("breath") but from the Semitic *nagam* (Heb. *na'am*), "play a tune."

²⁶ In the Yemenite chant the)atnah (caesura) still has "a special melody that seems almost to divide the verse", Y. Kafih. op. cit., p. 264.

of melody); whatever actual parallelism existed between corresponding members was lost in the musical asymmetry. For example, Balaam's opening parallel pair (Numbers 23:7)

מן ארם ינחני בלק // מלך מואב מהררי קדם

From Aram does Balak summon me // the king of Moab
[summons me] from the Eastern mountains

is completely obscured by the asymmetry of the t^e(amim
(reading from right to left)

: ~ // < ~ ס

which even fail to recognize the caesura. Secondly, the "strict parallelism" of passages such as Balaam's oracles (as a whole) was no longer set off from its surroundings in such bold relief. For if (as might be supposed) the oracles of Balaam and other passages in the Pentateuch²⁷ were rendered with a special motif, a nagging maṣal-line or the like, this old singling-out was now lost in the t^e(amim. They homogenized the text.

In this connection it should be noted that three books of the Bible, Psalms, Proverbs and Job, are annotated with a special system of t^e(amim. It is not known what the original purpose of this distinction might have been. The strict parallelism of their lines made ambiguity less a problem, so the complicated system of the other twenty-

²⁷ Some of which, as we have seen, led Albright and others to postulate the existence of an original "poetic version" of the patriarchal stories, of which our text is a "prose recension."

one books was not necessary. But the fact that different symbols (particular to these books) were developed not only in the (late) Tiberian system, but also the Palestinian one suggests that here at least a melodic notation is the main purpose.²⁸

The existence of this separate system was significant for the recognition of parallelism. The system itself did not show the parallelism in any obvious light--i.e., the t^e amim for parallel phrases are not usually the same; how they were sung is unknown, all current traditions being apparently of post-Biblical origin.²⁹ But the special t^e amim of Sifrei 'Emet (as the books were called)³⁰ helped to preserve the reputation of these texts as "poetic"; in medieval Hebrew discussions of Biblical poetry the names of Sifrei 'Emet are often cited, and no doubt the special t^e amim were in part responsible. (It is curious, for example, how rarely the book of Lamentations is mentioned in such discussions, though its

²⁸ See Wickes, T^e amei AM" T (in English), Oxford, 1881, p. 9. He cites ibn Bilaam's remark that the poetic system was instituted because the verses of these books were so short, שְׁמִעוּקִים שְׁלֵחִים קְטָנִים, i.e., he says nothing about their parallelism or the "poetic" content.

²⁹ The 12th century traveler Benjamin of Tudela reports finding Levites in Bagdad who still sang the Psalms in their original [Temple] manner. See H. Avenary, op. cit., p. 161.

³⁰ An acrostic of the first letters of Job, Proverbs and Psalms.

parallelism is obvious, as is the alphabetical structure of the first four sections--a particularly "poetic" trait and one that continued into medieval religious poetry. One explanation, beyond the absence of special t^e(amim, as the book's traditional attribution to Jeremiah; as we shall see, Jews came to distinguish sharply between prophecy and poetry, even to the point of doubting the two might come from one man.) They were written with "poetic" stichography (see following).

The special t^e(amim, themselves, were not always applied consistently. While the "poetic" parts of Job are differentiated from the "prose" introduction and conclusion by means of the special t^e(amim, elsewhere the Masoretes were less systematic. Thus, when the same text appears in both a "poetic" book and elsewhere (e.g., David's Song, which is Psalm 18 and--slightly changed--II Sam. 22; or Psalm 105:1-15, which is I Chron. 16:8-22) the poetic t^e(amim appear in the poetic book and the prose t^e(amim in the prose book. That is, here the t^e(amim do not appear to be proper to the character of the text itself.

3.

Many writers have suggested that parallelistic poetry itself was originated to meet the demands of musical performance, i.e., that the lines "answer" each other because they were intended to be sung by choruses or soloists who would recite or sing them antiphonally. Antiphony in the Near East is certainly very old. It is mentioned in Gilgames and in Ugaritic writings.³¹ Some Hebrew poems were clearly designed for a leader and chorus or two choruses (e.g., Psalm 136), while in others (Song of Songs) the antiphonal possibilities are certainly present. Deuteronomy 27:12 describes an antiphonal arrangement, though it is not clear if it was to involve singing.³² Nehemiah 12:24 and 12:37-47 is clearly musical antiphony. In either case, the performance itself

³¹Werner, op. cit., p. 203. See Gilgames' Tablet VI, 180-85, Montgomery in JAOS 53, p. 99.

³²A consistent difficulty in this question is the meaning of the Hebrew word anah, which conceals two historically different roots, the one corresponding to Arabic عن, the other to عن; the first means, in Hebrew, "answer," the second, "sing." Many a Biblical commentator, and, indeed, many a modern scholar, has been trapped in this confusion (see, e.g., on Exodus 32:18). What is particularly confusing is that the second word meant "sing" in (among others) the specific sense of "to lead antiphony" (see Exodus 15:21); that is, the leader sang anah (sense 2) and the chorus answered anu (sense 1)! In Deut. 27:12 and ff. the idiom anah we'amar is used; this means to recite solemnly or ceremonially (cf. Deut. 25:9, 26:5) but may have involved some musical element as well; indeed, the two senses may have merged even in Biblical times. See, also, Mishna Sota 7:2.

emphasized the parallel structure; so long as two singers or choruses answered each other with parallel hemistichs, there is little chance a listener could be unaware of the balancing structure of the poem (though it does not necessarily follow that the full nature of Biblical parallelism would be evident to him).

In Talmudic times, synagogal antiphony was still a commonplace. Because the song of Exodus 15 begins "Then sang Moses and the Israelites," it was natural to assume the song was rendered antiphonally (else how could they sing this presumably spontaneous composition all at once?); Talmud Sotā 30b records the discussion and, with it, evidence of antiphonal practice with the Hallel (Pss. 113-18):

[R. Akiba explained:] How did they render the Song? Like an adult who leads the Hallel [for the congregation] and they sing in answer to him the psalm beginnings.³³ [which function as a refrain]. Thus Moses said "I will sing to the Lord" and they say "I will sing to the Lord"; Moses said "For He has triumphed" and they say "I will sing to the Lord." R. Eliezer the son of R. Yose ha-Gelili says [it was sung] like a minor who leads the Hallel and they repeat after him everything that he says [because he cannot, as a minor, fulfill the congregation's requirement to say all the words]. Moses said "I will sing to the Lord" and they say "I will sing to the Lord." Moses said "for He has triumphed," and they say "for He has triumphed." R. Nehemiah says: like a school-teacher who recites the Shema (in the synagogue [with his pupils]; he begins and they respond after [i.e., word for word, cf. Jer. Sota 5:4]

³³For this meaning of ra'sei p^eraqim, see Ber. 14a, Rosh HaSh. 30b, and, especially, Pes. 117a.

On the same question, Jer. Sota 5:6 presents two different sorts of antiphony:

משה אמר אשירה והן עונין אחריו אשירה

משה אמר עזי והם אומרים עזי

The fact that the text jumps from אשירה to עזי may indicate that all the intervening words were sung, thus:

Moses: I will sing of the Lord for He has triumphed,
horse and rider He has cast in the Sea.

Israelites: I will sing of the Lord for He has
triumphed, horse and rider He has cast
in the Sea.

Similarly, the system of R. Eliezer, the son of R. Yose haG^elili is specified in the Jer. Talmud as:

Moses: I will sing . . . (etc. to) the Sea.

Israelites: I will sing . . . (etc. to) the Sea.

Moses: G-d is my strength and is become my Salvation;
this is my G-d and I will praise him,
G-d of my father and I will glorify Him.

Israelites: G-d is my strength . . . (etc. to)
glorify Him.

Such a system of antiphony has little to do with the parallelism, since each line is repeated in its entirety. The second system of the Jer. Talmud might be schematized as--Leader A, Congregation A + B. Thus, R. Abbahu explains the word le'mor:

משה אמר אשירה והן עונין אחריו אשירה לה" כי גאה גאה
מום ורכבו רמה בים. משה אמר עזי וזמרת והן עונין אחריו
עזי וזמרת י-ה.

The same principle is observed in the Mekilta's description, brought in the name of R. Eliezer b. Tadaï (second century):

משה היה פותח בדברים תחילה וישראל עונין אחריו וגומרים
 עמו. משה היה פותח ואומר אשירה לה" כגאה גאה וישראל
 עונין אחריו וגומרין עמו אשירה לה" כי גאה גאה סוף
 ורכבו רמה בים. משה היה פותח ואומר עזי וזמרת י-ה
 וישראל עונין אחריו וגומרין עמו עזי וזמרת י-ה ויהי
 לי לישוע. [זה אלי ואנוהו אלקי אבי וארממנהו]
 משה היה פותח ואומר ה" איש מלחמה וישראל עונין אחריו
 ה" איש מלחמה ה" שמו. 34

Finally, Succah 38a and b presents the following antiphonal pattern in the Hallel (Pss. 113-18):

CHORUS

הללויה

הללויה

READER

הללויה

הללו עבדי ה"

Similarly:

הודו לה" [?...]

אנא ה" הושיע נא

הודו לה" [?...]

אנא ה" הושיע נא

³⁴Lauterbach ed. (Phila. 1933), pp. 7-8. See on this I. W. Slotki, "Antiphony in Ancient Hebrew literature" in Jewish Quarterly Review 26, pp. 210-12. Two discussions of antiphony in the Hallel by Slotki are "Omnipresence, Condescension and Omniscience . . ." in Journal of Theological Studies 32 (1931), pp. 368-9; and "The Stichometry and text of the Great Hallel," JTS 29 (1928), pp. 260-68. [This last article is not really about "stichometry," but a conjecture about how the notion of repetitions in early texts of Psalms may have been corrupted in later copies.]

Finally, the antiphony

בְּשֵׁם ה'

בְּרוּךְ הוּא

is cited. Raba (39a) objects to this breaking of the hemistich into halves; R. Safra disagrees.

Somewhat similar arrangements are described by Natan haBabli (tenth century) in his description of the installation of the Exilarch:³⁵

The leader of the congregation begins with בְּרוּךְ שְׁאֵמֵר and the choir sings in answer to each line "Blessed is he," [Thus:

בְּרוּךְ הוּא

בְּרוּךְ שְׁאֵמֵר וְהִיָּה הָעוֹלָם

בְּרוּךְ הוּא

בְּרוּךְ אֹמֵר יְעִישֶׁה

בְּרוּךְ הוּא

בְּרוּךְ מֵרַחֵם עַל הָאָרֶץ

And when he says Psalm 92 they answer "It is good to give thanks to the Lord." [Thusly:

"טוֹב לַהֲוֹדוֹת לַה'

"טוֹב לַהֲוֹדוֹת לַה'

"טוֹב לַהֲוֹדוֹת לַה'

וְלִזְמֹר לַשִּׁמְךָ עֲלֵינוּ

"טוֹב לַהֲוֹדוֹת לַה'

לַהֲגִיד בְּבוֹקֵר חֲסִדֶיךָ

Then everyone reads P^esukei dezimra together, until they finish them. The hazan stands and says the opening [verse] of "The breath of all Living" and the chorus sings in answer "shall bless thy Name"

[נִשְׁמַח כָּל חַי חֲבֵרְךָ אֵת שִׁמְךָ חֲבֵרְךָ אֵת שִׁמְךָ]

He says a line and the chorus sings [the last part] in answer after him, until they reach the Kedusha [of yoser 'or; this part everyone participates in], the congregation say it to themselves and the choir out loud.

³⁵ Reprinted in B. Halper, Post-Biblical Hebrew Literature (Phila. 1921), I, 37; II, 65, but the translation is inexact.

If parallelism was well suited to antiphonal performance, its nature was particularly precious to a specific class of antiphony: that relatively common situation of a lead singer or singers fully familiar with the text to be sung, and a general chorus or congregation only partially familiar. For here the precise nature of parallelismus membrorum comes into its full value: in strict parallelism, the balance of meaning makes it easier for the chorus to complete the verse responsively or repeat the second hemistich after the leader. This is the last arrangement described by Natan (above), and, indeed, it seems to be what Philo has in mind in his description of the Therapeutai in "The Contemplative Life":

Then the President rises and sings a hymn composed as an address to G-d, either a new one of his own composition or an old one by poets of an earlier day . . . After him all the others take their turn [in singing a hymn] as they are arranged and in the proper order while all the rest listen in complete silence except when they have to chant the closing lines or refrains [ἀκροτελευτία καὶ ἐφύμνια] ³⁶ for then they lift up their voices, men and women alike. ³⁷

(Philo also specifies various singing arrangements used, τῇ μὲν οὐνηχοῦτες, τῇ δὲ καὶ ἀντιφωνοῦσι ἁρμονίαις and describes the the rendition of Exodus 15.) ³⁸

³⁶Werner takes these two terms to be equivalent, both meaning "refrain"; see op. cit., p. 137.

³⁷Philo, text and tr. ed., F. H. Colson (Harvard Univ. Press), 1960, p. 163.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 164-8.

But antiphony gradually disappeared from synagogue prayers and rendition of the Bible. Whether due to a general decline in Jewish learning among congregants (making their participation lack-lustre and undesirable) or to the "monopolistic" ambitions of the ḥazzan (pre-center) this disappearance became noticeable as early as the ninth century.³⁹ Musical rendering of the psalms and other parallelistic parts of the service became more and more the hazzan's exclusive property, and his dominance of the litergy was fixed by the tenth or eleventh century.⁴⁰ Where antiphony had previously been the norm,⁴¹ solo performance now took over. Complementing this specialization was a general decrease in the amount of material musically rendered at all; what had been sung before was now chanted or spoken.

In this connection, a remark of Profiat Duran (late 14th century) is interesting, for it draws a stark contrast between the musical renditions of Christian psalm-singing and synagogal rendition of Biblical passages according to the t^e(amim:⁴²

³⁹Werner, p. 134.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 185.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 146-7, 181-2.

⁴²Incidentally, he attributes the invention of the t^e(amim to Ezra, who (he says) wished to compensate for the Bible's being learned in book form rather than from the mouth of a teacher alone. Ma'aseh Ephod (Vienna, 1865), p. 21.

One consequence of this feature [^et(amim)] is that you can hear a hundred people reading aloud a part of the text [of the Bible] as if it were one man reading: they all pause or continue their reading simultaneously . . .⁴³ And if you listen to the sound of the songs of other peoples you will find matters quite the contrary: they almost annihilate the words, so that virtually nothing may be understood of them save for a stray syllable--because they had no concern to do this [i.e., to make the words clear], but only to please the sense of hearing with the differences in pitch, height and depth and the like.⁴⁴

Antiphony survived in the Church where it disappeared from the synagogue--and this may be one reason for which Christians were, as we shall see, more attuned to Biblical parallelism. For there is a profound kinship between antiphony and parallelism, and responsive recitation and the like cannot but bring the parallel structure into clearer focus. To this extent, Jewish awareness of it in their psalms and prayers was decreased by the turn taken by liturgical renditions after the tenth century.

4.

Antiphonal structure falls clearly in the domain of what one modern critic has called "the poem in the

⁴³This idea was first stated by Yehuda Halevi in the Kuzari II #76-77 [see Slonimsky ed. (New York, 1964), p. 127] and repeated after Duran by ibn Habeb in דרכי נועם [see infra, Chap. IV].

⁴⁴Ibid., loc. cit.

ear."⁴⁵ For the awareness of parallelism what he calls the "poem in the eye"--what is seen on the page--is at least equally significant. As we have already seen, parallelism was, in the ancient Near East, represented in inscriptions either with a special dividing sign or by means of a space separating the hemistichs. A fifth century B.C. Aramaic tomb inscription found in Egypt shows this sort of convention,⁴⁶ and no doubt the consistently parallelistic books of the Bible were so arranged from earliest times. "Stichometry," as this device has been called (though, with the reader's indulgence, I shall call it in what follows "stichography"),⁴⁷ later became a form of punctuation and was used in prose texts, but this will not concern us.

Some of the Psalm texts preserved among the Dead Sea Scrolls are stichographically arranged. Thus, the document 4Q Ps.^b (= the second Psalm's fragment found in

⁴⁵ John Hollander, Vision and Resonance (New York, 1975).

⁴⁶ Holscher, Syrischer Verkunst (1932), pp. 3-4.

⁴⁷ "Stichometry" is a misnomer arising from the "Stichometry of Nicephorus" and the like, which listed books of the Bible and their total number of verses (stichoi); apparently the word, originally coined to describe a function ("measuring," that is, listing, verses) was mistakenly understood to describe the format. Even then, it was applied to prose texts alone (see Oxford English Dictionary, ad loc.). An aggressively descriptive lexicographer might insist that matters be left as they are, but this seems to me too bookish a word to have developed a large and emotional constituency, and too bookish a word to be wrongly used.

Qumran Cave 4) is written in short, narrow columns consisting of a single hemistich per line. (Considering the size of the document and its spacing, it seems unlikely the entire Psalter was contained in the original document,⁴⁸ and one wonders what the function of it may have been; the Psalms represented are 91-4, 99-100, 102-3, 112-116, 118). At the same time, 4Q Ps.^a, from a later period, prints its psalms without any line breaks, as in a modern Hebrew Bible: this is, indeed the arrangement of a great many of the Qumran psalms,⁴⁹ as well as the "Thanksgiving Hymns" of the Qumran community members. Another common arrangement--the one which most clearly represents parallelism to the eye--is with two separated hemistichs to the line (e.g., the Psalter of Cave 8,⁵⁰ as well as 1Q Ps.¹¹⁹ and 4Q Ps.^c); sometimes, however, this arrangement fails to represent the real parallelism and simply presents opposing chunks of words!⁵¹

⁴⁸P. W. Skehan, "The Qumran MSS. and Textual Criticism," Vetus Testamentum Supplement 4 (1957), p. 154.

⁴⁹See, e.g., Barthelemy and Milik, Qumran Cave I, pp. 71-2.

⁵⁰See Baillet, Milik and de Vaux, Les Petites Grottes de Qumran, pp. 148-9.

⁵¹See Skehan, op. cit., p. 155. Cf. Pes. 117a: "Rab said: I saw a Psalms in the house of my friend in which is written 'Hallulu' on one side (חללו) and 'yah' on the other." (This is cited in debate about whether Hallelujah is one word or two.)

This is a phenomenon repeated in later periods--indeed, it is true of current scribal convention governing the writing of Exodus 15 in Pentateuchal scrolls--and a most interesting piece of evidence, for it probably indicates 1) that stichographic arrangements even at Qumran were not necessarily designed to follow singing arrangements, and, therefore 2) that stichography already had an independent existence and function: it was a way of representing to the eye that the composition in question was "poetic." Perhaps there was some influence of foreign stichographic practice on Hebrew scribes.

(Psalm 119 was extremely popular with the Qumran community, and some versions of it [e.g. that of Cave I, both from Cave 4 and the one from Cave 5] represent two hemistichs per line; but this is almost inevitable because of the Psalm's acrostic structure.)

Finally, it ought to be noted that stichography at Qumran is not limited to Psalms or other traditionally "sung" texts (as best we can tell). Thus 2Q 18 contains a stichographic fragment of the "Wisdom of Ben Sira" (Ecclesiasticus), a late collection of wisdom sayings.⁵² It is difficult to imagine that this book was ever intended for singing. The Ben Sira scroll of Massada is likewise stichographic.⁵³

⁵² Baillet, Milik and De Vaux, op. cit., pp. 75-6.

⁵³ Y. Yadin, the Ben Sirach Scroll from Massadah (Jerusalem, 1965), p. 7.

The notion that stichography came to have an independence is borne out by early Biblical manuscripts. Thus the Leningrad codex (written 1009; it was used by Kittel as the basis for his Biblia Hebraica) has the Psalms written with some lines following the parallelism's division and some with apparently random breaks. Thus Psalm 122 (in B 19a) begins:⁵⁴

שְׂמַחְתִּי בְּאִמְרֵים לִי בֵּית ה' נֶלֶךְ
 עֲמֻדֹתַי הֵיוּ רִגְלֵינוּ בְּשַׁעְרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
 יְרוּשָׁלַיִם הַבְנוּיָה כְּעִיר שֶׁחִבְרָה לָהּ יַחַד
 שָׁם עָלוּ שְׁבָטִים שְׁבָטֵי י-ה עֲדוֹת
 לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְחֻדוֹתָם לִשְׁם ה' כִּי

The famous Aleppo Codex (of which we shall speak more presently) has similar irregularities. Its Psalms section begins:

⁵⁴ For this and other textual information I have relied on the photographs accompanying Y. Yeivin, The Aleppo Codex of the Bible, Jerusalem, 1968.

אשרי האיש אשר לא הלך בעצת רשעים
 ובדרך חטאים לא עמד ובמושב לצים לא ישב
 כי אם בתורת ה' חפצו ובתורתו יהגה וילילה
 והיה כעץ שחול על פלגי מים אשר פריו
 יתן בעתו ועלהו לא יבול וכל אשר יעשה יצליח

Gaster's MS. 151 (now in the British Museum, Or. 9879), an apparent contemporary of the Aleppo codex (i.e., tenth century) contains, among others, parts of the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ruth and Ecclesiastes. In all these books except Ruth, large sections of strict parallelism occur and could conceivably have been written stichographically; here only the Psalms were. Their arrangement in this manuscript is most interesting, because the stichography sometimes follows the parallelism against the t^e(amim. Thus Psalm 69:3b-4

באתי במעמקי מים ושבילת שטפוני
 יגעתי בקראי נחר גרוני כלו עיני מיחל לאלקי

At other times though (even in the same psalm) no break is written, and the verse end is separated from the next not linearly or with a white space, but with gold illumination.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ From what I have seen of Gaster's book, A Samaritan Pentateuch . . . (London, 1907), the white spaces are reserved for hemistich breaks. See, also, Sasson ms. 1053, which has great regularity in regard to the hemistichs.

To sum up, then: from earliest times it was common to represent parallelistic sections of the Bible, especially Psalms, with stichography, though the latter often fails to correspond to real hemistich breaks, and must have been regarded by the scribes either as a traditional ornament or a way of symbolizing the "poetic" character of the text. (This is not a degeneration, but is present in the Qumran texts.) Not only do the surviving manuscripts attest that the practice of stichography was common in the Middle Ages, but other sources confirm it. Thus, the Sefer ha'ittim, an eleventh century tract attributed to R. Yehuda b. Barzillai of Barcelona,⁵⁶ describes one stichographic arrangement as the manner of writing "Ha'azinu (Deut. 32), the Book of Psalms, Job, and Proverbs."⁵⁷

Gradually, stichography died out. One cause may be found in the regulations governing the writing of the Sefer Torah (scroll of the Pentateuch), which single out only a few passages in the Bible for stichography.

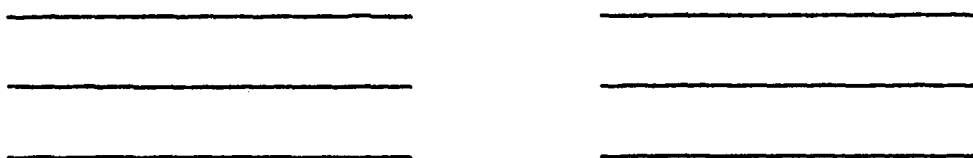
Since the public reading of the Pentateuch became a communal practice of the Jews, every detail of the reading came to be governed by regulations set down first in the

⁵⁶"An Eleventh Century Introduction to the Hebrew Bible," ed. E. N. Adler, in Jewish Quarterly Review 9 (1897), pp. 703-4.

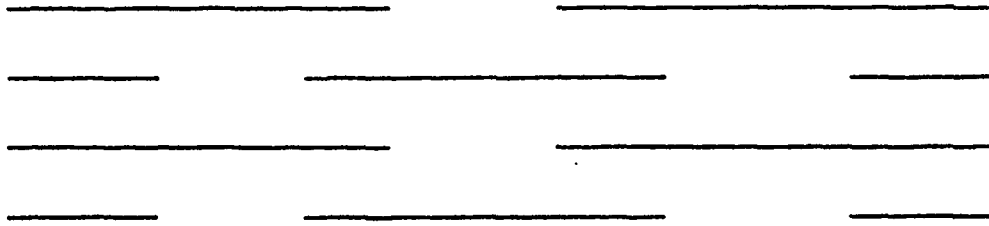
⁵⁷Ms. has memšalot in place of mišlei.

Talmud and later in the various medieval codes of Jewish law. Now the Pentateuch contains two songs par excellence: The first is Exodus 15, the Song of the Sea, known in Talmudic writings as "the song"; it became incorporated into the daily liturgy. The second is the Song of Moses (Deut. 32), known in Hebrew by its first word, "Ha'azinu" ("Hearken"); it was, as stated earlier, sung by the Levite choir in the Temple, and is, therefore, sometimes called "the song of the Levites."

Traditionally, these two songs have been written in two different stichographic patterns. The one used for Ha'azinu is that which we have already seen with regard to Psalms, ben Sirah and other books: two verse-halves per line, separated by a white space to mark the caesura.



The second system also separates verse-halves by white spaces, but the halves are not end-stopped. They run on from one line to the next. The result is that instead of having two parallel columns, there simply are alternating chunks of writing and white space in an irregular pattern. In fact, scribal practice regularized this to alternating one and two white spaces per line. Thus:



This is the system to be used for the Song of the Sea, and, as well, for two songs outside the Pentateuch: Deborah's Song (Judges 5), and David's (2 Sam. 22, Psalm 18).

Each system has its own advantages and disadvantages. The first most graphically represents the parallelism: corresponding units are on the same line and the two resulting columns are perceived as answering each other. In the second system, this is not so; answering parts can fall on different lines, and in any case, a verse-half (or whatever group of words is being set off) is treated in isolation: it is as close to its unrelated neighbor as to its partner. Yet the first system will only work if the verses are of rather regular length: an extraordinarily short one will stand out, and a long one may force the caesural white-space to be shortened or eliminated, and even then the line may have to run beyond the margin. Furthermore, as we have seen, some Hebrew songs occasionally have verses of three parallel members instead of two. This is no problem for the second system, but for the first it requires either centering of the third member on a line of its own (thus breaking the pattern of the columns), or,

alternately, placing the third member on the next line in column A, and starting the next verse in column B. All subsequent verses will then begin in B (until another verse with three members comes along) and be answered diagonally in the next line.

The Song of the Sea certainly would be ill-suited for the first system, since it has both extraordinarily short and long verses, as well as several three-membered verses (e.g., vv. 8, 9). The same is true of Deborah's Song and David's. Ha'azinu has verse-halves of regular length; however, it does have two tricola, vv. 14b and 39b, and, written according to scribal convention, all the parallel clauses between these two verses answer each other diagonally, as explained earlier.⁵⁸

The tradition of singling out the Song of the Sea and Ha'azinu for special handling is attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls. (Interestingly, the Qumran 4 Ha'azinu is written with two verse-halves per line until the last verses, when the scribe switches to one hemistich per

⁵⁸ I do not know of any manuscripts that avoid this by centering the third member as described. Perhaps it was felt that the stichography in a certain way mirrored the theme of the song, for the first tricola comes at the point in the song in which things start to turn awry for Israel, and at the verse where the song predicts a rectification and Israel's reinstatement, the second tricola occurs and the lines come back into alignment. Yehuda b. Barzillai does not comment on this, but suggests the reason for the two columns is to represent the two Levite choirs in the Temple. (ibid., loc. cit.)

line)⁵⁹ Gaster's Samaritan Torah scroll fragment likewise has Ha'azinu written stichographically, but he notes "the division did not always follow exactly the Jewish tradition, the end of the verse did not always coincide with the end of the hemistich. The space in the middle is merely due to the mechanical division, but is dictated probably by the ancient tradition that this portion must be written in hemistichs."⁶⁰

But while the principle of "special treatment" seems to have a long history, the exact details of it, particularly in regard to Ha'azinu, are apparently recent. Thus, one finds all manner of variants. The Leningrad Codex treats Ha'azinu like the Song of the Sea: verse-halves are separated by spacing, but the lines are run-on.⁶¹ The Ha'azinu of Barb. Or. 161 (thirteenth century)

⁵⁹ Skehan theorizes the scribe's intention may simply have been to finish exactly at the bottom of his final column, which he did (op. cit., p. 214).

⁶⁰ In this manuscript, dots are used to mark the end of verses, a practice which was ended among Jews after R. Yehudai Gaon (eighth century) forbade the custom on scrolls to be used for public readings. See Gaster, op. cit., p. 36.

⁶¹ For this and the following MSS. see M. Gottstein-Goshen, "The Authenticity of the Aleppo Codex" in Textus I (1960). This is a most valuable study which deals with the question of scribal practice in Ha'azinu in some detail; Gottstein-Goshen demonstrates convincingly on the basis of its handling of Ha'azinu, that the codex fragments now in Israel are indeed from the same manuscript referred to by Maimonides in his Mishneh Torah (see note 61).

has:

האזינו

השמים ואדברה וחשמע הארץ אמרי פי יערף כמטר לקחי
תזל בטל אמרתי כשעירם עלי דשא
וכרביבים עלי עשב כי שם ה' אקרא הבו גדל לאלקינו האור

which is, except for the title flourish, also the Song of the Sea system. (Note, however, that the division is not truly stichographic but random alternation of writing and spacing.) The old Ashkenazic manuscript Vat. Heb. 5 (which has been dated 840) has:

האזינו

ואדברה	השמים
וחשמע הארץ	
יערף	אמרי פי
כמטר לקחי	

in which the arrangement is purely visual. The same is true of Firenze pl. III, 4 (Spanish script, thirteenth-fourteenth century); indeed, here the divisions are made in such a way as even possibly to hinder proper reading of the text:

הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶדְבְּרָה

וחשמע הארץ אמרי פי יערוך כמטר
 לקחי תזל כטל אמרתי כשעירט עלי
 דשא וכרביבים עלי עשב כי שם ה"
 אקרא הבו גדל לאלקינו האור

The Aleppo Codex prints Ha'azinu in today's method of two columns, or hemistichs, save that in two places it squeezes whole verses into the space reserved for hemistichs, and in a third place, the columning seems to break down completely; two-and-a-half hemistichs are written in column B, running beyond the margin, and the other half plus another hemistich appear in the next line on column A. This anomaly might have been enshrined forever, because Maimonides (relying on the text's reputed antiquity) incorporated it in his prescriptions in "Laws of the Sefer Torah."⁶²

⁶² See Gottstein-Goshen, op. cit. The only question this thorough treatment refrains from asking is how the particular form of writing contained in the Aleppo Codex came about. I believe the answer is that the scribe of the codex (or of the codex's Ur-text) based himself not on a "live" model for the arrangement, but on a list of the first words which begin each line (such as the list one finds in Tractate Soferim; see following). But occasionally, the list-maker had slipped up and left out a word: his omission of שאל caused the first bunching-up (line 76), and (verse 11b) פרש the second. In the third instance, he became confused. His list should have read: עַם, וּמַחֲדִירִים, יוֹנָק; Instead, he skipped over וּמַחֲדִירִים and wrote the beginning word of the next hemistich, גַּם. (Perhaps, like many people, even today, he knew the song by heart, and had looked away from his text; his mistake was that he began to confuse line-beginnings with verse-beginnings.) This

There is, in short, enormous variation in the handling of these songs--in fact, some mss. even treat Ha'azinu as "prose"--and to any aspirations for a normalized and systematic Judaism, this scribal variation must have been a challenge of serious dimension. Maimonides (who, as we have seen, ended up with an anomalous solution) complains, "I have found great confusion in all the scrolls I have seen in regard to these matters [the writing of the songs], and the grammarians that write [models] and composed books to set down [the tradition] all disagree in these questions" ⁶³

caused him to skip וְיִנָּק . He might then have written אִמְרָתִי but looking up and seeing it did not begin the line, he correctly wrote אֲשֶׁנִּיהָ . So his list read: עַם, גַּם, אֲשֶׁנִּיהָ . To make matters worse, the Aleppo scribe understood the גַּם as referring to the second, rather than the first, occurrence of that word in this verse. (An 11th century Persian manuscript in the British Museum (Or. ms. 1467) is like the Aleppo Codex, save that this second line begins גַּם בְּחֹר וְגַם i.e., the first גַּם rather than the second. See the illustration in Enc. Jud. 4:955.) and so broke the hemistich in the middle. We have seen that the "special handling" of Ha'azinu was an outgrowth of its parallelistic structure, and it is difficult to imagine any rationale for the Aleppo Codex handling of it--other than some scribal error of this kind. But so powerful is tradition in matters of scribal practice that Maimonides chose, on the strength of the Codex's antiquity, to adopt it as his model. Only a further scribal error--in the transmission of Maimonides Mishneh Torah--prevented the spread of this treatment; the error brought Maimonides text in line with the specifications of Tractate Soferim. See Gottstein-Goshe, op. cit.

⁶³ Hilkot Sefer Torah, 8:4.

In regard to the songs the Talmudic sources were, it is true, somewhat confusing. Shabbat 103b contains the brief observation, "if he [a scribe] wrote it [the Pentateuch] as the Song, or if he wrote the Song as the rest [of the text] . . . these [copies] must be put aside." The statement is unclear: in its original context, did the "it" refer to the whole Pentateuch, or to Ha'azinu?⁶⁴ (Interpretation has it referring to the whole Pentateuch, but understands the comparison in general terms: the scroll contained, like the Song of the Sea, extra gaps between groups of words.) Does "Song" mean "Song of the Sea," or song in general (viz. Song of the Sea and Ha'azinu)?

Talmud Megilla 16b and the Jerusalem Megilla 3:7 both name the two stichographic techniques we have seen. The terms used derive from two sizes of brick: 'ōriah was a small brick, placed at intervals in a wall, and l^ebenah was the regular, larger one. The Song of the Sea system is called "small brick over large brick, large over small" because, with the vertical alternation of writing and white spaces, it looks like a normal brick wall constructed out of the two different sizes in alternating patterns. The remark of the Jerusalem Talmud, brought in the name of Rab, say "The Song of the Sea and Deborah's Song are written small brick over large brick, large over small; the ten sons

⁶⁴Talmud Menahot 31b has a slightly different version
 עשאה כשירה או שירה כמוחה

of Haman (Esther 9:7-10) and the kings of Canaan (Josh. 12:9-24) are written small brick over small brick, large over large, for anything so constructed cannot stand up."⁶⁵ The text says nothing of Ha'azinu (though it might have been included under the ominous last observation, since the song ends with a promise of retribution against Israel's enemies). The Babylonian Talmud's version of the same remark is brought as a d^eraś of R. Shila of Kfar Tamrita:

All the songs are written small brick over large brick, large over small, except for this song and the kings of Canaan, which are written small brick over small brick, large over large--what [he asked] is the reason? So that [this unstable construction, bricks directly atop each other instead of interlocking, portend that] their downfall be without any chance of rebuilding [Lev. 26:37]

This version is interesting because "all the songs" probably referred, as we have seen, to Psalms as well. In the Talmud's discussion, "this song" is taken to mean Esther 9:7-10; was it ever sung?

These prescriptions were repeated and modified somewhat by the late (eighth century?) tractate Soferim. It required that Ha'azinu be written two verse-halves per line, and that Song of the Sea and Deborah's Song be written "small brick over large brick," giving the exact details of the arrangement (Sof. 12:8-12). Its remark

⁶⁵ Note that, in addition to Ha'azinu, Eccles. 3: 1-9 is, according to current usage, also written in the "small brick over small brick" style.

(13.1) about David's Song is somewhat cryptic;⁶⁶ I would translate, "However, in the case of David's Song in the Book of Samuel and Psalms the sages did not prescribe how specifically they are to be written, but an outstanding scribe will connect them at the verse beginnings, the caesuras and the ends, and likewise all of the book of Psalms and Job and Proverbs." In other words, while Soferim is aware that some scribes do write this song in Samuel in the "poetic" manner, and, indeed (as we have seen), the entire Psalter, Job and Proverbs as well, a good scribe (lablar mubhaq) will not do so.⁶⁷

The code of Maimonides set out prescriptions for Ha'azinu and the Song of the Sea, but said nothing of the songs outside the Pentateuch; the same is true of the code of R. Yosef Karo. As we have seen, the stichographic writing of other sections continued on; but while Deborah's Song (no doubt because of Soferim) has generally survived the turn against stichography, and to a lesser extent David's Song, the Psalms and other Hagiographia have generally been treated as "prose" in printed Bibles. "The

אבל בשירה דוד שבשמואל ובהילים לא נתנו חכמים 66
 שיעור אבל לבלר מובהק מרצפן בפחחי } באתנחאוח ובסוף פסוקי
 וכן חילים כולו ואיוב ומשלי.

⁶⁷ For another interpretation, see, e.g., Nahalat
Ya'aqob, ad loc.

poem in the eye" was down to three, or maybe four, passages. Not only that, but of these, only one arrangement, that of Deut. 32, actually represented visually the correspondence of matching verse-halves. The criss-cross pattern of Exodus 15 set it off as "song" and distinguished it from its surroundings, but did little to emphasize the binary structure of the verse. Furthermore, the fact that the blocks of letters often do not correspond to the true A and B caused at least one commentator to misunderstand their significance.⁶⁸

5.

The most important development for the disappearance of parallelism and its understanding is the invention of "poetry."

With the entrance of Greek political power into the territory of Israel, first under Alexander and then with successive regimes of Ptolemies and Seleucids, Greek culture began to penetrate all but the most resistant elements of the population. Buildings were constructed in the Hellenic style, Greek first names replaced Hebrew ones, and the Greek language began to be spoken by Jews. Among the many new items Hellenization brought with it was its own

⁶⁸ See infra, Chapter 4, on Abarbanel.

peculiar concept of poesis; like the rest, its penetration was slow, but ultimately, it came to dominate Jewish thinking.

In the Biblical period, parallelism had been used in many sorts of "unpoetic" (from the Greek standpoint) subjects. This was true as well for metrical compositions in Greek--if meter may be analogized here to parallelism for an instant--but even before Alexander, the notion that poetry was a matter of genre rather than meter must have been current. Aristotle wrote:

It is the way with people to tack on "poet" to the name of a meter, and talk of elegiac-poets and epic-poets, thinking that they call them poets not by reason of the imitative nature of their work, but indiscriminately by reason of the meter they write in. Even if a theory of medicine or physical philosophy be put forth in a metrical form, it is usual to describe the writer in this way; Homer and Empedocles, however, have really nothing in common apart from their meter; so that if the one is to be called a poet, the other should be termed a physicist rather than a poet.⁶⁹

Even if Hebrew parallelistic compositions had been written, instead, in strict Greek-style meters, this generic notion might still have prevailed in Hellenized Judea and eliminated from the corpus of Hebrew poetry laws, sayings, and other "unpoetic" utterances. But, of course, Hebrew was not written in meter, and to Greeks or Hellenized Jews imbued with the metrical idea, parallelism must have seemed too

⁶⁹ Poetics 1447b.

loose and easy a thing to be in any sense an equivalent of meter, or, indeed, to be perceived as structure at all. Were it not so, we should find statements that recognize the poetic character of things which in Greek are normally "prose"--statements that "the Jews even write their laws in verse" or the like;⁷⁰ instead we find the contrary, writers who even in describing Hebrew songs fail to recognize the native structure and superimpose Greek terminology. Philo consistently did so, though he occasionally stresses the antique origin and great variety of the "meters," as if to hint that their exact structure is no longer understood:

They have also writings of men of old, the founders of their way of thinking, who left many memorials of the form used in allegorical interpretation and these they take as a kind of archetype and imitate the method in which this principle is carried out.⁷¹ And so they do not confine themselves to contemplation but also compose hymns and psalms to G-d in all sorts of meters and melodies [παντοίων μέτρων καὶ μελῶν]

⁷⁰The earliest person I have found to make such a remark is Hobbes: "And in antient time, before letters were in common use, the lawes were many times put into verse; that the rude people, taking pleasure in singing or reciting them, might the more easily retain them in memory." He then cites specifically Proverbs 7:3, Deut. 11:19, 31:12. Leviathan II, Chapter 26 (1651 ed. repr. London 1929, pp. 209-10).

⁷¹This sentence is somewhat obscure and translations vary; it sounds to me as if Philo is trying to account for the structure of post-Biblical parallelistic compositions (such as the Qumran hodayot) as imitations of the Psalms--i.e., he does not understand parallelism.

which they write down with the rhythms necessarily made more solemn.⁷²

Poets of an earlier age . . . have left behind them hymns in many measures and melodies, [hexameter] verses and trimeter, processional hymns, libation-
[παρὰ ποταμῶν]⁷³ but this, of course, has metrical implications, as the word attests] and altar-hymns,⁷⁴ standing choruses, arranged in a way suitable for one or many turns.⁷⁵

George Buchanan Gray, in his study of Hebrew poetry,⁷⁶ remarks "At the very time that the Rabbis were examining Scripture with eyes blind to parallelism, other Jews were still writing poems that made use of parallelism." About the Rabbis' "blind eyes" we have already seen; yet the remark has pertinence. Once parallelism began to be examined "post-Hellenically"--once "poetry" existed--it

⁷²The Contemplative Life, 29-30. This last phrase is also obscure. The general sentiment expressed in this passage is reminiscent of Ecclesiasticus 44:5 seen in Chapter One.

⁷³See E. Werner, "The Conflict between Hellenism and Judaism," HUCA 1947, p. 411.

⁷⁴S. Mowinckel, following Gunkel, has written extensively on the relationship between different psalms and Temple ceremonies and other occasions (see The Psalms in Israel's Worship); curiously, he does not cite these passages from Philo.

⁷⁵στροφῶν πολυστροφῶν εὐ διαμετρημένων is this for a single chorus or for different, possibly antiphonal, choroi? (Philo uses different terminology for antiphony, so perhaps he means something specifically relating to the arrangement of the voices; some translators have taken the phrase as referring to physical movement of the choir. (The passage is in Contemplative Life, 80.)

⁷⁶The Form of Hebrew Poetry, reprinted, New York, 1972, p. 27.

acquired a different aspect. Gray's paradox is no paradox. It is quite conceivable that parallelism could be recognized, even imitated (hence Philo's "archetypes") without being fully understood, certainly without being understood as the organizing principle of much of the Bible. If it was perceived, was it not understood in a Greek way, as a "color of rhetoric,"⁷⁷ or as an adjunct to some other element: rhythm, choral arrangement, etc.? The first step in the disappearance of parallelism was not its not being seen, but being seen in a new way. (The same phenomenon is observable in Saadya's view of ordering in the Psalms--i.e., as a concession to human nature, which demands rhetorical variety;⁷⁸ incidentally, his Arabic translation scrupulously observes the parallelism of Psalms [within a metrical framework], even being careful to add a

⁷⁷ On this point see Aristotle's Rhetoric, 1409b-1410a. The entire section is important to an understanding of how a "Greek mind" might react to Hebrew parallelism if it perceived it. I shall only cite part: "The periodic style . . . is divided into members is of two kinds. It is either simply divided, as in 'I have often wondered at the conveners of national gatherings and the founders of athletic contests'; or it is antithetical, where, in each of the two members, one of one pair of opposites is put along with one of another pair, or the same word is used to bracket two opposites, as 'they aided both parties--not only those who stayed behind but those who accompanied them; for the latter they acquired new territory larger than at home, and to the former they left territory at home that was large enough.'" (tr. by W. Rhys Roberts).

⁷⁸ See Y. Qafih (ed. and tr.) חהילים עם חרגום
22.23-23.6 , מפירוש ר' מעדיה.

paralleling extra element on one side of the caesura when the necessities of translation forced an extra one on the other.) The fact that parallelism continued to characterize post-Hellenic Jewish writings in Hebrew--and perhaps Greek⁷⁹--does not necessarily mean the authors understood its role, and certainly not that they recognized the full extent of its use in the Bible.

It was rhyme that finally put an end to the systematic use of parallelism in Hebrew poetry. La rime chasse le parallelisme--this rule is clear in the early development of piyyut.⁸⁰ Parallelism could have gone on existing even after more regular rhythmic patterns, accentual or syllabic, were introduced in Hebrew--as, indeed, it may have begun to do even in the late Biblical period (Ecclesiasticus, for example, shows a very regular accentual pattern).⁸¹ But rhyme is essentially a development of parallelism, a competing system for binding stichs into pairs. The language in which rhyme first originated had been much disputed until the discoveries of early piyyut fragments earlier in this century. It has now become clear that rhyme is a Hebrew invention, emerging some time between the fourth

⁷⁹Gray, op. cit., p. 26; Tannehill, "The Magnificat as Poem," in JBL 93 (1974), pp. 263-75.

⁸⁰J. Yahalom, oral communication.

⁸¹See Mowinckel, op. cit., II, 116-7.

and sixth century.⁸² It, too, may have developed out of antiphonal recitation.⁸³

Early rhyming systems show the greatest variety of formal requirements--from the "discontinuous rhyme" (which requires not only a rhyming last syllable of at least consonant + vowel, but also two consonants of the verbal root) to morphological rhymes (i.e., based on grammatical terminations), root rhymes, and simple repetition of the final word.⁸⁴ The most interesting of these for parallelism is the so-called "semantic rhyme,"⁸⁵ which was among the rhymes used by the paytan Yannai, the earliest Hebrew poet known to have used a regular rhyme pattern. This "rhyme" consists of lines terminating in words without any necessary sound similarity at all, but with parallel meanings: zemer - ranan (sing - exult), 'akilah - š^etiyah (eating - drinking), sus - hamor (horse - ass). As such it represents something like the "missing link" between parallelism and rhyme.

⁸²See ב. חרושובסקי, "חורת החרוז וחולדותיו" הספרות 721-49. י. יהלום, "חאוריה ומעשה בחריזה..." ב- Ibid.

⁸³See L. Levi, "Antiphony and Rhyme" in Synopsis of the Third Congress for Jewish Studies, Literature.

⁸⁴See in English, Hrushovsky's article on prosody in the Encyclopedia Judaica, 13:1210.

⁸⁵See Yahalom, op. cit., p. 765. Note that semantic rhymes appear alongside other, sound-based rhymes in a single poem.

Thus, when Hebrew poets ceased to write in parallelism, it was to replace this structure with another; later developments in Hebrew poetry--the introduction of stress and syllabic rhythms in early piyyut, and of Arabic meters and rhyme rules in Spanish poetry of the tenth century--only helped to obscure the structure-giving role of parallelism in the Bible: the absence of these outward signs was equivalent to the absence of poetry. Even so sensitive a poet and reader as the great Moshe ibn Ezra (eleventh century) could, in examining the question of Biblical poetry, be completely blind to its structure. And since his words touch on many of the points already examined, I will translate them here:

We have found nothing in the Bible that goes beyond the realm of prose, save for these three books: Psalms, Job and Proverbs.⁸⁶ And as you will find, these books had recourse neither to rhythm or rhyme, in the way of the Arabs, and are only like the rajaz compositions.⁸⁷ Every once in a while one may find by chance something of a rhyme (rajaz) in one of them, such as Job 28:16, 33:17, 21:4, and so forth. Some of the songs in the Bible are differentiated

⁸⁶ I.e., Sifrei 'Emet, with their distinctive te'amim.

⁸⁷ An irregular iambic meter of four to six feet per line; unlike other Arabic meters, rajaz has no division into hemistichs but consists of one long line. The lines rhyme. See R. A. Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs (London, 1930), pp. 74-5. Ibn Ezra probably makes this comparison because he wants to assert these books are poetry, yet metrically irregular. But his comparison then leads him to deal with the question of rhyme in these books because rajaz compositions are, of course, rhymed.

from prose,⁸⁸ such as the Song of the Sea, Ha'azinu, David's Song and Deborah's Song. Now I only said some of the songs [i.e., those songs to which the name shirah (song) is specifically applied] because even amidst the prose occur things which are called shirah, like the Song of Songs and the Song of the Well (Numbers 21:17), etc., as I just explained. The halakhists [i.e., compilers of the treatise Shirata]⁸⁹ set the number of Biblical songs at nine, but most of them are prose.

The Bible attests that Solomon wrote both verse and prose, which it calls "figurative language" [אלאגיה'ל] "And Solomon spoke three thousand mašal"--this is the prose--and his song was one thousand and five--this is poetry. Some think they were qasida.⁹⁰ But of the quality of these poetic composition, and even of their existence, I know nothing, for not the slightest trace of them has come down to us.⁹¹

⁸⁸I.e., stichographically: these are the four mentioned in Soferim. Ibn Ezra understands this as meaning their structure is also not prose.

⁸⁹See J. Lauterbach, Mekilta de R. Ishmael, vol. II, p. 2. Another tradition of Ten Songs is presented in the opening section of the exegetical Targum of Songs of Songs; the list is somewhat different. See R. Loewe, "The Apologetic Motifs in the Targum to Song of Songs," in A. Altmann (ed.), Biblical Motifs (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 169-70. Origen, in his introduction to Song of Songs, lists six songs; Loewe (op. cit.) is unwilling to claim any specific connection between the two. Christian liturgy recognized fourteen "canticles" from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, overlapping with some of these "Ten." See Werner, SB, 139-40.

⁹⁰"Ode"--another very ancient verse form with specific themes characterizing each section; see Nicholson, op. cit., p. 76. Ibn Ezra may be connecting the passage from Kings he alludes to here with the Apocryphal Psalms of Solomon; or he may simply be repudiating the idea that any of the Biblical compositions ascribed to Solomon constitutes "poetry."

⁹¹A. S. Halkin (ed. and tr.), Jerusalem, 1975, pp. 46-7.

כתוב אלמחציה
ואלמדאברה

CHAPTER THREE

וּחִידוּתָם

1. Allegory
2. Philo and Josephus
3. The Greek Fathers and Poetry
4. Origen, Eusebius, Hilary and Ambrose
5. Jerome
6. The figurative reading of parallelism
7. Augustine
8. The later Fathers

1.

Philo, the first person known to have described Hebrew poetry in the terminology of Greek meters, was also a consistent allegorizer of the Biblical text, and these are not unrelated facts.

Allegorizing of the Bible is, of course, older than Philo: it is found even in the Greek translation of the Bible, which in the course of translating also sought to harmonize Biblical teachings with Greek doctrines.¹ Aristobulus of Paneas (2nd century B.C.) and the apocryphal Letter of Aristeas (ca. 100 B.C.) contain allegorical interpretations of the Bible, as, of course, the New Testament does. Before all these come purely Greek instances of allegorizing, for example, the Stoics' harmonizing of stories of the gods with their own ideas, or the allegorical interpretation of Homer, which goes back to Theagenes of Rhegium (sixth century B.C.).² The impulse to allegorize, in all these cases, comes at least in part from a perceived contradiction or inconsistency within a text, or between the text and something outside it (one's senses,

¹H. A. Wolfson, Philo (Cambridge, 1947), p. 94.

²H. I. Marrou, St. Augustin et la fin de la culture antique (Paris, 1938), p. 495.

ideology, knowledge of history, etc.). By looking for an allegoria, an "other speaking," or hyponoia (Philo's usual term) the difficulty can be resolved:

If taken literally, this point presents, I feel, great difficulty. The penalty inflicted by law on those whose offenses are identical is unequal . . . Let us then have recourse to the scientific mode of interpretation δυσσολόγητον ἀποδρασόμεθα which looks for the hidden meaning ὑπονοῶν of the literal words . . . We say then that the High Priest is not a man, but a Divine Word . . . Moreover, his head has been annointed with oil, and by this I understand that [the Word's] ruling faculty is illumined with a brilliant light . . . Now the garments which the Supreme Word of Him That Is puts on are the world . . .³

A second, related motive for allegorizing is to lift the discourse from the specific to the general, and (in the case of the Bible) to turn what is historical and particular into something both universal and (hence) potentially personal.

This is why [Abraham] is said to emigrate first from the land of Chaldea to that of Haran. Now Haran translated into Greek means "holes," a symbol for the seats of our senses.⁴

Beyond the harmonizing and generalizing accomplished by allegory, there is another, typically Greek, appeal to it: it makes apparently straight-forward utterances into gnostic ones. The text becomes a surface, concealing essences of universal dimension beneath it. Now

³Philo, On Flight and Finding xx.; F. H. Colson, tr. (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 67-9.

⁴On Abraham xvi (Colson, p. 41).

to the Greeks, the very idea that the Bible, like an oracle, spoke in riddles, was a confirmation of its divine character; and the fact that it did not seek to say, but only, through its histories and odes, pointed to truths that lie beyond the capacity of speech--well, here was a sign that it was a truly worthy text, one meriting the careful analysis which the Jews were said to lavish upon it.⁵

It will be instructive, then, to consider briefly the difference between allegorical exegesis of the Bible and its (wholly Semitic) competitor, the d^eraš mentality. Both are systems which can be used for smoothing over "irregularities of surface" in the text: apparent contradictions, irrelevancies, anthropomorphisms, etc. And both accomplish this smoothing over by making reference to something outside the text. For this reason, the two have been

⁵The notion that the plain truth must be "represented" to humans to be understood is fundamental. Thus the Latin Father Cassiodorus notes: "In terris nobis pro captu ingeni, parabolis et propositionibus sumptis, coelestis veritas imitatur"--"But for us on earth, so that our own intellect may comprehend it, Heavenly truth is represented in figures and propositions." (The last phrase alludes to the Latin translation of Psalm 78: "parabolis" for mašal and "propositiones" [among other things, the first part of a syllogism, hence certain rhetorical overtones] for מִתְּנִיחַ. See Migne, Patrologia Latina (henceforth PL) 70:1131. A Jewish contrast to this view is to be found in the continuation of this note, Additional Note 3.1.

described as essentially the same process.⁶

But there is an important difference. In the case of midrash the governing supposition is that the text of the Bible is a single whole, its divine character the stuff of which all its several separable units are made. On this basis alone we should be justified in explaining a verse in Deuteronomy in terms of a verse from Isaiah, for the same G-d is speaking to us through two different prophets. (Though I suspect it is more accurate to think of this as a later stage in development of a process whose first steps would be more simple-minded: understanding a now-obscure phrase via a clearer use in another Biblical book; the comparison of two texts which present similar

⁶Thus Wolfson: "The allegorical method essentially means the interpretation of a text in terms of something else, irrespective of what that something else is." (It might be, he explains, book-learning, practical wisdom, inner consciousness, etc.) "The Palestinian rabbis of that time, unlike Philo, happened to have no acquaintance with the literature of Greek philosophy, and consequently, they did not interpret Scripture in terms of Greek philosophy." But this is unimportant, he continues: "The main thing is that by the time of Philo the principle was already established in native Judaism that one is not bound to take every Scriptural detail literally." (Philo, pp. 134-5) A similar position is stated in Wolfson's The Philosophy of the Church Fathers, in his chapter on the allegorical method, pp. 24-72. These discussions are useful in breaking down the "literalistic vs. allegorical" polarity that characterizes other discussions of the subject. But Wolfson fails to make the point about midrash that it proceeds only via other parts of the Bible (see above). This is the important difference between the two: see also R. J. Loewe, "Apologetic Motifs in the Aramaic Targum to the Song of Songs," in A. Altmann, ed., Biblical Motifs (Cambridge, 1966).

versions of the same law or narrative [as we have seen in the case of the g^ezerah yawa]; understanding A in terms of B.

The "something else" in terms of which the text is read, then, is always another Biblical text. So it is with what has been cited as a typical piece of Rabbinic allegorizing, the interpretation of Exodus 15:22 "They found no water" adduced in the Mekilta.⁷ Here the "allegorizers" (דורשי רשומות)⁸ understood "water" to mean Torah. Now on the face of it, this does resemble Greek allegorizing. What makes it midrash instead is the proof text which is immediately brought in support of this reading: "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye for water!" (Isaiah 55:1). The darsan is saying: "May times--as here in Isaiah--the word 'water' is used where it obviously means not water but Torah or Divine learning." (He could have cited other instances: Isaiah 49:10; Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13; Ezek. 47:1; Zech. 14:8, etc., and, of course, numerous rabbinic parables.) "We must, therefore, be careful to consider this other meaning of 'water' wherever it appears in Scripture; even here, where actual water seems to fit the text, perhaps we ought to understand 'Torah.'"

⁷Lauterbach, ed. (Philadelphia, 1935), p. 89.

⁸See Wolfson, Church Fathers, p. 25; Lauterbach (JQR 1 [1911], pp. 298-301) explains the phrase as referring to the symbolic or hidden meaning.

This is not so much the method of the allegorist as the philologist, or perhaps, the cryptographer. Even in the most allegorical of rabbinic exegeses, those of Song of Songs, the focus never shifts from the words of the text; if it is even proper to speak here of "literal" and "figurative" meanings at all, these words should be used in a way quite distinct from their normal application, "for the letter is not, as in Christian exegesis, the potentially jealous stepmother of allegory, but rather her willing handmaid or research assistant."⁹

This difference in method reflects a still more profound difference. For the rabbinic mind, the holiness of the Bible resides in its details: "Turn it over and over, for everything is in it."¹⁰ The fact that it comes of Divine source means that it is perfect. Not only are there no mistakes or contradictions, but the slightest details of its manner of speaking are both significant and intelligible. Furthermore, no words are wasted, and by this we must also understand that nothing is repeated or said for emphasis or purposes of rhetoric. We have seen this to be true for parallel verse-halves, but it is evidenced elsewhere. For example, faced with the statement in Deuteronomy 26:7 "And G-d saw our affliction, our

⁹R. J. Loewe, op. cit., p. 159.

¹⁰Abot, 5:25.

suffering and our oppression," rabbinic exegesis does not simply have the option of understanding these three terms as allusions to different aspects of the Exodus story; in some sense the verse must be read in such a manner, lest it seem to be using synonyms to emphasize a single idea, viz., that the Israelites were severely persecuted. Consequently, we find in the Haggadah each of the "synonyms" explained as a specific reference to a different part of the account in the opening chapters of the Book of Exodus: "affliction" alludes to the forced separation of man and wife in Egypt,¹¹ "suffering" is taken as the actual slaying of Israelite babies, and "oppression" (connected with Exodus 3:10 in which the same word appears) seems to be an allusion to forced labor.

In short, the imperative perceived by the darshan in the Bible's holiness is to understand it as fully as possible by sifting every word and comparing it to every other part of the text. The text's divinity is both the

¹¹This part of the homily rests on the single element 'And G-d saw' common to both Deut. 26:7 and Ex. 2:25. The latter verse was immediately preceded by "And G-d heard [the Israelites'] groan, and G-d remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." What covenant? the Haggadist is asking. Why the covenant to make them a great nation. "And G-d saw the Israelites" in the next verse means then that G-d saw the extent to which this promise had not been carried out (because of the Egyptian threat to slay Israelite babies, the Israelites were thought to have practiced marital separation), "and G-d knew" (understood why they were reduced in number). Thus, the phrase "And G-d saw our affliction" in Deut. 26:7 is, by virtue of its similar wording, an allusion to the same enforced separation.

guarantee that such searching will be fruitful (for nothing is said in vain, for emphasis, etc.) and the key to how to search (elsewhere in the same divinely inspired text).

Not so the allegorist. For him the essence of the text's sanctity is the fact of its allegorizing: what vouchsafes its divinity is that, in seeming to present history it alludes allegorically to what is eternal and ineffable.¹² As a consequence, the allegorist will not be concerned with harmonizing two apparently contradictory laws, since they are in any case mere allusions (on the contrary, an apparent contradiction will only tend to confirm him in this reading). But his attention will especially focus on the little details which, although at home in a narrative, are too particular for his notion of a holy text. "Whatever in the text has nothing to do with right conduct or questions of faith," said St. Augustine, "must be understood figuratively."¹³

¹²This attitude developed slowly and unsystematically. Philo, Origen and their successors had to walk a middle path between the extreme allegories of sects which refused literal meaning (and, in the New Testament, the historicity of Jesus!), and on the other hand the rejection of allegorical reading whatsoever (see Wolfson, Church Fathers, 73-96). Still, the insistence in this early period on the "perfection" of Scripture (ibid., pp. 91-2) is not the same as the darśan's; it is perfect in that apparently irrelevant details have an allegorical dimension, hence "nothing is said in vain."

¹³De Doctrina Christiana 3:10 (14). See Marrou, op. cit., p. 478. This is an extension of the earlier doctrine, "whatever contradicts right conduct . . ."

Ironically, Christian exegesis is in one respect more "Jewish" than Philo. Its notion of figurae--its reading, in other words, of the "Old Testament" as pre-figuring the New--combines Greek allegorizing with the d^eraś notion of the essential unity of all parts of a divinely inspired text.¹⁴ Here the precise wording of laws, tales and so forth is scrutinized for possible allusions to subsequent history, viz. the events surrounding the life of Jesus as set forth in the Gospels. This search for foreshadowing, if not quite the philologist's type of operation recognizable in midrash, is not yet Philo's either; it moves from one historical frame to another, rather than soaring above the plane of history and into the world of Heavenly essences. (Furthermore, a similar notion of large-scale correspondence is observable in the Jewish institution of the haftarah, wherein a section from the Prophets is selected as a matching text to the weekly reading from the Pentateuch.)¹⁵ Of course, this is not all there is to

¹⁴ On the latter, see 2 Tim. 3:16, where Paul specifically states that every part of the divinely inspired Bible is useful to the Christian. Now Judaism also has Messianic readings, as well as other species of what Wolfson calls "historical predicative" texts; see Church Fathers, p. 27.

¹⁵ The haftarah is said to go back to the period of Antiochus Epiphanes' ban on the weekly public reading of the Torah; a section of the Prophets, selected because of its allusion to a matter dealt within the Torah passage of that week--or for some other resemblance--was substituted to remind the listeners of the forbidden reading, and so to circumvent the ban. A. Buechler [JQR 6 (1839), 1-73]

Christian allegorizing. As early as St. Paul one finds an allegory of the "purely Hellenistic" type (Gal. 4:21-31), and this exists side by side with typology (Ga. 3:14, 16, etc.) as in later Christian exegesis. Soon they were to become systematic.¹⁶

The rabbinic exegete, as we have seen, is "blind" to parallelism by conviction and temperament. The text's holiness both allows and requires him to search out the highest possible reading of a verse. Repetition, rhetoric, emphasis--these are traits best not attributed to the word of G-d, all the more so because "searching" a verse through its canonized surroundings will yield so much richer a meaning. But for the allegorist, the text's holiness resides in its allegorizing, in the fact that it can be read on two, three or four different levels. Of these, its surface-meaning is the least important--often, so to speak, incidental. Therefore, there is no blasphemy, or lèse-majesté, in reading that surface as if it were a human text. To say that it is composed in meter, or follows the laws of Greek rhetoric; to see tropes and figures in it, or

distrusts this traditional explanation. He thinks the haftarah was instituted against the Samaritans, who denied the canonicity of the Prophets, and retained against the Sadducees for similar reasons. It certainly precedes Christian typology: see Acts 13:15, Luke 4:17.

¹⁶For the three-fold reading, see Origen, De Principiis IV, 11:18.

to read it in a way not essentially different from the way one reads Ovid or Vergil--these do not touch the sanctity of the text, because that is not where the sanctity lies. And this is why Christian exegesis of the Hebrew Bible, though often hampered by incomplete mastery (if not total ignorance) of the Hebrew text, is far more attentive to real and imaginary nuances of style than the Rabbis--why in our specific area of concern, the Church Fathers here and there identified parallelism while Talmudic exegesis never did so. And, curiously, it is also why, in the end, Christian exegesis failed to understand the essence of parallelism, and began a process of misreading which (as we have seen) continues to this day.

2.

Philo, as we have seen in The Contemplative Life, attributed hexameters, trimeters and other Greek meters to Hebrew poetry. It may be that a reference here to the "poets of an earlier age" [Contemplative Life 10] implies Biblical authors, or he may have had in mind the immediate ancestors of his Therapeutai, i.e., the Essene authors of such poems as the "Thanksgiving hymns" discovered at Qumran. The same ambiguity surrounds his statement [Contemplative Life 3] that the Therapeutai "sing hymns and psalms to G-d composed of many meters and melodies" *παντοίων μετρῶν καὶ μελῶν* .". Are these Biblical psalms and

canticles, or post-Biblical compositions? About Moses, Philo says that he learned "the study of rhythm, harmony and meters" from the Egyptians [Life of Moses, I, 23]; however, though he describes the antiphonal structure of the Song of the Sea in several places [Contemplative Life 11; Life of Moses I, 32: II, 46] he does not attribute a specific meter to it. Neither does he say anything about the meter of Balaam's oracles, for example.

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.

Moses also composed a song to G-d [Exodus 15] containing His praises and thanksgiving for his kindness, in hexameter verses. [Jewish Antiquities II, 16:14]

After this he read them a song [Deut. 32] composed in hexameter, and left it to them in the sacred Scriptures. [IV 8:44]

And now David, free from wars and danger and enjoying the prospect of peace, composed songs and hymns to G-d of several sorts of meter; some of these he made with trimeter, some pentameters; he also made musical instruments and taught the Levites to sing hymns to G-d. [VII 12:3]

The reader will recognize these as among the "songs par excellence" of Jewish tradition, those whose parallelistic structure was (and is) frequently singled out by special stichography. Yet of Deborah's Song (Judges 5) Josephus is curiously silent [V, 5], and about

Solomon he observes only, "He also composed books of odes and songs, one thousand and five, and of parables and figures three thousand [an allusion to I Kings 5:12]," without saying anything of their form.

This is the somewhat spare basement of that imposing structure, the Patristic and Scholastic notion that the Psalms, Job, and other Biblical books are "metrical." Nearly two thousand years of scanning, syllable-counting and the like have failed to yield a consistent metrical structure in them--certainly nothing to which the terms hexameter, pentameter or trimeter might be meaningfully applied. What possible motive, then, can be attributed to Philo and Josephus in these statements? Two answers present themselves. First, it is possible that the designations actually corresponded to rough rhythmical schemes in their minds, schemes that were known in Hebrew under generic names (qinah, etc.) for which "hexameter," "trimeter" etc. were selected as rough equivalents, "translations."¹⁷ One modern critic has suggested that the Greek quantitative terms used in regard to Biblical poetry actually suggested a corresponding number of stress accents.¹⁸ In view of what has already been shown about the

¹⁷ See Joh. Döllner, Rhythmus, Metrik und Strophik (Poderborn, 1899), p. 20.

¹⁸ G. Castellino, "Il Ritmo ebraico nel pensiero degli antichi," in Biblica 15 (1934), p. 508.

"metrical hypothesis," however, this view seems hardly probable. The second alternative is that the terms were not used as rhythmical designations at all, but to indicate the character of the composition. For (as we have seen in Philo) meters were associated with certain subjects and life-settings; by "hexameter" Josephus may mean an heroic song, an epic speech such as those found in Homer; by "trimeter" or "pentameter" he may mean a lyric comparable to those composed in these meters.

Beyond these possibilities, it may simply be that the terms were used because, for a Greek readership, some account or mention of the meter of a poem or song was only to be expected. "No meter" was hardly credible. For their part, Hellenic Jews (and even one so intimately connected to the Temple service as Josephus) must have been puzzled about the laws governing the structure of Psalms and other Hebrew songs they heard. Surely, some meter stood behind the very evident musical regularity, determining even the occasional lapses in that regularity. Furthermore, the Greek association of music and meter with mathematics encouraged Jews to seek this branch of Wisdom in their own Divine service; failing to find it there, they were more likely to blame their own inabilities (who knew the rules? which syllables were long and which short?) than the text. And in this there was a matter of prestige as well: something so fine as meter they were not willing to concede to

the Greeks' exclusive domain. This last point has been nicely summarized:

The Hellenistic Jews, once they had come in contact with Greek culture, sought to integrate themselves amongst the Greeks by countering philosophy with philosophy, history with history, literature with literature, divesting all their thought of its specifically Semitic character and attempting to present it in keeping with the language of the Greek cultural milieu in which they found themselves.¹⁹

The truth of the matter is probably that neither Josephus nor Philo had any real notion of the rhythmic structure of Biblical songs, but they never doubted that that structure existed. Their use of metrical terms was probably chiefly intended to communicate that belief, and, perhaps, also, as noted, to "translate" the character of the compositions into Greek analogues.

3.

The Fathers of the Church eventually developed a somewhat hostile attitude toward "pagan" (i.e., non-Christian Greek and Latin) literature, and were consequently reluctant to speak of Moses or David as "poets." But this is not true of the earliest Fathers. Their culture was Greek: they had a high opinion of poetry, and this opinion survived amidst their Christianity. So, for example,

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 505.

Clement of Alexandria frequently cites verses from Homer in his theological writings, and compares Sybilline verses to the oracles of a Hebrew "prophetess."²⁰

Connected to this phenomenon is the firm belief of the period that Greek poetry, philosophy, and other learning had originated with the Hebrews. The roots of this notion are pre-Christian--it was cited as a Jewish bulwark against the inroads of Hellenization -- but at the same time it helped Jews to accept Greek learning without conceding it priority or even originality. Thus Aristobulus of Paneas reports that there was a translation of the Torah that had existed prior to the Septuagint:

For others before Demetrius Phalereus, and prior to the supremacy of Alexander and the Persians, have translated both the narrative of the exodus of the Hebrews our fellow countrymen from Egypt, and the fame of all that happened to them, and the conquest of the land, and the exposition of the whole Law; so that it is manifest that many things have been borrowed by the aforesaid Philosopher [Plato] for he is very learned; as also Pythagoras transferred many of our precepts and inserted them in his own system of doctrines.²¹

Similarly, the "Letter of Aristeas" alludes to the notion that the Torah was transliterated and translated into Greek at the command of Ptolemy II; this was clearly a well-known tradition at the time this Letter was written

²⁰Migne, Patrologia Graeco-latina (PG) 8:177, 187.

²¹Cited in Eusebius, Preparation for the Gospel, Bk. XIII, Chapter XII (664a-b).

(second century B.C.) and, indeed, the idea that the Septuagint was preceded by one, or many, translations is certainly credible.²² Much of the Letter was devoted to demonstrating the superiority of Jewish wisdom (i.e., the Torah and its allegorical interpretation) to Greek philosophy. Josephus repeats and elaborates this theme in Against Apion. Among other proofs he reports an account from Clearchus, a pupil of Aristotle, that his master had discoursed at length with a Jew "and since he [the Jew] had lived with many learned men, he communicated to us [i.e., Aristotle] more information than he received from us."²³

Clement of Alexandria was familiar with Aristobulus, and attempts²⁴ to document the idea that Greek wisdom was "stolen" from the Hebrews by adducing examples of infra-Greek plagiarisms (to show their thieving ways!). He also claims that the story of the prayer of Aeacus was stolen from I Sam. 11:18. Another such "plagiarism," the borrowing of the story of Gideon and the fleece (Judges 6:37 ff) for the Argonaut legend (!) is reported by Eusebius and carries through to Dante.²⁵ In fact, Eusebius' Preparation

²² See Eissfeldt, The Old Testament, p. 604; also, R. Gooding, "Aristeas and Septuagint Origins," VT 13 (1963).

²³ Josephus, Against Apion, I, 22.

²⁴ Miscellanies VI 2:4.

²⁵ See G-R. Sarolli, Prolegomena alla Divina Commedia (Florence, 1971), p. 400.

for the Gospel presents a whole compendium of arguments in support of the Hebrew origin of all wisdom: Aristobulus, Josephus, Tatian, Diodorus and others are cited at great length.

The result of this notion was to allow poetry and other "pagan learning" a small place within Christianity. It might not have happened without it. For it was precisely because he believed all wisdom came from the Hebrews that Clement (and others) felt free to look for learning also in its somewhat corrupted Greek form: Aratus, Hesiod and others had taught "fragments of the true theology."²⁶

Allegorical interpretations also saved a great deal, and not just by the "smoothing over" already discussed. Thus: Clement had learned from Philo the practice of allegorical interpretation of the Bible (and in turn passed it on to Origen). The fifth book of his Stromateis is a defense of the doctrine of "concealment"--i.e., that wisdom must be passed on in a form not comprehensible immediately, or to all. But this doctrine reflected quite favorably on Greek literature as well, and specifically on its form. For, Clement says, Greek poets are comparable to Hebrew prophets in their allegorizing, and he cites Psalm 78:1-2, "I shall open my mouth with figures" (mašal here is translated in the LXX παραβωλις) to show that the

²⁶R. B. Tollington, Clement of Alexandria (London, 1914), I, p. 217.

manner of hidden meaning in Biblical writings is comparable to that of Homer and Hesiod in their (by then well-established) allegorical interpretation.²⁷

Beside these procedures, poetry and other Greek achievements could be countenanced within early Christianity by attributing to them some sort of supernatural source short of Divine inspiration. This is evidently Athenogoras' aim when he writes (in Plea for Christians, A.D. 176):

Poets and philosophers have proceeded by conjecture. They were driven each by his own soul and through a sympathy with the Divine Spirit to see if it were possible to comprehend the truth. They were able indeed to get some notion of reality, but not to find it, since they did not deign to learn about G-d from G-d, but each one from himself. For this reason they taught conflicting things about G-d, matter, forms and the world. We, on the contrary, have as witnesses for what we maintain and believe the Prophets, who have spoken through the divine spirit itself about G-d and theology.²⁸

Similarly, Origen:

There is a particular energy or power who is the inspirer of poetry, another of geometry, and in the same way . . . of every such art and subject of instruction. Finally, many Greeks have been of the opinion that the art of poetry cannot exist apart from madness, and accordingly in their histories it is recorded that those whom they call seers were suddenly filled with the spirit of a kind of madness. And what is to be said also of those persons whom they call divine, who through the control of

²⁷ See PG 9:44, 9:80.

²⁸ Translated in C. R. Richardson, Early Christian Fathers (Phila. 1953), pp. 306-7.

the demons that are over them utter responses in verses formed according to the rules of the poetic art?²⁹

In both these passages there is an obvious dissonance, the clash of the authors' admiration for Greek poetry and philosophy with the exclusive nature of Divine inspiration as presented in the Bible and Christian doctrine. For Origen, especially, it was a difficult problem.³⁰ But by these and similar efforts to strike a compromise, the door between Biblical and secular literature was left open: it was possible to dwell in the Biblical chamber without sealing oneself off from the secular. Now, inevitably, movement through this door was not unidirectional. (Supposedly) historical and analogical connections between the writings of the Greeks and the Hebrews³¹ left the Greek Fathers favorably disposed to the notion that the Prophets (including, of course, David) were at least poets, poets-and-something-more; that their Divine inspiration was comparable (though, of course, superior) to poetic inspiration or the madness from which pagan auguries had come; and that, finally, the songs and poems of the Old Testament were, as any self-

²⁹G. W. Butterworth (tr.), Origen on First Principles [based on Koetschau's text] (Gloucester, Mass. 1973), Book III, Chapter 3, p. 226.

³⁰About the priestess of the Delphic oracle, see *Contra Celsum* III, 25, VII, 3.

³¹Fueled everywhere by the syncretisms of Philo, who at one point even ventures to identify Terah with Socrates (*On Dreams*, I, 10:58).

respecting poem would be, written in meter. In short, their undaunted feeling for Greek literature helped to prepare the ground for the metrical hypothesis of Biblical poetry. The testimony of Philo and Josephus--Jews, and hence authoritative on matters of Hebrew culture--was welcomed as definitive, and repeated.

4.

Origen discussed the meter of the Psalms in only one place, the now-famous³² scholion to Psalm 118 (119). After citing the first verse in its Septuagint version, he notes:

This is how the verse is written. But the verses that the Hebrews possess, as has been pointed out already, are set in meter; the ode in Deuteronomy [32] is in hexameter, the Psalms are trimeter and tetrameter. Therefore, the verses the Hebrews have are different from the Greek. If we wanted to preserve them [i.e., their form] we would make these verses a single one, "Happy are those who are pure in their path, who follow the law of the L-ord." [Ps. 119:1] and in the same way begin the second line, and so forth. It must be understood that the Greek translator made two verses from a single Hebrew verse; whoever made this copy started a new line at the caesura [of the Hebrew verse]. They [the translators] took for a second verse what was only the continuation of the first according to the meaning. And so is it in every line.

³² The passage was not known for long in the early Church. We owe its frequent mention in modern discussions of Hebrew poetry to Cardinal Pitra, who resurrected it in his Analecta Sacra (II, p. 341) from a Vatican manuscript (Codex Vat. 11); and to Ernest Preuschen, who reprinted in ZAW 11 (1891), p. 316.

This is an interesting passage, and somewhat confusing; a number of separate points should be made:

1. The passage asserts Hebrew verse to be metrical. The unnamed source of this claim might be Josephus, since the works singled out as metrical were among those cited by him. But why, then, no mention of Exodus 15? And why are the Psalms "trimeter and tetrameter," where Josephus has "pentameter and tetrameter"? No other source has been found for the assertion.

2. The main thrust of the passage has not to do with meter, however, but with what constitutes a line. This is a natural concern in this alphabetical psalm. Perhaps--so it seems to me--Origen's text was stichographic (following a Hebrew original) and preserved the caesural break; his concern was that this manner of writing not obscure the true number of verses (by seeming to double them) or the alphabetical nature of the Psalm.

3. The whole reason he makes this metrical assertion is thus to introduce to his readers the idea that the Hebrew line indeed has a caesura, and that the translators mistook this caesura for a new line. He is otherwise not interested in meter here or elsewhere, still less with parallelism.

4. The Greek is difficult in several places. Thus, Cardinal Pitra translated the phrase *μετ' αἰσθήσεως* ("according to the meaning") as cum eodem sensu, and added, "It is worth noting that he had some obvious suspicion here about the parallelism of the stichs."³³ But as Ley hastened to point out³⁴ this reading is probably unwarranted. Since the Greek original is rarely reprinted, I have appended it (Additional Note 3.1) along with Pitra's translation, for anyone anxious to see if Origen had discovered parallelism avant la lettre; as we shall see, there were certainly others.

Eusebius speaks of meter in his Preparations XI, 5, in a passage of (as usual) furious preferring of Hebrew to Greek wisdom:

If any one were also to study the language [of the Bible] itself with critical taste, he would see that the Barbarian writers are excellent dialecticians, not at all inferior to sophists and orators in his own language. He would also find among them poems in meter, like the great Song of Moses [Deut. 32] and David's 118th Psalm, composed in what the Greeks call heroic meter. At least it is said that these are hexameters, consisting of sixteen syllables; also their other compositions in verse are said to consist of trimeter and tetrameter lines, according to the sound of their own language.

While such is the relation of their diction to its logical sense, the thoughts must not be brought into comparison with those of men. For they comprise the oracles of G-d and of absolute truth to

³³Pitra, op. cit., p. 341.

³⁴Julius Ley, "Origenes über hebräische Metrik" in ZAW 12 (1892), p. 212.

which they have given utterance, prophecies, and predictions, and religious lessons, and doctrines relating to the knowledge of the universe.³⁵

Origen's scholion (or possibly some unknown source common to both) is the source for Eusebius' ideas about meter. But he seems sceptical: instead of all the Psalms he limits himself to Psalm 119, and insists that these opinions are only what he has heard. The last two sentences cited are a wonderful expression of that dualism that allowed Christian commentators to make observations about meter, tropes, etc. without endangering the sacred status of the text. The letter ("diction") may be compared to human works, but not the "thoughts."

After Origen and Eusebius, the names of two of the earliest Christian poets in Latin ought to be cited, Hilary of Poitiers (d. 367) and Ambrose of Milan (340-397). They introduced hymn composition to the Latin Church (Ambrose's iambic dimeter and four-line stanzas became the octosyllabic rhyming lines of later Church hymnaries). It is not surprising, then, that they showed some interest in the Psalter and its makeup.

Hilary asserts that the Psalms have a musical meter, but translation "caeterum modi musici disciplinam conservare non potuit."³⁶ He was interested in the significance

³⁵ Preparation . . . , XI, 5 p. 514b and c.

³⁶ PL 20:263.

of the diapsalma (= Hebrew "sela") in this meter.³⁷ Beyond this, he was a defender of the classics in Christian education, and, of course, of the notion of Christian poetry.³⁸ Ambrose wrote a long and influential Psalm commentary (he believed that psalm singing effected remission from sin).³⁹ The commentary follows Origen closely. In discussing Psalm 118 (119) he notes⁴⁰ that Pss. 110-11 are also alphabetical (as Origen had said),⁴¹ which explains why they have twenty-two verses, and "unde et per metra asseruntur esse descriptos." Elsewhere, he speaks of the "rhythms" of the Psalms,⁴² but he is not particularly interested in questions of structure. Perhaps he was unsure of the information available. He calls the blessings of Jacob "songs," as if sensing something of their structure, but then says he means this "figuratively," because they are prose.⁴³ Similarly, he speaks of the "songs" of David and Job.⁴⁴

³⁷ See, also, Jerome's Epistles 28 and 138 on this.

³⁸ See M. Roger, L'Enseignement des Lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin (Paris, 1905), pp. 150-1.

³⁹ See his Preface, PL 14:925

⁴⁰ PL 15:1199

⁴¹ PG 12:1585.

⁴² See Döllner, op. cit., p. 32.

⁴³ See Fathers of the Church, vol. 65:171.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 419-20.

Their contemporary, Jerome, was far more interested in the specific question of meter; it is to him that one must turn for the source of all later metrical speculation.

5.

Jerome had an obvious love for the masters of Latin poetry and prose, and his own style in his letters and introductions betrays an attention to elegant expression wholly in keeping with his classical education. His writings are full of citations from the poetry of "pagans," and, far from recanting later, he defended this practice against his accusers by showing that earlier Fathers had done likewise, and, in fact, Paul.⁴⁵ One of his aims in retranslating the Hebrew Bible was to prevent the then-common experience of revulsion at the style of the Old Latin, its lack of classical elegance.⁴⁶ At the same time, of course, Jerome had inherited certain strictures against the Classics from his forebears. Tertullian (c. 150-240) had condemned all profane literature.⁴⁷ In De Idolatria⁴⁸

⁴⁵In his Epistle to Titus, Paul inserts verses of Menander and Epimenides; see M. Roger, op. cit., p. 140.

⁴⁶Like others, Jerome's first impression of the Hebrew Bible was that it was a sermo incultus. On this, see infra.

⁴⁷In De Spectaculis PL 1:650.

⁴⁸PL 1:675.

he ruled that Christian children could go to pagan schools--even in the time of Jerome and Augustine, the only schools available to Christian children were the state schools--where, presumably, they would be exposed to classical literature; but the children should be protected against being misled by the texts, and, of course, no adult Christian ought to seek employment as a teacher in such a school.⁴⁹ The Fathers, even the early Greek Fathers, had condemned classical literature for its polytheism, its erotic scenes and depictions of forbidden things, and for the "prideful" classical philosophy. Jerome echoed these sentiments.⁵⁰ In a famous letter (Number 22, to Eustochium) he recounts how, even after he began his ascetic way of life, he retained his books of pagan literature; but, stricken with fever and near death, he had a vision of being summoned before the seat of Heavenly Judgment, where he was reproached for having clung to these classical ways:

⁴⁹ Ibid., see Roger, pp. 133-36. To be fair, much of this program of separation from the pagan world was never carried out. Tertullian's ban was never enforced; even after Christianity ceased to be a minority religion the classics stayed. A more realistic statement of policy is Basil's "On the Reading of Profane Authors," where he suggests that pagan writings are acceptable reading if they are examined in the light of the Gospels and with judicious selection of texts. Nevertheless, in Jerome's day the outcome was far from certain--indeed, his was the age in which the classics were in greatest disrepute. [On this whole question, see Marrou, p. 321; also C. L. Ellspermann, The Attitude of the Early Church Fathers . . . (Washington, 1949).]

⁵⁰ See on Job, PL 26:645, 780.

"Ciceronianus es, sed non Christianus!" Upon his recovery, he reports, he devoted himself entirely to Christian reading. In the same letter, he cautions Eustochium against any mixing of two wholly separate ways of being:

Do not wish to appear eloquent or go about performing merry little lyrics set to meter. Be not overly fastidious, imitating the slobbering lisp⁵¹ of those married ladies who alternately slacken and snap their lips as their chattering tongue pursues its inane speech--for they think that anything that is left natural is boorish and unrefined. Adultery, including the verbal kind, pleases them immensely. "What do light and darkness have in common? On what can Christ and Belial agree?" [2 Cor. 6:14] Then what has Horace to do with the Psalter? Vergil with the Gospels? Cicero with the Apostle? Is not a brother led astray if he sees you recumbent in the place of idolotry? Now it may be true that "all things are pure to the pure-hearted, and nothing is unacceptable if it is received in the spirit of thanksgiving"--still we ought not to drink from both the cup of Christ and the cup of demons [as per 1 Cor. 14:21].

This passage does reveal a great deal of Jerome's attitude toward the Bible, for his question to Eustochium is not quite Tertullian's "Quid Athenae Hierosolymis?", what has one entire way of thinking to do with the other, but only: where there is a Psalter, what need is there also for Horace? Implicit in this is some sort of equivalence of function, and, indeed, note: Horace with the Psalter (read: lyric with lyric), Vergil with the Gospels (epic with epic), Cicero with Paul (rhetorician with rhetorician). His attitude is really no different from that of the

⁵¹In Jerome's day, lisping was a sign of culture. Martial frequently satirizes this affectation in his Epigrams.

anonymous Didascalia Apostolorum (third century) which, forbidding the reading of pagan literature, proposed, "If you wish to read histories, take those of the Book of Kings; if you want poetry and wisdom, take the Prophets; if you desire songs, you have the Psalter."⁵²

In both the Didasclaia and Jerome is the quite definite notion that these holy books are somehow a literature, and are to be used as such. Apollinaris of Laodicea and his father had set about rewriting the Pentateuch as an epic, and other books as dramas, Pindaric odes, etc. (among these all that has survived is a Psalms paraphrase in hexameters).⁵³ Jerome's Vulgate did not go so far, but he had no doubt that in Hebrew the Psalms were mellifluous lyrics comparable to the best of Greek and Latin literature. It was only translation that made them "dure sonantes":

What is more poetic than the Psalter? which, in the manner of our Flaccus or of the Greek poet Pindar, now flows in iambs, now rings with

⁵²F. X. Funk, ed., Didascalia Apostolorum (Rottenberg, 1891), Bk. I, Chapter IV, pp. 12 and 14. On this, see Marrou, History of Education in Antiquity (London, 1956), p. 320, and L. Alonso-Schokel, "El Estudio literario de la Biblia" in Razon y Fe 157 (May, 1958), p. 468.

⁵³They did so in order to create a purely Christian course of study which, nevertheless, would provide classical learning (i.e., metrics, rhetoric); the program was not successful. See Marrou, St. Augustin . . . , p. 324 and J. Quasten, Patrology (Utrecht-Antwerp, 1960), III, p. 380.

Alcaics,⁵⁴ swells to a Sapphic measure or moves along with a half-foot? What is fairer than the hymns of Deuteronomy or Isaiah? What is more solemn than Solomon, what more polished than Job? All of which books, as Josephus and Origen write, flow in the original in hexameter and pentameter verses.⁵⁵

And so we have the proper context for Jerome's remarks about Hebrew meter. The rather haphazard observations of Josephus and Origen became for him confirmation of this notion of the Bible as a "holy literature" parallel to the secular; the Psalms were metrical because Horace was, and the Psalms were to replace Horace. One of the results of this particular view of things was that henceforth metrical speculation was to center on Psalms and other Hagiographia (though note that the Didascalia had said "If you want poetry . . . take the Prophets"), leaving the Prophets alone. Jerome was quite specific:

⁵⁴ A four-line stanza named after the Greek poet Alkaios (late seventh-sixth century B.C.) on the scheme

♀ - ♀ - ♀ - ♀ ♀ - ♀ ♀ (twice)
 ♀ - ♀ - ♀ - ♀ - ♀
 - ♀ ♀ - ♀ ♀ - ♀ - ♀

Jerome did not mean the whole stanza pattern, but single lines with the characteristic choriamb (i.e., a combination of trochee and iamb). The choriamb is also characteristic of Sapphic verse, which Jerome mentions next. These two are the favorite meters of, significantly, Horace.

⁵⁵ "Preface to Eusebius," PL 27:56.

Let no one, when he sees the prophets written down in verses⁵⁶ think that they are read metrically in Hebrew or have something in common with the Psalms or the works of Solomon; but, following the practice that is often found in the works of Demosthenes and Cicero (who both write in prose, not verse) that they are written down in keeping with periodic style (ut per cola scribantur et commata) so I as well, out of regard for the reader's convenience, have distinguished my new translation with a new manner of writing.⁵⁷

The question asked earlier of Philo and Josephus might now be asked in regard to Jerome: did he have any real notion of the metrical structure of the passages so described?

He had, of course, studied Hebrew, and from the year 386 on he lived in Bethlehem, where he worked at translating. Part of what was to become the Vulgate he had begun translating directly from the Hebrew text. Certainly his knowledge of Hebrew and feel for the Bible were impressive. But the study of Hebrew was not an easy thing in his day; there was no dictionary to consult; vocalization, and

⁵⁶ Jerome set off each verse poetically (as it appears in Migne). All the latter prophets are done in this fashion, as, of course, the "poetic books" of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Lamentations, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes; also, Daniel appears this way. Despite what he says here, Jerome had some perception of the Prophets as speaking in "poetic language," and may have arranged them stichographically for that reason; it is also possible he had seen stichographically written texts in Hebrew.

⁵⁷ PL 28:825. Jerome would, of course, exclude from this characterization the "famous songs" that appear within the Prophets, such as Isaiah 5 and 26 or the Canticle of Habakkuk (Hab. 3); about the latter he notes that it is "lyrico more compositum" (PL 25:1307).

even pronunciation of the consonants, was not standardized;⁵⁸ grammar was uncertain. In the specific question of meter Jerome was not noticeably confident, or consistent. He must have tried to perform some kind of scansion in Hebrew, but never reports or duplicates it. In the passage from his preface to Eusebius already cited, there is one phrase that sticks in the throat, that most anticlimactic "ut nunc semipede ingreditur."⁵⁹ That "half-foot" seems an escape-clause of sorts, an admission that, try as he did, he could not get the Psalms to conform consistently to any of the previously cited meters.

Another passage which gives evidence of Jerome's actual attempts to resolve the metrical question is his Preface to Job:⁶⁰

⁵⁸ In Epistle 54, Jerome says the name Asher is translated either as "happiness" or "wealth" ("Aser' vel in beatitudinem vel in divitas vertitur"); obviously he has conflated two separate roots, אֲשֶׁר and עֵשֶׂר, in keeping with the tendency of later Hebrew not to distinguish between 'aleph and 'ayin. In the same letter he interprets Naomi to mean "consoled," confusing נָעִם and נָחַם. In some regions het and 'ayin were pronounced similarly; see Jer. Berakh. II 4d.

⁵⁹ The passage was cited by Thomas Lodge in his (typical of the English Renaissance) justification of the poet's occupation: "David was a poet, and . . . his vayne [talent] was in imitating (as S. Jerom witnesseth) Horace, Flaccus, and Pindarus, sometimes his verse runneth in an Iambus foote, anone he hath recourse to a Saphier vaine, and aliquando semipede ingreditur." (Defense of Poetry, Music and Stage-Plays [1580].) The switch to Latin may indicate it stuck in his throat, too!

⁶⁰ PL 28:1140-1.

From the beginning of the book to the words of Job, the Hebrew version is in prose. But from the words of Job where he says, "May the day perish . . ." [Job 3:3] to the place before the end of the book where it says ". . . dust and ashes," there are hexameter verses made of dactyls and spondees, and, owing to the special character of the language, frequently containing as well other [sorts of] feet, which have not the same number of syllables, but the same quantities. Sometimes also a sweet and pleasing rhythm is obtained by the patterns being broken up according to the laws of meter [numeris lege metrici solutis] about which a master of metrics will know more than the ordinary reader. From the afore-said verse to the end of the book the small remaining section is prose. And if it seems incredible to anyone that the Hebrews really have meters in the same manner as our Flaccus, and the Greek Pindar, and Alcaeus and Sappho--whether the Psalms, or the Lamentations of Jeremiah or almost all the songs of the Scripture are to be considered--let him read Philo, Josephus, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, and with their testimony he will find for sure that I speak the truth.

Here there are familiar elements: the "special character" echoes Eusebius' phrase in the Preparation XI:5, and the same catalogue of Greek and Latin poets has already been seen in Jerome's preface to Eusebius cited earlier. The singling out of these same authors again might lead one to suppose they had a special significance for Jerome, a metrical significance; for as we have seen, certain characteristic combinations are associated with these names. Now a metricist trying to find meters in the Hebrew text would find the choriamb, for example, a useful rationalizing feature in a predominantly iambic line. It would avoid, mutatis mutandis, the rigidity imposed by an alternating system such as that of the modern isosyllabic scansion.

If Jerome looked at the opening line of the "poetic part" of Job he singled out,

יֵאבֶד יוֹם אוֹלָד בּוֹ וְהַלֵּילָה אָמַר הָרָה גָּבֵר

he would (with current vocalization) have seen a line of seventeen syllables (sixteen if the third word was read as bisyllabic). This is easily rationalized into a hexameter line of five dactyls and a spondee (5 X 3 syllables and 1 X 2 syllables)--and behold:

Yobad yom / iwwaled / bo weha- / laila a- / mar hora /
gaber

The trouble with this is that one whatever notions of syllable quantity or stress one assigns, the division into feet becomes somewhat arbitrary. Still, the basic regularity of the line length was a powerful argument for metrical structure; how natural for Jerome to think then that the Hebrews simply had feet not known to the Greeks and Romans. And for the lines that are just too long or too short he also sees a design: the patterns are periodically varied "numerus lege metrici solutis," a sort of "law for the lawless."

Jerome did not always stick to his sources.

Josephus, Origen and Eusebius had all said Deut. 32 was hexametric, but Jerome in his commentary on Psalm 118 (119) says both this Psalm and Deut. 32 are said by Josephus to be in the same meter, elegiacs (a hexameter line followed by

a pentameter),⁶¹ "because the earlier verse consists of six feet and the lower verse ends in a pentameter, less by one [foot]." Now this seems to be the result of his own observation, for, indeed, many of the B-halves of these songs are shorter than the As; thus

הָאֵינָנוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶדְבָּרָה (13 syllables)

וְחָשַׁמְעַת הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי פִי (9 syllables)

In another passage, however, he contradicts this opinion. It comes in a didactic letter to Paula (N° 30) in which he explains the alphabetical poems in various books:

But you ought to know that in the "prior" versicles [viz., the A-halves] of these Psalms [111 and 112] the individual versicles, which are written in iambic trimeter, are joined together by a single alphabet [i.e., each verse begins with a successive letter], and that the "lower" versicles [i.e., B-halves] are in iambic tetrameter, just as the song of Deuteronomy [32] is written. In Psalm 118 [119] eight-line verses follow the individual letters [of the alphabet]. In Psalm 144 [145] individual verses are set off by each letter. There are those who think other Psalms as well follow this arrangement, but they are wrong.

You also have in Jeremiah's book of Lamentations four alphabetical compositions, of which the first two are written in a sort of Sapphic meter, since a short line [Latin: "comma"] of Heroic verse ends three versicles which are connected together and begin from one letter [in the alphabetical sequence.]. The third alphabetical section is written in trimeter and in triplets of letters, but [i.e., unlike the groups of three verses in Lamentations 1 and 2] the three verses begin each with the same letter.

⁶¹ See also PL 26:1258.

The fourth alphabetical section is similar to the first two. A final alphabetical section closes the Proverbs of Solomon, which is set off in iambic tetrameter starting from the place in which it says, "A woman of valor who shall find?" [Proverbs 31:10]

Here, then, Deuteronomy 32 has lines of alternating lengths, but instead of hexameter and pentameter they are trimeter and tetrameter; this is the same structure as Psalms 111 and 112. He does not specify the meter of Psalms 119 or 145. The first two alphabets of Lamentation are in a "sort of Sapphic meter" because three metrically similar verses (unspecified) are followed by a "comma" (the term can mean a half-verse, but is usually used for prose) of shorter duration. Lamentations 3 is in "trimeter," and Proverbs 31:10 ff is in tetrameter.

What is one to make of this array? One critic⁶² has attempted to rationalize these various remarks into a realistic description of "meters," substituting stress accents for quantity, but this seems most unconvincing. Besides, Jerome felt--if he thought in such precise terms--that Hebrew poetry was, like Greek, a quantitative system; in his Job preface he specifically notes that Hebrew has other feet "non earumdem syllabarum, set eorumdem temporum." Throughout his critical writing he remained convinced of a basic premise: Hebrew songs are metrical. On this he had the agreement of four predecessors, plus

⁶²G. Castellino, op. cit.

his own observations--the obviously roughly equivalent line-lengths in Psalms, Job, etc., and the evidence of something like stanzaic structure in Job. The only missing information was what the meters were. This was a difficult area, since vowel quantities were so vague. The fact that he contradicts himself, and his predecessors, only indicated that Jerome was probably proceeding by trial scansions, dissatisfied with earlier results but convinced that the metrical "answer" was out there somewhere. (It is a situation which should not seem unfamiliar to the metrical school of modern-day Biblical criticism.) Jerome was probably never entirely satisfied he had found the key to Hebrew poetry--how could he be?--and, significantly, he never gives details about how the words of the text actually fit the meters he names. In the Job preface he comes close to confessing his nomenclature is an approximation (in the sense that Hebrew had its own rules of substitution); but meter was in any case a question of mathematics, a question which goes beyond the "special character" of the language. And Hebrew had meter.⁶³

⁶³ Other remarks by Jerome about meter are to be found in the following places: Epistle to Paulinus (PL 22:547); Commentary to Ezechiel (PL 25:295); Preface to Jeremiah (PL 28:904).

6.

The results of Jerome's writings about Hebrew meter was that the question of the structure of the Psalms and other parts of the Bible was answered before it had been properly asked. The metrical thesis remained unchallenged in Christian circles until the Renaissance. It need not have been so, for the fact of parallelism was perfectly obvious to many of the Church Fathers. All they lacked was the proper framework for understanding what they saw.

As noted in the first chapter of our study, Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 350-428) may be counted as the first⁶⁴ person to describe the "distribution" reading of Hebrew parallelism. About Hosea 5:9 he writes:

Now here a single idea is being expressed in common by diaeresis ["dividing in two": it was a figure of rhetoric called in Latin distributio] just as is found here and there in the writings of blessed David, as when he says "By day I called, and at night I am before you" [Ps. 88:2] he does not mean he called during the day and at night spoke to G-d face to face, but rather "All day and night have I called out before you." So here when he says Benjamin will be wasted and Ephraim put in desolation, it is as if both are to be included in the same expression: they were wasted and put in desolation.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Diodorus (d. 391) speaks of "parallels" in regard to four psalms, but says no more about them; on this see Alonso-Schokel, Estudios . . . , p. 197.

⁶⁵PG 66:121 ff.

About Hosea 5:12--

He does not say one thing here about Ephraim and the next about Judah, but both are contained in the same exhortation and warning, as we have seen above.

On Habbakuk 3:4

For also in this place he says something common to both by diaeresis, which manner of expression we have shown to be not unusual in the sacred Scripture.⁶⁶

What Theodore noticed, in short, was that A and B make a single whole. His remarks here and elsewhere might have had some greater notice, were it not for the fact that his works were condemned by the Council of Constantinople--a ban which was followed much more strictly than a similar interdiction on Origen's works⁶⁷ and which caused his works to remain in obscurity for some time. But there were certainly others who made similar observations. Paulinus Diaconus (fourth-fifth centuries) says about Gen. 49:11:

The manner [idioma] of Hebrew speech [lit. "sermo" which is sometimes used specifically for "prose"] is such that it repeats one and the same thing in different expressions, as here. For what is wine if not "the blood of the grape?"

Far from prizing this insight, however, he continues:

⁶⁶ These passages from Theodore, as well as Gennadius, I owe to Alonso-Schokel, op. cit.; he credits Father A. Vaccari with having found them for him.

⁶⁷ See Beryl Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages (Notre Dame, Ind., 1964), p. 15.

But just as much as the surface of the letter is without importance (for no one will ever wash his cape or mantle in wine!) so much the more pleasing does the inner meaning commend itself. For the Savior washed his cape in wine and his mantle in the blood of the grape, since while hanging on the cross he had his holy flesh, which was his mantle, drenched in his own blood.⁶⁸

Paulinus' words are telling: the coupling of valuable remarks about structure with an immediate denigration of the literal is a Patristic leit-motiv. It was this attitude which prevented--just as surely as the Rabbinic attitude did--a systematic approach to the structure of these passages. So a few pages earlier Paulinus understood Gen. 49:7 ("I will divide them in Jacob, I will scatter them in Israel") as: 1) a single literal statement describing the dispersion of the Levites throughout the land; and 2) figuratively, as referring to two aspects of the Church.⁶⁹

Adrian (sometimes "Hadrian") a fifth century Greek monk, wrote a brief Biblical introduction ("Isagoge")⁷⁰ which, among other things, lists and catalogues figures of speech in the Old and New Testaments. In the course of this he has occasion to treat parallelism, which he describes as a kind of "repetition [of ideas] in different words, thus: 'Behold I am conceived in iniquity and in sin my mother conceived me' [Psalm 51:7]; 'I have slept

⁶⁸"De Bened. Patr. Libellus," PL 20:715.

⁶⁹PL 20:718-20.

⁷⁰PG 98:1274.

and am asleep' [Ps. 3:6]; 'Born of the earth and sons of men' [Ps. 49:3]; 'Who made his angels spirit, and his ministers a flame of fire' (Ps. 104:4); 'G-d is become my refuge, and my G-d into the help of my hope' [Ps. 94:22]; 'G-d spoke and He called the earth' (93:4) 'They spoke and said' [Ps. 78:19] 'Hear my words, understand my expression' (Ps. 5:2)." He says Isaiah and Jeremiah are written in prose, while the Psalms of David and the songs of Moses in Exodus and Deuteronomy are songs--indeed, the presence of meter indicates they are not prophecy; the same is true of the other songs, "such as the books of Job and Solomon."⁷¹

Finally, Gennadius, a fifth century presbyter of the Constantinople Church, remarks on another passage from the blessings of Jacob (Gen:49:9):

This phrase, "as a lion and as a lion's cub" consists of parallels παραλλήλου [expressing] the same idea [in different words]. It is like "What is man, that Thou shouldst remember him, or the son of man, that thou shouldst take notice of him?" (Ps. 144:3)⁷²

In all these writers, however, it is apparent that the structural role of parallelism simply eludes them. It is significant that Theodore identified his parallelistic passages with a Greek figure of speech. This is a way of recognizing parallelism without truly understanding it. It

⁷¹PG 98:1312.

⁷²PG 85:1657.

is how Augustine read parallelism, and because of his great influence the "figurative" misreading of parallelism became an institution of the medieval Church.

7.

One of the major obstacles faced by the early Christian proselytes was--how difficult for us to imagine nowadays!--the perceived crudeness and lack of elegance in the Biblical style. Jerome remarked on this (as we have seen), and, indeed, the Vulgate is in some sense his attempt to rectify the situation. Augustine remembers a similar revulsion in his Confessions (Book III, Chapter 5):

So I made up my mind to examine the holy Scripture and see what kind of books they were. I discovered something that was at once beyond the understanding of the proud and hidden from the eyes of children. Its gait was humble, but the heights it reached were sublime. It was enfolded in mysteries, and I was not the kind of man to enter into it or bow my head to follow where it led. But these were not the feelings I had when I first looked into the Scriptures. To me they seemed quite unworthy of comparison with the stately prose of Cicero, because I had too much conceit to accept their simplicity and not enough insight to penetrate their depths.

Against similar revulsion in potential converts Augustine devised a two-fold defense. The first half, elaborated throughout his critical writings⁷³ is to dismiss all matters of elegance and style as superficial,

⁷³ See on this Marrou, 473-537.

in every way secondary to the meaning in the author's heart. (Indeed, hints of this can be seen in the Confessions passage cited: its gait is "humble," but it reaches sublime heights; "I had too much conceit . . . and not enough insight.") Meaning saved the rudeness. Indeed, Augustine went beyond this idea: for him, it was specifically the way that Scripture means--that is, darkly and through ever-shifting allegories--that accounts for its apparent superficial bareness. Were the Bible written with the oratorical flourish of Cicero, our eyes might not even see its mysteries; they must be laid out plainly, so our minds will be spurred on to find the meaning: "saepe enim et verba non latina dico ut vos intelligatis." ⁷⁴ If you wish to cure cultivated men of their repulsion at Scripture's style, Augustine wrote in De Catichizandis rudibus, "introduce them to the manner of its allegories." ⁷⁵

In fact, this aesthetic extended beyond the Scriptures. Augustine had a place in his universe for the Christian poet, for example; his job was not to delight the ear, but to instruct the mind. The superficial elegances of poetry, he says in De Doctrina Christiana (following an old Christian allegory), are comparable to the gold and silver that the Israelites brought with them

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 551.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 492.

out of Egypt (i.e., the learning that Christians inherited from the pagan Greeks and Romans); they were valuable, but nothing in comparison to the riches that lay ahead in Jerusalem and the temple of Solomon. So a Christian poet ought to pay little attention to the superficial pleasures of poetry, and instead veil his meaning in mystery. For the real delight of the mind comes in finding the hidden truth of poetry, "salubris obscuritas" in Augustine's words,⁷⁶ or what was to become "le trobar clus."⁷⁷ Isidore of Seville, echoing Augustine, counsels the Christian poet to write "obliquely, figuratively, with a certain beauty."⁷⁸

The second half of the defense quite contradicts the first: it is to demonstrate everywhere possible in the Scripture poetic and rhetorical flourishes worthy of the greatest classical authors. This argument finds its definitive form in the De Doctrina Christiana; begun in 397, revised and published in 426, it represents Augustine's most complete and considered statement on Biblical style.

⁷⁶See De Doctrina IV: 8 (22).

⁷⁷See F. Huppé, Doctrine and Poetry (New York, 1959), 1-30); Marrou, p. 489; both of these remark on the tremendous significance of this doctrine for later, secular literature.

⁷⁸Huppé, op. cit., p. 31.

The order of the four books of that work represent a definite hierarchy in the author's own mind. The first is concerned with the three Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity; these are the end of all Christian learning, Augustine asserts, and a Christian who possessed them perfectly would have no need of the Scriptures whatsoever, unless it be to teach another. The middle two books are concerned with Scripture, its essence and its interpretation; the fourth book has as its subject rhetoric and eloquence. About the latter, Augustine shows the ambivalence of his day. His whole rhetoric is based on Cicero--"orator noster" he calls him; yet he is mistrustful of the institutions of oratory, since they can be used to plead the case of falsehood as well as truth.⁷⁹ He was especially critical of the Sophistic ideals that dominated contemporary oratory; in this sense his Ciceronianism is a yearning back to an earlier simplicity.⁸⁰

The fourth book of the De Doctrina contains several extended citations adduced to prove the rhetorical mastery of the Bible. Most of these come from the New Testament (from Paul), but Augustine also cites Amos 6:1-6. He is at pains to point out that the author of these

⁷⁹ De Doctrina IV:2.

⁸⁰ See Therese Sullivan, De Doctrina Christiana (Washington, 1930), p. 8.

words was a shepherd, hence unlettered; it is an eloquence arrived at without the benefit of tutoring. But here, as so often⁸¹ Augustine has little sense that he is dealing with a translated text whose original may be quite different in the very particulars he is defending. Afterwards he notes that the words of the Bible are "composed by human industry, but likewise infused with the Divine mind both wisely and eloquently, with a wisdom which is not bent on eloquence, but an eloquence which does not depart from wisdom ("non intenta in eloquentiam sapientia, sed a sapientia non recedente eloquentia").⁸² Purus became, through Augustine, a code-word for the Bible's stylistic simplicity; about Jerome 5:30-1 he exclaims "O eloquence so much the more terrible for its being pure; and for its being restrained, so much the more vehement!"⁸³

Now the study of tropes and figures, Augustine says, is important for a Christian to aid him in reading the Bible:

Those who know these tropes recognize them in the Holy Scripture, and the knowledge of them is a considerable aid in understanding the Scripture . . . In the Holy Books there are seen not only examples of these tropes, just as of all the figures, but

⁸¹In Augustine's remarks on Psalm 118 he wonders what it can be like to "desire a desire," having no notion that this might be a Hebraicism; see Enarr. in Ps. 118 (PL 37:1521-2).

⁸²De Doctrina IV 7 (21).

⁸³De Doctrina IV: 17 (30).

even the names of some of them: for example
 "allegory,"⁸⁴ "enigma,"⁸⁵ and "parable."⁸⁶

While his examples of tropes and figures make no allowance for differences between the Latin and the Hebrew, he does note that rhythmical closures (a feature of Roman eloquence) are lacking in the Latin Bible; but this is not to be counted a fault, for the careful reader "will find many types of expression of great beauty--which even in our tongue, but especially in the Bible's own, are beautiful; of which none are to be found in those works about which [our grammarians and rhetoricians] are so puffed up with pride."⁸⁷ By this he seems to mean the Bible has a rhetoric of its own, with its own tropes and figures--but he does not elaborate.

Specific instances of parallelism Augustine treats under the rubric of various figures, most often repetitio.⁸⁸ There is never any question of according them a structural role: Hebrew poetry is metrical.

For that branch of music wherein rhythm [numerus] is taught most fully [i.e., poetry] is so far from

⁸⁴He is probably thinking of its use in I Corinthians (already cited).

⁸⁵I.e., of Sheba, or Samson, or some of the other uses of hiddah.

⁸⁶The translation of mašal.

⁸⁷De Doctrina IV: 20 (41)..

⁸⁸E.g., PL 36:903; see Alonso-Schokel, pp. 197-8.

lacking in our prophets⁸⁹ that that most learned man Jerome mentions the meters of some of them, but he left them only in the Hebrew and did not translate them, the better to preserve the truth that lies in the words.⁹⁰

In a letter (Epistle 101 ad Memorium) Augustine confesses his own ignorance with regard to meter:

I have not written in precisely which meters the verses of David are composed because I do not know. Nor can a person translating from the Hebrew language (which I do not know) capture the meter, lest he be thought to stray, because of the exigencies of the meter, farther from faithful translation than the meaning of the words permits. But that they do consist of meters I fully trust those who are experienced in that language [Hebrew].

The way was thus prepared for what was to become the Church's united stand on the "poetry" of the Hebrew Bible. That it was written in meter was uncontestable: those who (one might suppose) knew the Hebrew language best--the Jews Josephus and Philo, Origen of the Hexapla, and Jerome, champion of the Hebraica veritas--all said it was metrical. Who could contradict? At the same time, Augustine's De Doctrina Christiana had provided the theoretical basis for viewing parallelism--wherever it had been, or was to be, noticed--as a color of rhetoric: for though the Scriptures walked with a "humble gait," yet they were full of figures and tropes, so much so that the study of rhetoric was

⁸⁹It is important to remember that for Christians at this time David is a prophet, too.

⁹⁰De Doctrina IV: 20 (41).

important to a Christian if only⁹¹ to help him penetrate the Bible's meaning. As noted, in his Psalm commentaries Augustine identified parallelism primarily as repetitio, but soon the range of possible figures was widened.

8.

The contribution of Cassiodorus (ca. 487-580) came primarily in two books, his De institutionibus and his commentary on the Psalms. In both he acknowledges as his masters in exegesis Hillary, Ambrose, Jerome, and especially Augustine. He repeats the Augustinian idea that training in rhetoric and the liberal arts is necessary to an understanding of Scripture.⁹² But unlike his contemporaries, who were content for Christianity to exist within the old Roman system of education, he wanted to create an entirely new system, wherein a Christian rhetoric would be taught--"unde et anima susciperet aeternam salutem, et casto atque purissimo eloquio fidelium lingua comeretur." (He did not succeed.)⁹³

In De institutionibus divinarum litterarum he explains that Scripture uses images and figures to set forth

⁹¹Of course, it was also important to aid the Christian in bringing about conversions and in preaching.

⁹²PL 70:1140; see also M. Roger, op. cit., p. 176.

⁹³Roger, p. 176.

abstract ideas: "manus lavere significat non esse participem."⁹⁴ Sometimes figures are used to make comprehensible to humans the truth of Divine meanings, a truth which exists in each and every word of the Bible: "Everywhere in them truth reigns, and everywhere the Heavenly power shines through; everywhere things to come are explained to mankind."⁹⁵ Of all the Biblical books discussed in De Institutionibus, the only one he specifically connects with poetry is Job: "Prosa incipit, versu labitur, pedestri sermone finitur."⁹⁶ He praises the existence of rhetorical figures in that book, and asks, in view of its art and eloquence, "Who is there who will claim that the art of rhetoric does not begin with the Holy Scriptures?"

This is an idea which he developed in greater length in his preface to his Psalm Commentary.⁹⁷ He begins his discussion by citing Paul (Heb. IV 12): "For the word of G-d is alive and active. It cuts more keenly than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the place where life and spirit, joints and marrow, divide. It sifts the purposes and thoughts of the heart." Paul meant by this (Cassiodorus says) the specific structure of Biblical

⁹⁴PL 70:1127.

⁹⁵PL 70:1132.

⁹⁶PL 70:1118.

⁹⁷PL 70:1-26.

style--I believe he means parallelism⁹⁸--"per commata procedens ad depromendum sensum." This he identifies as an ornament of style, "but these [ornaments] do not exist to beautify Scripture--on the contrary, they themselves are glorified by having Scripture's own dignity conferred on them."⁹⁹ The ornaments, which first appeared in the Bible, were later taken over by the Gentiles for their own purposes (the old Aristobulus theme) and reappear in Greek topics and disputational and rhetorical art. He then cites Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana III 29, to support his claim, and adds the Augustinian notion that the Bible has its own colors of rhetoric which are impossible in Latin ("alios autem proprios in divinis eloquiis esse declaravit, quos grammatici sive rhetores nullatenus attigerunt").¹⁰⁰

His Psalms commentary itself is filled with references to Greek tropes and figures. There are so many that Garet, in his edition of Cassiodorus, drew up a table of the figures with their Greek and Latin names and a list of references to them in Cassiodorus' commentary.¹⁰¹ In the commentary itself, what we would recognize as parallelism is variously identified as emphasis (i.e., exaggeratio),

⁹⁸Hence, perhaps, "two-edged sword"?

⁹⁹PL 70:20.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., loc. cit.

¹⁰¹The table was reprinted in Migne's edition, PL 70:1271-80.

epanados ("repetitio rerum quae junctim dictae sunt"),
epexegesis, epimone, exetasmos, hirmos, hypozeuxis, ison,
metabole, periphrasis, schesis onomaton, etc. Thus, about
 Psalm 5:2 ("Hear my words, O Lord, understand what I say
 . . ." etc.) Cassiodorus writes:

This device is called metabole, that is, the repetition of a single idea in a variety of words: for here, one and the same thing is signified in a three-fold repetition. For he said "Take my words to your ears, O Lord" [i.e., the Latin translation of ha'azina]; thence "understand my cry"; thirdly, "hearken to the sound of my speech"--all of which goes to stating a single request. It is as if he had said "Listen to my speech."¹⁰²

About Psalm 24:10 he writes:

"Who is the King of Glory? The L-rd of Hosts, He is the King of Glory." This as well is a most lovely device which is called in Greek anadiplosis, and in Latin congeminitio dictionis, which can be done either in a whole verse, or in repetition of individual words.¹⁰³

While such repetitions as these are laudable, they are to be distinguished from mere pleonasm. Cassiodorus has Augustinian difficulties with "set on fire" in Psalm 73:7:

"Incenderunt igni sanctuarium tuum . . ." Now its saying "they ignited with fire" is a device which in secular literature is called pleonasmos, where something superfluous is interposed. But in the Sacred Scriptures (so it seems to me) it is not fit to speak of this figure, for therein everything is useful, everything is necessary, and everything is perfect.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰²PL 70:54.

¹⁰³PL 70:175.

¹⁰⁴PL 70:528.

The same notion of tropes is found in Isidore of Seville (d. 636), who passed it on to the Venerable Bede (672-735). In fact, Bede wrote a treatise on the subject, De schematibus.¹⁰⁵ He was familiar, of course, with Cassiodorus,¹⁰⁶ and probably also with Donatus.¹⁰⁷ He repeats the idea (stated also in Isidore) that the Greek rhetorical devices came originally from the Hebrew, and asserts that the Bible is superior to other books "not only because of its Source, which is divine, or by reason of its use, inasmuch as it leads to eternal life, but also by its antiquity and its manner of expression ("positione dicendi")."¹⁰⁸ Bede then catalogues various devices, explaining them and giving examples from Latin literature and, apud nos, from the text of the Bible. (Here began an English tradition of teaching rhetoric which was to flower in the Renaissance: rhetoric books by Richard Sherry [1555], Dudley Fenner [1584], John Barton [1634], Thomas Hall [1654], John Smith [1657] and John Prideaux [1659] all resort to the Bede tactic.)¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵PL 90:175.

¹⁰⁶See Roger, p. 31.

¹⁰⁷Huppe, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁰⁸Cited in Roger, p. 308.

¹⁰⁹See Israel Baroway, "The Bible in the English Renaissance," Journal of English and German Philology 32 (1933), p. 470. Note, also, George Wither, A Preparation to the Psalter (1619): "If you have respect to those

Bede also went so far as to catalogue books of the Bible according to their poetic structure. Of the three classical types of poems, dramaticon, exegematicon, and coenon, Song of Songs is an example of the first because it consists of two "voices," the Savior and the Church; Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Psalter are in the second class (as are the first three books of Vergil's Georgics and part of the fourth) because in them "poeta ipse loquitur sine ullius interpositione personae"; and the Iliad, the Aeneid, and Job are in the third class (the poet speaking both for himself and through his characters)--though he notes, following Jerome, that not all of Job is written in verse.¹¹⁰ Finally, it should be noted that this classification is repeated almost word for word in another great medieval cyclopedia, the De Universo of Rabanus Maurus (784-856).¹¹¹

Meanwhile, the metrical thesis was not lagging behind. Drepanius, in a verse epistle¹¹² wrote:

things which are the ordinary of other mens poesy, as Similes, Metaphors, Hyperboles, Comparisons and such like . . . I dare mention that no volume of such bigness [as the Psalter] hath so many as this . . . And what is this but Poesie? Nay what is this but that most excellent kind of Poesie?" [Publication of the Spenser Society 37 (1884), pp.73-4.]

¹¹⁰Bede, De Arte Metrica, in PL 90:173-4.

¹¹¹Book XV, under "De Poetis" PL 111:419-20.

¹¹²PL 61:1089

Job prius heroo sua carmine bella retexit
 Divina David personat ipse lyra
 Quid loquar insigni tumidum Solomona cothurno
 Qui thalamos Christi psallit et Ecclesiae

Similarly, Arator (sixth century) in another verse letter¹¹³

Metrica vis sacris non est incognita libris
 Psalterium lyrici composuere pedes
 Hexametris constare sonis in origine linguae
 Cantica Hieremiae¹¹⁴ Job quoque dicta ferunt

It is no accident that these claims find themselves in the middle of poems, for the metrical thesis helped to guarantee poetry a place in the Christian world; indeed, attributing meters to the Bible made metrics, like rhetoric, an essential field of study.¹¹⁵

Isidore's Etymologies repeated in great detail Jerome's claims about Hebrew meters, with occasional variation:

All the Psalms are composed in the Hebrew in metrical poetry. For in the manner of the Roman Flaccus and of the Greek Pindar, now some flow with the iamb, then resound with Alcaics, now shine with a Sapphic tetrameter or trimeter.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ PL 68:80.

¹¹⁴ I.e., Lamentations.

¹¹⁵ Roger, p. 140. Of course, it was part of the discipline of music, hence mathematics. Augustine's De Musica deals exclusively with the question of meter.

¹¹⁶ PL 82:231.

Of Job, he repeats the Jerome delimitations of poetry and prose, and says Proverbs, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes are written in hexameter and pentameter verses. Isaiah, "evangelista potius quam propheta" (the formula is Jerome's) writes in "rhetorical prose," except, of course, for his Canticle (Isaiah 26) which consists of hexameters and pentameters.¹¹⁷ He also repeats Jerome's description of Lamentations.¹¹⁸

Beyond this, Isidore presents the idea that the Hebrews invented the meters later adopted by the Greeks! (This is an obvious parallel to what Augustine had said about tropes and figures.)

Moses was the first to have sung metrically in the canticle of Deuteronomy, long before Pherecydes and Homer; thus it is apparent that the study of poetry is of greater antiquity among the Hebrews than the Gentiles. Likewise Job, which goes back to the time of Moses¹¹⁹ runs in hexameter verses of dactyl and spondee . . . The Prophet David is likewise shown to have first composed and sung hymns in the praise of G-d. Thence did it pass to the Gentiles . . . long after David.¹²⁰

Similarly, Isidore attributes the first epithalamion to Solomon (Song of Songs) and the first lament to Jeremiah (Lamentations). To Gentile sources he ascribes the origin of elegiac and bucolic verses.

¹¹⁷PL 82:232.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Here Isidore does not take sides in the dispute over whether Moses himself was the author of Job.

¹²⁰PL 82:119-20.

After Isidore, Aldhelm (seventh century) and Bede both repeated the metrical thesis as they had the attribution of tropes and figures to the Bible.¹²¹ Again, it is to be noted that both were poets. Indeed, as a poet, Aldhelm was a thorough-going syncretist. What has survived of his poetry includes Latin verses in which "Olympus" is used to signify Heaven, "Tartarus" for Hell, and the Deity is called "the King of Olympus"!¹²² He even seems to attribute some validity to pagan inspiration:

I do not seek the rustic Muses for my verses and periods, nor for my metrical songs the Castalian nymphs . . . [etc.] But rather I strive to move the Thunderer [his poetic appellation for G-d] with my prayers, Who grants to use the oracles of peaceful word; I seek the word from the Word, whom the Psalmist sang . . ."¹²³

Bede, as we have seen, wrote a treatise on meter; in it he discusses the differences between meter and rhythm (rhythm can exist without meter, but not vice versa; meter is "ratio cum modulatione," rhythm "modulatio sine ratione").¹²⁴ He repeated Jerome's description of the meter of Job, and added that Proverbs and Ecclesiastes,

¹²¹For Aldhelm and tropes, see PL 89:171; he speaks of allegoria (ibid., pp. 114, 165), metaphor (165), climax (169), etc. See Roger, p. 385.

¹²²Huppe, p. 69.

¹²³Ibid., p. 70.

¹²⁴PL 70:173.

as, indeed, the whole Psalter, are also written in meter "in their own language."¹²⁵

Rabanus Maurus, the last great encyclopedist of this early period and an admirer of Bede, discusses the question of meter in De Universo, Book V.¹²⁶ Here, he repeats what he had gleaned from previous auctores, principally Jerome and Isidore. It is a summary of medieval knowledge on the question of meter, stating the view that would pass basically unchanged until the Renaissance. It is the fruit of much of what we have seen about meter and figures in the writings of the Fathers:

The beginning and the end of the book of Job are composed of prose speech in the Hebrew; its middle parts, however, from the place in which he says "Pereat dies . . ." up until the place in which it says "Idcirco . . ." is all written in heroic meter.

[. . .] All the Psalms are composed in Hebrew in metrical poetry. For in the manner of the Roman Flaccus and the Greek Pindar they run now with an iambic foot, now with an alcaic, now with a Sapphic they sound, moving along in trimeter or tetrameter.

[. . .] The first of [the books of Solomon] is Masloth [sic] which the Greeks call Parabolas and the Latins Proverbs; in which book he shows, by comparisons and similitudes, figures of words and images of the truth, which truth however he leaves to be found out by the readers.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ PL 111:107.

[. . .] The songs of these three books [Proverbs, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes] are said to be written in hexameter and pentameter verses, as Josephus and Jerome both write. Isaiah, more an evangelist than a Prophet, produced his book, all of which precedes by rhetorical prose; however, the canticle is in hexameter and pentameter verse. Jeremiah similarly wrote his book with Lamentations . . . in which he composed a four-fold alphabet in diverse meter; the first two parts of it are written in a Sapphic-like meter."

CHAPTER FOUR

יראת ה', ראשית דעת

1. Brief summary of disappearance of parallelism
2. The paršanim
3. Medieval Hebrew poetry
4. "Three classes of song"
5. Azariah dei Rossi

1.

The early history of Jewish and Christian exegesis, which has been our subject, is thus the key to such misunderstandings about parallelism as still exist among Biblical scholars. The "high style" of balancing clauses slowly died out in Hebrew and was replaced by "poetry": first came rhyme, then various metrical arrangements culminating in the adoption of the Arabic quantitative system in the tenth century. In the meantime, Jewish exegesis read parallelism "sharply" wherever possible, and consequently lost sight of the balancing altogether. Christian exegetes saw it, but perceived it not for what it was, but as a form of (nay, the ancestor of) classical tropes and figures; and, following Philo-Josephus, they thought in terms of Hebrew "poetry" governed by classical meters. These early suppositions have been perpetrated by modern critics to an extent that most would find surprising. For really, we have never left off the idea of Biblical poetry; all the erroneous scansions and metrical systems are the child of this misconception. In a more subtle way, so are the misleading categories of Lowth et al. About De Sacra Poesi it might be justly

said, "it told us what we wanted to hear": that Hebrew poetry had a system, one that was comparable to European poetry's various structural features. Since Lowth, new elements have been introduced; but critics have always continued to demand of Biblical texts that they be systematic, that they be poetry, even amending the text to suit their own notions of rhythm or parallelism of meaning.

This history, if it does not quite have a happy end (for there seems to be no end in sight to the misreading of Biblical parallelism) has at least a happy middle. It comes with the one man entitled (if any one man is) to the claim of being the "discoverer" of Biblical parallelism, that most impressive Renaissance Jewish scholar, Azariah dei Rossi (c. 1511-1578). He is an ideal figure to end with, because (though the subject of parallelism is only a tiny part of his massive compendium, M^e,or (Einain ["Light of the Eyes"]), he had a remarkably complete acquaintance with both exegetical traditions, Jewish and Christian, and this learning allowed him to see clearly where all his predecessors had faltered. His description of Biblical parallelism was the crucial step forward. Though it is still the prisoner of the "poetry" notion and too strict in its idea of parallelism, Azariah's analysis is in some ways superior to Lowth's, as we shall see.

Before translating it, however, I should like to deal with the notion that parallelism had in fact already been recognized in various of the Biblical commentaries written by Jews in medieval Spain and Provence.

2.

Medieval Hebrew exegesis was the child of the Talmud and Midrash. Of course, there is enormous variety in the method and focus of exegesis in this most fruitful and productive period: exponents of kabbalah, philosophy, rationalism, etc. all used Biblical commentary as a means of setting forth their ideas; commentaries were systematic or hodge-podges, literary, philological, mystical, scientific.¹ But they were all heir to the notion of exegesis embodied in the commentaries of the Talmudic period, and, indeed, frequently had recourse to this body of work in order to buttress their own ideas. Among the presuppositions adopted universally by medieval Jewish exegetes was the non-literary character of the Bible, and as a consequence, one finds in them very little of the stylistic awareness seen among the Fathers of the Church in their writings about the Bible.

¹See on this M. Segel, פרשנות המקרא (Tel Aviv, 1952).

This statement must be qualified a bit. First, in a few places even the earlier exegeses show some awareness of style; Talmud Sanhedrin 89a, for example, speaks of אֲנִי נִבְּאֵר the "style" of the Prophets. Expanding on this theme, the midrashic tractate Leviticus Rabba (10:2) portrays G-d asking Isaiah:

How is it that all the other Prophets prophecy in simple speeches, and you prophecy in two-fold consolations: 'Arise, arise!' [Is. 52:1] 'Rouse thyself, rouse thyself' [51:7] 'Joyful I shall rejoice' [61:10] 'I, yea I . . . ' [43:11] 'Comfort ye, comfort ye . . . ' [40:1]

Perhaps most important to our subject is the remark in Genesis Rabba (71:1) concerning Ps. 69:34:

"For the L-rd listens to the downtrodden, and His prisoners He has not disappointed." Said R. Benjamin b. Levi: the beginning of this verse is not [like] the end, and the end is not [like] the beginning. For the text ought to read, "For the L-rd listens to the down-trodden, and the prisoners . . ." etc.; or else "For the L-rd listens to His down-trodden, and His prisoners . . ." etc.

What is striking in this is not that a difference is noticed between A and B; this is, after all, the essence of the Talmudic "sharp" reading and occurs constantly in exegesis thereafter. But what is peculiar here is the bluntness of the remark, "the beginning is not like the end," which after all presupposed parallelism as a characteristic of all verses; and secondly, the fact that this observation is not then used as the point of departure for a "sharp" exegesis (R. Benjamin only goes on

to suggest that the "downtrodden" are the nation of Israel and "prisoners" are barren wives, without connecting this interpretation to his initial observation).

But among midrashim these are isolated instances; the great bulk of this material moves along the familiar lines dictated by the "d^eraś mentality."

Among the medieval commentators there are occasional "literary" analyses, especially at the end of the period, when Christian commentaries began to be known to the Jews.² But what is by far the most literary-minded commentary on the Torah was not written in Christian Europe, but in the Orient; it is that of Tanhum Yerushalmi, a thirteenth-century parśan who lived first in Palestine, then in Egypt.³ The commentaries of his which have been published thus far show a marvelous insight into the texts. For example, six hundred years before Ugarit was unearthed, Tanhum was aware of the fact that lamed in Hebrew can have the meaning "from."⁴ He frequently used

²On Abarbanel, see S. Gaon, "Don Isaac Abravanel and the Christian Scholars," American Sephardi VI (1973), p. 17.

³His work was well known among Oriental Jews, but was only rediscovered in the West in the nineteenth century. See I. Goldziher, Studien über Tanhum Jeruschalmi (Leipzig, 1870); also, B. Toledano, "Tanhum Yerushalmi" in Sinai 42 (1961), p. 339 (a general review), and Hadassah Shai, "Almarsad alhafi" in Leshonenu 33 (1969), p. 196.

⁴On Hab. 3:16; see M. Dahood, Psalms III, p. 394.

Arabic to explain the meaning of a difficult word,⁵ and even Turkish (in Habbakuk 3:14 he cites the comparison of Hebrew [פְּרָזָן] with Turkish ferzan (= vizier, man of distinction))⁶ But most striking is his use of literary terms: in his Habbakuk commentary, he frequently describes phrases as "metaphor" אִסְתֵּגָרָה,⁷ "exaggeration" מִגְבָּלָה,⁸ and most commonly, "simile."⁹ At the prayer of Habbakuk he makes a brief excursion in which he compares the style of the Prophet to that of Deborah in Judges 5, Isaiah 38:9, and certain Psalms (he cites 91 as an example); they all resemble each other in concision, obscurity, and the use of metaphors.

For all that, he does not, in the available texts at least, speak directly about the parallel structure of Hebrew verses, although he is clearly aware of its working in places.¹⁰ It is not in Tanhum that one

⁵ Thus, on Hab. 2:5 he explains yahir via Arabic yahr.

⁶ See S. Munk, Le Commentaire de R. Tanhoum de Jerusalem sur Habakkouk (Paris, date missing), p. 77.

⁷ See e.g., on 2:1.

⁸ = Hebrew guzmah, haflagah, etc. The Arabic term is related to balaga ("rhetoric, good style"); although literally exaggeration, our word ought perhaps to be translated "figurative language," and likewise its Hebrew equivalents.

⁹ אֶלְמַהֲלִי כַמֶּגֶז מֶלֶךְ, עָלֵי טָרִיק אֶלְתַּמְהִיל

¹⁰ See on Hab. 1:15, 3:2; also Lamentations 4:7 (see Wm. Cureton, Tanhumī Hier. Commentarius arabicus in Lam. [London, 1843], pp. 36-7.).

can find Azariah's predecessor.

Nor is he to be found among the popular traditional commentators that came out of the Middle Ages.

Rashi is, in general, scrupulously "sharp," always reading B as a distinction over-against A, and hence not remarking on B's balancing of meaning. For example, on Numbers 23:7, "Come, curse Jacob for me, come condemn Israel," he remarks:

Balak had told him to curse them using both of the names of the Israelites, lest one alone not be precise enough.

Similarly, on Deut. 32:7, "Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders and they will say to you," he adduces the verse of 2 Kings 2:12 to show that "your father" refers to the Prophets of Israel; "your elders" he takes as a reference to the Talmudic rabbis.¹¹

There is one place in his commentary, however, where Rashi may identify parallelism as such. On Exodus 15:1 he writes about the phrase ki ga'oh ga'ah

The form is doubled here to show that He did what it is impossible for flesh-and-blood to do, and because of this the idea of ge'ut applies as in Is. 12:5 . . . And likewise you will find doubling throughout the Song: "the strength and power . . ." [15:2], The L-rd is a warrior, the L-rd his Name," and so all of them.

¹¹ חכמים, he says, which might simply mean "sages," but the "historical predicative" reading is possible in midrash (hence also Rashi), especially in a "predicative" song such as Deut. 32.

Rashi feels the necessity, just as we saw in the Talmud, to explain even the grammatical "doubling" of a verb (viz., the emphatic use of the infinitive). Having done so, he mentions two other instances of "doubling" (both explained in his commentary later): the first is only a two-word phrase, but the second constitutes an entire line in which, as Rashi attempts to show later, "the L-rd is His Name" refers to the manner of fighting, and is thus a "duplication" of the A-half, "the L-rd is a warrior."

One must understand things in Rashi's way in order to grasp the significance of this. Normally, every word of Scripture has its own raison d'être, so that each word adds something new. In Exodus 15, however, such a viewpoint runs into difficulties; therefore, at ga'oh ga'ah he introduces the idea that "doubling"--not only doubled verbs, but in general restatement of ideas--is peculiar to this Song to distinguish G-d's actions from human ones. The same idea is repeated in his explanation of verse 6, "Thy right hand, O L-rd, is glorious in power, thy right hand crushes the enemy." Here Rashi cites a Midrashic explanation, then continues:

"Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power"--to save Israel; and the second "thy right hand" crushes the enemy, and so it seems to me that that same right hand that saves Israel also crushes the enemy, which is something a man cannot accomplish, two deeds with one hand. But the simple meaning of the verse is: "Thy right hand, O Lord, which is glorious in power--what

does it do? Thy right hand O L-rd crushes the enemy." And there are many such verses in the Bible, such as "For behold thy enemies, O L-rd, for behold thy enemies will perish" [Psalm 92:10], and the others like it.

This verse presents another instance of "doubling," and Rashi has found the same explanation for it: "right hand" is repeated to emphasize the difference between human and Divine deeds. But his addition about the "simple meaning" of the verse shows he was perfectly aware that the repetition in B was simply that, a repetition and continuation of A's thought. He even cites another example of this "repetitive parallelism," Psalm 92:10.¹²

The notion was dealt with in more explicit terms by Rashi's grandson, R. Shmuel b. Meir (= Rashbam) in his commentary on the same passage.

"Thy right hand . . ." etc. This passage is like "The waters have lifted up, O L-rd, the waters have lifted up their voice" [Psalm 93:3] "How long shall the wicked, O L-rd, How long shall the wicked rejoice" [Psalm 94:3] "For behold thy enemies, O L-rd, for behold thy enemies perish" [Psalm 92:10]. In all these the first half does not finish its idea until the last half comes and doubles [i.e., repeats] it and then completes its idea. In the first half it [only] mentions who or what it is talking about.

What is most interesting in Rashbam's explanation is not that he accepts the repetition as not significant (hence

¹² Some editions of Rashi contain other examples, but this may simply be a back-formation from his grandson's commentary; see following.

a trait of style) for Rashi had already done so in his account of the verse's "simple meaning." But here Rashbam even speaks of the "first half" and the "last half" of the verse, i.e., he recognizes the binary structure. Earlier, in his commentary on Gen. 49:22,

בן פרט יוסף בן פרט עלי עין he had observed:

Now this verse is an example of "halves." At the beginning of the verse it does not complete its idea,¹³ but only mentions its subject; then it returns and doubles [repeats] half of the beginning of the verse and finishes its idea, as in "The waters lift up," "For behold thy enemies," "How long shall the wicked," "Vanity of vanities says Koheleth, vanity of vanities, all is vanity" [Eccles. 1:2], "Thy right hand . . ." and so forth.

It is clear from here that Rashbam understood the structure of the verses mentioned, i.e., understood "repetitive parallelism" as a specific stylistic construction that divided verses into two halves. Whether he understood this as a sub-category of a more general balancing he does not say. Furthermore, it is to be noted--both in regard to him and to Rashi--that their central concern is meaning. Their attention is drawn to these verses only in that they violate the general assumption of commentators that every word adds something new; both are willing to concede the "stylistic" reading, but having done so they

¹³The text here is defective. See David Rozin (ed.), (Breslau, 1872), pp. 74-5.

have no further interest in the formal nature of Hebrew verses. Parallelism as such is not relevant to the task of commentator.

The same may be said for the various remarks about parallelism in the commentary of Abraham ibn Ezra (1089-1164). He frequently remarks on the "doubling" of meaning in verses of sections identified as songs, sayings, etc. For example, about Balaam's verse in Numbers 23:7 he observes:

The idea is repeated as a sentence; this is a way of saying one idea in different words. They repeat for the sake of emphasis.

He makes similar remarks about the "Song of the Well" (Numbers 21:17) and the "Song of the mos^elim" (Numbers 21:28); about Deut. 32:7 he observes, "the idea is repeated for this is a feature of style (כִּי כֵן דֶּרֶךְ צְחוּרִית)." One of his most interesting explanations is of Gen. 49:6:

About this verse R. Moshe ha-Cohen has nicely explained that the idea is repeated in the manner of prophecies: "Ask your father . . ." [Deut. 32:7], "How shall I curse . . ." [Num. 23:8]. Similarly here "in their company" is like "in their group," "go" is like "proceed," "myself" is like "my glory."

But by far his most interesting comment on parallelism comes on Exodus 23:10, where he attempts to understand the meaning of the word sapir in the expression כַּעֲשֵׂה לַבַּיִת לְפָנֶיךָ by looking at other instances in which the word is parallelistically apposed:

Saadya Gaon has said that a sapir is white, and his proof is this text, כמעשה לבנת הספיר. But on the contrary, a sapir is red; this is proven by the fact that it is the practice of Hebrew to repeat an idea in different words, so that where it says Lam. 4:7 "Her princes were purer than snow, whiter than milk" the idea is being repeated. So when the verse continues "Their bodies were ruddier than red coral, their limbs redder than sapirim" sapir ought to be compared to "red coral."¹⁴

Not only had ibn Ezra used parallelism of meaning as an exegetical tool, he also identified it (correctly in our view) as מנהג הלשון a habit of the language, and דרך צחות, the "high style," rather than associating it (like the others) with songs and poetry.

Mention ought to be made as well of the commentaries of Rabbi David Kimhi, since they have been cited as well as Ibn Ezra's as describing parallelism avant la lettre.¹⁵ On Hosea 12:5 he says, "He repeated the idea for emphasis, since it was a great wonder for a man to fight with an angel." About Habbakuk 3:8--"He repeated the idea for emphasis." On the other hand, he does not notice the parallelism in either Exodus 15 or Deut. 32,

¹⁴ Ibn Ezra goes on to assert, in a part not cited, that libnat in this verse does not mean, as Saadya had supposed, "whiteness," but comes from the Hebrew lebenah, "brick."

¹⁵ Kimhi was so credited in Dukes, Zur Kenntniss der neuhebräische Poesie (Frankfurt, 1842), p. 125; in a reply, Schmiedl adduced ibn Ezra's comment on Gen. 49:6 (see Monatschrift für Geschichte in Wissenschaft des Judentums [1861], p. 157).

nor for that matter on those other široṭ Numbers 21:17 or 21:27. Indeed, it is most revealing that he uses the same phrase, וּכְפַל הַפֶּסוּק לַחֲזָק הָעֵינָן, to describe an actual repetition (Psalm 118 8-9); in his words, at least, he does not distinguish between paralleling and repeating. Furthermore, he speaks of "repetition" in the same way when it is individual words, rather than verse-halves, that are involved; for example, on Judges 5:27--

"Between her feet he bowed he fell": such is the habit of Hebrew¹⁶ to repeat things in order to reinforce the meaning, for he bowed down to the ground so as to never rise again. That is why it says next, "where he bowed, there he fell stricken." Judges 5:27

Similarly, Deborah's cry, "Arise, arise" is described as an emphatic "doubling."

If one were to rank the foregoing on their understanding of parallelism, Abraham ibn Ezra would probably come first. But there is something quite wrong-headed in describing any of them as "understanding" parallelism, for even in ibn Ezra it is a most passive act of comprehension. These commentators embraced the parallel structure of Hebrew style only insofar as it aided them in their main task, explaining the meaning of the words. Where "sharpness" was possible, they read sharply; only when the text literally repeated itself, or in an obvious

¹⁶ Note that the phrase is precisely the same as that seen in ibn Ezra.

way restated a single idea, did they speak of "doubling," repetition and so forth. "Elegant style," "the manner of prophecies," and "the habit of Hebrew" are all apologetic: they explain what, to these paršanim, ought otherwise not to exist, mere repetition or restatement. For these not only ran counter to their notion of the text's perfection, they likewise violated the rules of style set for mortal men.

On this last point, the testimony of Moshe ibn Ezra, the author of a lengthy treatise on poetry,¹⁷ is most instructive. It is in his eighth chapter that he takes notice in general of the phenomenon of repetition and restatement in the Bible, noting "in our language, the repetition of an idea is permitted so long as the words are different; on the contrary, in the opinion of one of the masters of the study of rhetoric [R. David Kimhi] this is a form of elegant style and rhetoric [פניאחרי ובלאגה]. He then cites Isaiah 41:4, 43:7, 41:20, Deut. 25:18, Gen. 25:8, Lev. 17:5, Ex. 25:23, etc.--some of these entire verse-halves, but most of them individual pairs of words. (For him, as for the other commentators seen, there was no difference. They posed the same problem, seemingly needless repetition of ideas, and they received the same solution, the label "rhetorical style.")

¹⁷ See Chapter 2, note 91. The present passage is the same edition, p. 162.

These examples notwithstanding, he cautions Hebrew poets against imitating Biblical practice: "In poetry, brevity is the correct thing." He cites many verses that seem repetitive, interpreting their repetition as adding in each case a significant nuance. (Hence Psalm 115:12 is "a general statement followed by a specification.") Then he adduces a few examples of parallelism which he reads in the "distribution" manner. Thus Leviticus 25:37,

Do not lend thy money out at discount // and
thy food do not give out at interest.

he reads "Your money and your food do not lend out at interest or discount."

For parallelism itself he has little feeling. His comments here, like those of the paršanim, has a defensive quality--he wishes to show it is not bad style to repeat in Hebrew, even though in the values of Arabic rhetoric, which he had embraced as his own, it is.

As we have seen, the Church Fathers had no hesitancy in identifying parallelism with various devices of Greek and Latin rhetoric, especially repetitio, distributio, expositio, interpretatio, etc.¹⁸ The medieval Jewish commentators of Spain had not only the normal Talmudic prejudice against finding rhetorical devices, emphatic

¹⁸On the last two, see E. Faral, Les arts poétiques du 12e et 13e siècle (Paris, 1962), pp. 63-4.

expressions and the like in the Biblical text; some also were heir to a surrounding secular tradition which carefully avoided repetition or restatement in any form. This was an important factor.

3.

If Azariah's insight was not the product of descriptions of parallelism among the paršanim, was it then solely his own work, buttressed by his reading of (as he recounts) Philo, Josephus, and the Church Fathers? No. He had medieval Jewish sources as well: three of these he names, but behind them stand other important works, all of them dealing with, or dependent on, the introduction of the Arabic quantitative system of poetry introduced into Hebrew by Dunash ibn Labrat in the tenth century.

The story of Hebrew poetry in the medieval period has been told elsewhere.¹⁹ What is important here is not the verse itself, but the effect of its existence on

¹⁹ A brief summary is available in English in Shalom Spiegel's article, "Medieval Hebrew Poetry" in L. Finkelstein, The Jews (New York, 1965), p. 82. Presently, the best anthology of this period is H. Schirmann, השירה העברית בספרד ובפרובאנס (Tel Aviv, 1960), which contains a good introduction. Schirmann's introduction to I. Davidson, A Thesaurus of Medieval Jewish Poetry (Tel Aviv, 1970) is a brief history of scholarship surrounding the poetry of this period.

Jewish perceptions of the Bible. For poetry came, in a short period of time, to dominate utterly Jewish consciousness (as it already had the Arabs) in a way without analogue in modern societies. It was used for everything: praise of patrons, shaming of enemies; love-songs, wine-songs, occasional verse of all kinds; religious poetry incorporated into the synagogue service; learned treatises on grammar;²⁰ Maimonidean polemics²¹--all these found the new poetry their natural medium. "If you wish to make some matter well-known," Yedaya haPenini said, "put it in a poem. If you put it in a book, never on your life will it spread abroad!"²² An astonishing quantity of poetry was known by heart. Arabic school children, as best we know, had to learn an entire anthology, Hamasah, by heart. Jews learned poetic compilations of halakha by heart, and in the detailed course of study outlined by Maimonides' pupil, R. Yosef ibn 'Aqnin (outlined in his "The Healing of Souls") poetry plays a significant role. Moreover, secular and occasional poetry was well-known: a wealthy man required his own house poet at least as a

²⁰ That is, the disputes between the grammatical schools of Dunash and Menahem were argued out in verse; see B. Klar, בית קרים ועיונים (Jerusalem, 1954), p. 98.

²¹ Ibid.

²² See Dukes, נחל קדושים (reprinted Tel Aviv, 1970), p. 22. Cf. Saadya on Job 12:11, cited in N. Allony (ed.) ספר האגרון (Jerusalem 1968), p. 112.

defensive weapon, to counter the withering epigrams aimed at him by the poets in his rivals' employ--for these passed amongst the people and spread fame and shame to every quarter. Similarly, he expected that if a song of praise of him was well-wrought, it would survive long after his death. Poems passed from mouth to mouth; ibn Jannah recounts how he heard a line of his master, R. Yishaq b. Mar Sa'ul, misquoted many times in public, until he finally heard the correct line from his teacher's own lips.²³ Likewise, Moshe ibn Ezra says of ibn Jannah, "his poems were recited and passed on from one person to the next."²⁴

All manner of special qualities were lent to poetry. Because of its association with music and the rhythmical modes, it was felt to have special healing qualities (this idea goes back to Pythagoras; the Arabs classified types of music according to the effect produced in the listener).²⁵ Saadya Gaon had accepted the notion of the special power of the different rhythmical modes; he felt excellence in this field to be a Jewish specialty, and cited Psalm 137 ("On the rivers of

²³ Klar, op. cit., p. 102.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ See on this, Werner-Sonne, "Medieval Jewish Musical Theory," HUCA 1941, p. 265.

Babylon") as proof that the Jews were renowned in the ancient world for their knowledge of song, since "the Babylonians asked our fathers to sing songs during the exile."²⁶ Even Maimonides accepted song's therapeutic value, though he was generally opposed to secular music;²⁷ about poetry, too, he had well-known reservations.²⁸ But these were not easily passed on to a population in which song and recitation of poems had such a central role.²⁹

Under such circumstances, it became difficult for Jews to imagine life without poetry. The Bible was full of references to songs and singing, and it is natural that a population so taken up with poetry would eventually wonder in what manner the song and poems of their ancestors had been composed. Yehuda haLevi, the greatest of all medieval Hebrew poets, discussed this: he was most critical when it came to the quantitative system of scansion imposed onto Hebrew from the Arabic meters (which he himself used!). In his Kuzari, the poet denounced it as an unfortunate result of assimilation, arguing that it

²⁶ See Saadya's Psalms Preface (ed. J. Kafih, Jerusalem, 1966), p. 31.

²⁷ See H. G. Farmer, Maimonides on Listening to Music (Bearsden, Scotland, 1941).

²⁸ See, e.g., Guide of the Perplexed, I:59.

²⁹ See, for example, the opinions of the otherwise Maimonidean Shem Tob b. Yosef Falaquera, cited in Werner-Sonne, op. cit., p. 269.

made for grammatical ambiguities and was wholly foreign to Hebrew language:

It is obvious that songs do not need fixed meter for their words, nor the counting of a greater or lesser number of syllables. The verse "Praise the L-rd for He is good" [Ps. 136:1] can be sung to the same tune as "To the worker of greater miracles alone" [Ps. 136:4] . . . In the Bible poems with rhyme and meter are neglected for something loftier and more useful.³⁰

That something, he explains, is the system of t^e(amim. He is careful not to describe the Bible's songs as "poetry," and the t^e(amim are seen as a substitute for meter, not a form of it. But although this passage was often alluded to in subsequent writings about poetry, its basic idea--that what is called "song" etc. in the Bible ought not to be compared to the metrical songs then known to Spanish and Provençal Jewry--was not widely accepted. Most would agree with Shem-Tob b. Yosef Falaquera (1225-after 1290):

For in poetry are said the praises to G-d
Which men have composed since Moses and the
Israelites [i.e., Ex. 15]
And the song Ha'azinu which contains all the
Torah's principles
Is written entirely in the manner of poetry
And amongst poets have been righteous and
upright men
Who spoke in the Holy Spirit
The Book of Psalms is written in the Holy
Spirit and it is entirely songs

³⁰ Kuzari II 70.

And our Sages called Song of Songs the 'Holy of Holies.'³¹

The association between Biblical "poetry" and that of their own day was inevitable. One writer even claimed that the number of possible meters in quantitative system in Hebrew was fifteen because "fifteen types of songs were sung in the Temple."³² Moshe ibn Habib recounts finding an ancient rhyming epitaph during his stay in Italy: "Then I truly believed that this sort of metered poetry has existed and has been with our people since the days in which our forefathers were on their own land."³³ Abraham ibn Ezra, in his commen on Eccles. 12:9, explains 'izzen: "[he composed] poems; [this verb refers to] the balancing of [metrical] science." Presumably he meant the songs attributed to Ecclesiastes' traditional author, King Solomon.

³¹ ספר המבקש ; see Schirmann's anthology, III, p. 338.

³²This is from אמרי שפר, attributed to A. Mizrahi. See A. Neubauer, מלאכת השיר (Frankfurt, 1865), p. 25.

³³ דרכי נעם, published by W. Heidenhem (Rodelheim, 1806).

If the quantitative system as such was irrelevant for Biblical poetry, one aspect of it was nevertheless extremely significant. Arabic lines (and their Hebrew imitations) in most meters divided strictly in half, and this binary structure was one of its most striking features. Following Arabic terminology, an entire line was called in Hebrew a "house"; the first half was referred to as "the door," and the second half "the closing" (hassoger).³⁴ Whether there is any historic connection between this caesura and the old pan-Semitic use of parallelism is an interesting question;³⁵ in any case, it is no doubt true that this structure fixed in Jewish minds the notion of half-verses that together form a line.

Poetry writing was originally the property of Hebrew grammarians and others of considerable erudition and talent. But as time went on increasing numbers of people desired to gain access to this branch of learning, and a series of treatises appeared on the subject of composition. Prominent amongs these were Abraham Ibn Ezra, ספר צחות; David ibn Bilia, דרך לעשות חזונו; Saadya ibn Danaan,³⁶

³⁴ See ibn Danaan's article on poetry, reprinted in A. Neubauer (note 32).

³⁵ The earliest metrical system of the Arabs did not have a caesura; see on rajaz R. A. Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs, p. 74.

³⁶ See Note 34.

שקל הקדש, S. Almoli; אמרי שפר³⁷ (?) A. Mizrahi; פרק בחורו;
 as well as the works by Saadya, M. ibn Ezra and ibn Habib
 already cited. Many of them felt called upon to deal with the
 question of the songs in the Bible before moving to the
 quick of their exposition. Ibn Habib, as we have seen,
 was of the opinion that poetry went from the Israelites
 to the Arabs; the author of the very popular treatise on
 poetry-writing, שקל הקדש, agrees:

None of our Sages who have written about metrical
 poetry has attributed the origins of this craft
 to any but the Ishmaelites [Arabs], for it was
 taken from them and they are most adept at it.
 But I personally have no doubt that everything
 the Sages of the Ishmaelites know about it they
 originally took from our own, just as they took
 their language in its somewhat confused form
 from ours.³⁸

Proponents of such a theory were then in the somewhat
 difficult position of having to explain what that primor-
 dial poetry consisted of. This question--it is our
 question--produced a tradition of a three-fold classifi-
 cation in poetry which had, at its heart, the purpose of
 incorporating those parts of the Bible called šir, širah,
 etc. into the general class of compositions known by the
 same name in medieval Jewry, viz. metrical poetry.

³⁷ Note 32; see also, H. Yalon, שקל הקדש
 (Jerusalem, 1965), p. 14.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 52. See, also, Ibn Danaan's remark:
 "It is known that Arabic is essentially Hebrew, but that
 it became confused." (A. Neubauer, op. cit., p. 52.)

Where this tradition begins I am not now prepared to say; its only fixed element seems to be the number three. Thus Falaqera:

Replied the poet: Songs are on three levels. There are songs written in prophecy, like the song "Then Sang Moses" [Ex. 15] and the song of Ha'azinu and these are the highest level. Then there are songs spoken in the Holy Spirit, such as the songs of David and others in the Psalms and Proverbs and Song of Songs and these are the second level. And then there are individual songs written by rabbis amongst the poets as praises of the blessed G-d and his wondrous deed, and these are on the lowest level.³⁹

Falaqera's three categories do not distinguish the form of composition; his categories are Maimonidean⁴⁰ and despite their sternness (he utterly condemns secular poetry and, as above, leaves no place for it in his conception of song) are really aimed at saving some place in the world for poetry; the religious poems of ibn Gabirol and Yehuda HaLevi are made to bask in the reflected light of their Biblical homologues.

But among the "Three Classes of Songs" treatises, there are three which deal with the formal structure of Biblical songs, and are consequently of some importance to the description of parallelism that was made by Azaria.

³⁹ ספר הצבוק , p. 29.

⁴⁰ See Guide of the Perplexed, II, Chapter 45.

4.

The first of these three treatises is also the most important, because it directly influenced the other two. It belongs to R. Moshe b. Shmuel ibn Tibbon (thirteenth century), the son of a famous translator and himself an accomplished translator; in his preface to an allegorical commentary on Song of Songs, he set out to place the Biblical book within a larger classification of the forms of speech and types of poetry, and this latter task leads him to discuss Biblical poetry:

The third type are poetic words, and they are of three types, or combinations of the three. The first of these are done with meter or rhyme and are called "musical constructions."⁴¹ The second are words that are actually performed with melody, even though they do not have regular meter or rhyme. Neither of these two types are truly poetry, as Aristotle wrote in his treatise on poetry.⁴² And the third type are things written in the manner of poetic style, and through exaggeration and overstatement, comparison, likenesses and images in order to praise something or to put it to shame, to excite the attention or to correct traits of character or to reinforce something and establish its truth through a multiplicity of words and accounts and many descriptions and comparisons, but not so that the literal meaning of the word accord with the true facts or that the thing to which it is compared actually resemble it in any real aspect or dimension. And this category is true poetry, and there are to be found in the Bible examples of it, such as "mother of the road," [Ezek. 21:26] "helmet of salvation" [Isaiah 59:17],

⁴¹ כלי נגון

⁴² I.e., the Poetics; but the Arabs (and Jews) had a pseudo-Aristotelean compilation, as will be seen.

"the cloak of righteousness" [Isaiah 61:10], "the wings of morning" [Ps. 139:9], "the eye of darkness" [Proverbs 20:20], "sons of his quiver" [Lam. 3:13], "I will make my arrows drunk with blood" [Deut. 32:12] and many others like this in the Bible. In this type the more it exaggerates, using such things as impossibilities or overstatements, the better and more praiseworthy it is, for as the wise man [Aristotle] said, 'The best of poetry is its lying.'⁴³

This last was an oft-repeated⁴⁴ pseudo-Aristotelean statement and is at the heart of ibn Tibbon's classification. For what he seeks to do is to explain why so many parts of the Bible can be called "song" (= poetry) and yet not be characterized by the lying and exaggeration which Arabs and Jews felt to be the essence of poetry. He would like to say that things are also called "song" when they are to be musically performed, but this he cannot assert about, for example, Ecclesiastes (nor, for that matter, for some of the serious religious poetry of his 'day). Hence his first category, poems made with meter or rhyme. Now, somewhat later in the preface, a deft maneuver will allow him to include in this first category Biblical "poems" which are obviously not rhymed or metered:

⁴³ Moshe ibn Tibbon, שיר השירים (reprinted 1874), pp. 7-8.

⁴⁴ See on this, Dukes נחל קדומים, pp. 59 ff.

In the first of the types of poetry are all the songs of Solomon, whether of Koheleth or Proverbs and those like them. And it is possible that of this class as well are the Proverbs [not of Solomon] and Job and most of Psalms, because they are verses that are divided up like [Arabic-style] poetic lines (although the units [verse-halves] are not equal in long and short syllables) which is why they are done 'short-brick over short-brick, long over long,' like poetic lines.⁴⁵ And of the second type are the hymns [široṭ] because they are recited with melody, even though they have no meter or rhyme, but whatever is lacking can be filled up with melody; this is the reason they are done small brick over small brick, like the pizmonim.⁴⁶ Or it is possible that Proverbs and Job and Psalms are a combination of the first type and the second, and therefore all three have the same sort of melody and special te'amim, and as well are written small brick over small brick, large over large, like the rešut poems.⁴⁷

The stichography of Biblical books is proof for ibn Tibbon of their binary structure. In this they resemble Arabic-style poems sufficiently to be classed with them as being written in meter and rhyme, even though they have neither. Here he is very close to the truth of Biblical balancing style, but it obviously makes him uncomfortable: where it is possible to explain the appellation "song" by musical rendition alone (as in the "hymns"--Exodus 15; [Numbers 21:17 and 27]; Deut. 32; Judges 5; Psalm 18) he does so, and he even fixes on the

⁴⁵The terms used for stichographic arrangements; see Chapter 2.

⁴⁶Poems with refrain-lines.

⁴⁷See Shalom Spiegel, op. cit., p. 95.

special te'amim of Job, Proverbs and Psalms to assert that they, too, are perhaps entitled to be put in the second class of poetry (i.e., musically rendered) as well as the first.

Ibn Tibbon's categories were followed by Isaac Abarbanel (1437-1508) in his discussion of the "Three Classes of Song," which is incorporated in much the same form in two places in his Biblical commentaries, the exegesis of Exodus 15 and of Isaiah 5. However, he introduces some new elements. In the first category, songs written in meter and rhyme, he includes only "modern" (post-Biblical) poetry in Arabic, Hebrew and other languages (he is aware of Latin and vernacular poetry). Biblical poetry falls into the second class, the musically rendered; these songs are distinguished from others both in form and content (he repeats ibn Tibbon's characterization of the Bible's content [not cited above], but suggests that the music exists to aid the memory and attract listeners, this last an idea firmly rejected by ibn Tibbon). As for the form of these songs, he seems to have fixed on ibn Tibbon's use of the Talmudic phrase "small brick over small brick" etc. and attributed new significance to the stichography:

Now by form was intended an arrangement of formal elements which establishes both the pattern for their reading and the musical structures to which they are to be sung. This is what our

rabbis meant by "a large brick over a small brick, a small brick over a large; a small brick over a small, a large over a large." What this means is that those who established [the rules of] the earlier type of song required that the number of letters [in each word] be set up according to the musical structure which they had decided to accompany it with, and that the pattern in which they are placed match the rhythm of their stress accentuation.⁴⁸ Once in this rhythmical pattern they were attached to the musical structures.

For there is music arranged in such a way that the first element corresponds to the third and the second to the fourth as being equal in length or brevity of the music's duration. The musical pattern of long duration they called "large brick," and that of short duration they called "small brick," which is half the size of a large brick. The rhythm arranged in such a way that the first element corresponds to the third and the second to the fourth they called "small brick over small, large brick over large," and this is the pattern of Moses' song Ha'azinu and the complaints of Job, and Proverbs, because the arrangement of the poem's content was constructed for being read in this form.

In other words, Abarbanel has attached to the practice of stichography a new significance. It indicates not what it did to ibn Tibbon (the existence of some quasi-rhythmic ordering comparable to Arabic-style poetry), but a musical pattern of long and short phrases. Of the second sort of these patterns, "large brick over small," is the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15), and Abarbanel then proceeds to distinguish eight "musical structures" in its pattern of phrases. The classification is enormously complicated and (so one must conclude after repeated attempts at making it consistent) somewhat arbitrary.

⁴⁸I.e., that rhythm that is imposed by their stresses.

But it was sufficient to qualify Biblical poetry as systematic for Abarbanel, although he does not disguise his preferences for the Arabic system over all others.

Moshe b. Shem Tob ibn Habib was a contemporary of Abarbanel, and his work on metrics, **דרכי נעם**⁴⁹ was completed at roughly the same time as Abarbanel's commentaries cited above.⁵⁰ It, too, was influenced by ibn Tibbon, but in a slightly different direction. Like the latter, ibn Habib distinguishes poetry on Aristotelean grounds, by subject and effect produced on the listener; but like Falaquera, he limits the poetry in his discussion to the religious, and finds all other types inappropriate. Following his classification by content, he divides poetry into three groups according to their "meter."

The first is poetry balanced⁵¹ in the number of syllables in the two columns⁵² except that the first

⁴⁹ The title is something of a pun. It comes from Prov. 3:17, but understands in its Arabic (and occasionally Hebrew) meaning of "melody." See *infra.*, Chapter 2, note 25. On titles of Hebrew books, S. Schechter, "Titles of Jewish Books" in his *Studies in Judaism* (Phila., 1915), p. 270.

⁵⁰ **דרכי נעם** was published in Constantinople ca. 1510, but had been completed by 1486; Abarbanel's Isaiah commentary was completed in 1495 and his Exodus commentary in 1505.

⁵¹ **שקול**. He takes advantage of the ambiguity of its two meanings, "balanced" or "metered." On the origin of the latter usage with Dunash, see Dukes, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁵² Of verse halves; in what follows he uses "column" (**טור**) to mean an individual verse-half as well as an entire column of them.

agrees with the ⁵³second neither in any part of its various parts, nor in its ending [rhyme], unless this happens by chance, without having been intended.

The second is like the first, save that sometimes the first column will not agree with the second even in the number of syllables, but they will compensate for what is lacking by means of the melody or movements of the throat or they will swallow what is extra with notes of the voice. Of these two categories are the books of Psalms and Proverbs and Job. Examples may be found of the first type in Psalms:

קראתיך הושיעני ואשמרה עוזתיך

[Psalm 119:145]

יתום ואלמנה יעודד ודרך רשעים יעוז
[Psalm 146:9]

and many others like these, in which the first half verse agrees with the second solely in the number of syllables. Similarly in Proverbs:

שמע בני מוסר אביך ואל תטוש תורת אבך
[Prov. 1:9]

אוגר בקיץ בן משכיל נרדם בקציר בן מביט
[Prov. 10:5]

Likewise in Job:

בערב פוך מליות ובמלחמה מדי חרב
[Job 5:20]

and many more in addition to these. However, the majority of the verses are rather of the second class, that is to say the number of [syllables in] the first half-verse does not agree with its

⁵³ I.e., poetic feet.

fellow; and of this second type is the song of the Red Sea and the song Ha'azinu and the Song of David and the song of Deborah:⁵⁴ for whatever is missing or extra [and so destroys the syllabic symmetry] between the half-verse and its fellow will be stretched out or swallowed through the melody as we have explained. . .

The third type is metered poetry in which lines agree in all respects, in the number of feet and the correspondence of the two columns each with his fellow in an equal rhyme. Not only that, but even in the matter of long and short syllables poets are quite careful and will put a short syllable only under a short and long only under a long; and these [are arranged] in various ways, as we shall show, with the help of the Almighty.

In this [third type] the Hebrew tongue has a degree and honor above all other nations, for among them it is impossible to meet one requirement [meter] and also another connected to it, the practice of poets bringing Biblical verses into their poems,⁵⁵ either in their literal sense or via a homonymous meaning or attributed sense, and there is no other language that can attain this merit.⁵⁶

Any poem . . . not metered in regard to its long and short syllables "shall surely bring him shame" [Song of Songs 8:7] amongst poets, and embarrassment and pain and injury will they cause to its author.

Ibn Habib views meter in the same way Renaissance poets in Europe viewed numerical symbolism: once the concept

⁵⁴That is, the four songs most commonly written with stichography.

⁵⁵On this practice, called שִׁנּוּי, see Schirmann, op. cit., p. 31. There is no modern account of this feature of style which takes into account the differentiation of types made so casually here by ibn Habib!

⁵⁶This idea comes from Profiat Duran, מַעֲשֵׂה אֶפְרַיִם (ed. Friedlander and Cohen), Vienna, 1965, p. 43. Ibn Habib was an admirer of Duran and his influence is felt elsewhere in Habib's work.

is accepted, there is no place where it can not exist. The notion of a poem without meter is for him a contradiction in terms. However, he has borrowed ibn Tibbon's idea of melody swallowing syllables or drawing them out (the same was seen in the Kuzari passage cited) in order to assert that the traditional Biblical songs are also, approximately, metrical. (His first and second classes might easily have been combined into a single one, since in either case the source is the Bible, and none of the Biblical songs will be seen to fit all of its lines into Class One. But he was, understandably, wedded to the tradition of three classes.) The assertion that Biblical songs are "approximately metrical" is quite correct, as we have seen; but this is only one kind of balancing. Of the other major aspect of balancing, that of meaning, ibn Habib ignores entirely.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Gilbert Genebrardus, the Renaissance Hebraist, was an admirer (and translator) of ibn Habib. In his Chronographicae ("Coloniae Agrippinae," 1581), he makes the following summary of the metrical question: "Mensurae sive metri rationem et proportionem conati sunt nominare Josephus in Davide et Salomone, Euseb. lib. II de Praeper. Hierony. cum alibi, tum ad Paulum Urbicam, Isidorus, &c. Hebraei hic sunt muti. Nam scandendi modum fateuntur se ignorare . . . Solus R. Mose Habib, quod sciam, se eam attigit: Carmina veterum sacra, ut in Psalmis, Job, Proverbis, sunt disticha. Alea autem mensurantur certo syllabarum numero, ita ut prior versus posteriore nunc sit longior, nunc brevior, prout genius componentis tulerit. Alia mensura constant aequali."

4.

We come then to Azariah dei Rossi. He is, as noted, a true Renaissance scholar, and brought to the Jewish world knowledge of texts theretofore known only to Christians. Prominent among these was the Letter of Aristeas, which he translated into Hebrew and incorporated into the second section of Me'or Eynayim. But he was learned in all of Christendom's texts, and in his discussion of Biblical poetry cites the opinions we have already seen in Philo, Josephus, Eusebius and Jerome. Among Jewish writers on the subject he mentions Yehuda haLevi, Abarbanel and ibn Habib (though he does not cite the passage translated above, but another part of the same section). "According to these sages," Azariah writes, "our holy tongue, by its nature and by its usage from earliest times, does not exclude poems with rhythm and meter--not only by virtue of [the equalizing accomplished by] the melody to which songs are sung, as Don Isaac [Abarbanel] says above, but from the standpoint of the words themselves. Indeed, some of these songs may be found in the Bible." Azariah then relates how it was he came to his own ideas about Biblical poetry:

And about this whole question [of the meter of Biblical poetry] I asked the opinion of many of the rabbis of our own time to see if they knew how to discover and describe any sort of meter or rhythm, but no one could. Yet all of them

admitted perceiving some of the pleasure of poetry even in reading [Biblical poetry] aloud, and perceived as well a difference between the singing of these parts and that of other sections of the Torah, the Prophets and the Hagiographia. But no one knew its structure.

And, "as my cares welled up within me" [Psalm 94:19] to find some solution from amongst these opinions and discover at least part of what I wanted, my heart said to me: there exist without doubt poetic measures and structures to the Biblical songs mentioned, but they are not dependent on the number of complete or incomplete syllabic feet as in the poems written nowadays--since these are, as the Kuzari says, practices of the poems of Arabic (which is but our language somewhat confused)⁵⁸--but their structure and measures are in the number of ideas and their parts, subject and predicate and whatever is connected to them, in every sentence or clause that is written.

There are cases in which the clause will have two feet,⁵⁹ and with the second part which is attached to it there will be four; others will have three, and with the second will have six perfect feet. For example, "Thy right hand, O L-rd" which is a clause unto itself with two units, or if you will, two "feet"; "wondrous in might," which is connected to it, is quite the same, and together they make four. Similarly the second "Thy right hand, O L-rd" has again two feet; "crushes the enemy" two more, making again four. In the same manner are "The enemy said," "I shall pursue and get" "I shall divide and spoil" "I shall be sated" "I shall empty my sword" "my hand shall inherit them" "With thy breath Thou blowest" etc. Unlike this is the song Ha'azinu, which is 3:3, making six, to wit: "Listen O Heavens and I will speak," "And hear, O Earth, my words" "Let my lesson flow as rain" "and my words distill as dew."

Sometimes in a single verse (and even more so in a whole song) these two types of [arrangement] of feet will exist [together], i.e., two-two and three-three, however the spirit may have rested on the prophet (and also because such changes may fit his purpose). An example of this would be "And

⁵⁸See note 38.

⁵⁹ מידה translated before as "measure"--he uses both senses.

with the breath of thy nostrils the waters were piled up," which is two-two; "they stood up like heaps of water, the billows froze in mid-sea" three-three. Similarly in the Song of the Well it begins three-three and afterward continues two-two, and likewise in the Prayer of Habakkuk . . .

But you must not count the metrical feet [according to the Arabic system] nor yet the words themselves, but the ideas. And as regards this it often happens that a little word will be joined to whatever is next to it, so that verses from the Psalms will be seen to observe the order we have described: "Favor me, O G-d, in accordance with your love" "And with your abundant mercy erase my sin . . ." [Psalm 51:3]

And it does not escape my attention that there are many verses which I am unable to fit into the above systems; perhaps even the exceptions are more numerous than those that obey the rules. For certain the learned readers will examine my presentation with caution, and so go forward and find out what I have been unable to find. But ought we not in any case to believe that all the songs found in the Bible--Song of the Sea and of the Well, and Ha'azinu, and Deborah, and the Song of David, and the Sifrei Emet⁶⁰ all of them without doubt have an arrangement and structure, this one in one manner and this in another, or one song alone possessing different [arrangements of] feet? For we sense when we read them aloud some marvelous special quality, even if we do not completely grasp their structures.

Azariah's account of the genesis of his discovery is perhaps misleading in one respect: what his "heart" told him was not terribly different from what ibn Habib had told him (and even more so ibn Tibbon, if he had read him): that Hebrew lines divide into roughly equal halves. The nuance added in Azariah's presentation rests on that one sentence, "But you must not count the metrical feet, nor yet the words themselves, but the ideas." This last word,

⁶⁰ Job, Proverbs and Psalms.

Hebrew עניינים, might also be translated "items" or "subjects" or possibly "units of thought." At a minimum, what this means is that a construction of nouns (such as רב-רמית, which he cites) is to be counted as one "item," and that "little words" are not to be figured into the calculation; but perhaps one can see in this sentence the glimmering of a greater understanding. True, Azariah still talks about the number of ideas, and about counting them and balancing the line. But in distinguishing the עניינים from the mere words themselves, he has inevitably raised the question of meaning. Scanning Hebrew poetry for him will involve "the number of ideas and their parts, subject and predicate and whatever is connected to them." How these are divided will inevitably make for decisions based on content rather than mere numbers.

It is true that he says nothing about parallelism of meaning. But does this mean he understood less than Lowth? As others have pointed out,⁶¹ the cases of "true" parallelism of meaning, in which each term of A finds a corresponding term in B, are the exception in Biblical poetry; the rule is a rough echoing or balancing of meaning, and quite often there is none at all. As we have defined it, the essence of parallelism is:

_____/_____
//

⁶¹See Note 6 of Chapter 1.

two corresponding units with a pause between them. By fixing on parallelism of meaning, Lowth only focused on one of the ways in which A and B are made to correspond to each other (rough balancing of the length of units was out of consideration, because Lowth still believed that Hebrew actually had a European-style meter independent of the parallelism). His view of parallelism was every bit as one-sided as Azariah's or ibn Habib's, and with his categories of synonymous, antithetical and synthetic, a good deal more misleading.

In the end, the chief virtue of Azariah's definition of Biblical poetry's structure is that it made no great claims. Like ibn Tibbon (and, in his somewhat metrocentric way, ibn Habib), Azariah saw the essence of Hebrew verses to be their binariness, a caesura dividing equal verse-halves. But his "equal" was flexible enough to accept extra syllables, constructs, particles, etc. without disturbance: what mattered was the number of "items." In this he came close to bringing together two matters before and since strictly segregated, line-length and meaning; but the essence of Biblical parallelism is that they are not separate. Finally, his modest admission that his (too strict) system will not account for many, perhaps the majority, of Biblical lines ends with the same point with which he began: the metrical

impression survives despite our inability to pin it down. He could not, in the context of things, assert what others⁶² have since said: that the persistence of the impression of meter is all the "system" Hebrew has. Azariah, like so many others, was adversely influenced by the poetry analogy; but to a greater extent than most, he succeeded in freeing himself from it. For this his view of parallelism ought to be praised.

Unfortunately, it was not. Because of other aspects of Me'or Eynaim--its attitude toward midrash, and a critical approach to Jewish history without precedent in Hebrew books--his book shocked his contemporaries, and rabbinic authorities quickly placed a series of bans on the book which effectively kept it in obscurity in the Jewish world until the period of the Haskalah. The chief beneficiaries of his insights were the Christian readers of its Latin translation, among these, most prominently, Robert Lowth.⁶³

⁶²See B. Hrushovski, infra, page 36.

⁶³See Lowth, op. cit., page 47.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 1.1 ETYMOLOGY OF MAŠAL

Various ingenious etymologies have attempted to trace a connection between mašal and the homonymous root meaning "rule, govern," but these are all rather far-fetched and unnecessary. Our mašal comes from a common Semitic root meaning "to be similar to, resemble"--thus Arabic **مثل** imitate, represent (the reflexive of the intensive form [fifth form] is used for "poetic citation a propos of a relevant situation")¹ Aramaic **ܡܬܠ** be like; possibly also Ugaritic **tmtl**, image.² These cognates have led some etymologists to conclude that mašal is an "image" of life, a parable or metaphor. This meaning is certainly present in Exilic and post-Exilic usages (esp. Ezekiel), and is of course the rabbinic meaning of the word,³ where presumably the Aramaic influence had made itself felt in Hebrew. But there are too many image-less mēšalim, especially among those of identifiable antiquity (I Sam. 24:13; Ezek. 12:22) to make this etymology plausible. Furthermore, in view of the ever-presence of parallelism in the mēšalim, a better tack is to suppose that a mašal was so called

¹John Gray, Kings I & II, New York, p. 141.

²But see C. Gordon, An. . Or. 25 (1947), p. 249.

³Thus, Mishna Nidd. V, 7: **למשל**

because A is like B, or B is an "image" of A.

This is rather close to saying mašal means parallelism. In the story of Balaām and in the book of Job the word is clearly being used as referring to the parallelistic style rather than to the particular nature of the message conveyed; in the case of Balaam, the phrase wayisa' m^ešalo wayo'mar (Numbers 23:7, 18: 24:3, 15, 20, 21, 23) is used to set off the strict parallelistic passages from the surrounding narrative, and in Job wayosef 'iyob sē'et m^esalo wayo'mar is used twice (27:1, 29:1) in a long speech of Job in order to remind the audience who is talking.

The earliest traces of the word tend, in my opinion, to confirm the impression that the word was originally coined to describe a form: Akkadian mašalu, "be like, resemble"; mišlu, "Half, part"; Old Akkadian mašum, "pair," mašalum, "mirror," tašsilum, "image."⁴ The -um ending in Old Akkadian is the sign of a Sumerian loan-word;⁵ the ultimate origin of the word is thus Sumerian mašalu "resemble," mušalu "mirror," and mišlu, mi-išlum, meš-li [different attested forms] "half."⁶ The different words

⁴I. J. Gelb, Glossary of Old Akkadian, Chicago, 1957, pp. 183-6.

⁵Ibid., p. 16.

⁶Deimal, Sumerische Lexikon, 1937, vol. II, pp. 277-8.

signifying "half" and "part" give some justification to the supposition that a mašal originally designated the half-verse of parallelistic lines. (Note in this connection the usage mešlu . . . mešlu . . . "on the one hand . . . on the other . . .")⁷ I believe in Balaam and Job an antiquated meaning of mašal has been frozen in an idiom (as "wide" is frozen in the English "far and wide") or, rather, in a formula of introduction:⁸ sē'et mašal in both simply means to speak in parallelisms.

⁷A. Saubin, Lexique Assyrien-Français, Paris, 1928, p. 195; I have translated his "D'une part . . . d'autre part . . ."

⁸As to the evident antiquity of this type of formula, cf. the Ugaritic wysd · gh · wysh and Gordon's comments, *Anal. Or.* 35 (1955), p. 111.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 1.2

W. F. Albright was well aware of the problem posed to his hypothesis about "repetitive" parallelism by Song of Songs (Canticles). In a later article, "Archaic Survivals in the Text of Canticles" (Driver Festschrift, Oxford, 1963) he gave his answer: this book, while containing irrefutable Iranian loan-words which argue for a late date (fourth to fifth century), contains "material" (i.e., whole verses) "from the last centuries of the second millennium, and perhaps even older, [which] persisted into the fifth-fourth centuries B.C., when it was presumably collected by an unknown amateur." Here is not the place for a thorough refutation of this "extraordinary" (Albright dixit) chain of events. Let it suffice to note the circular nature of Albright's position on repetitive parallelism: 1) repetition is an indication of a text's antiquity because it is found only in our most ancient texts; 2) it is found in the undeniably late Song of Songs; 3) therefore, Song of Songs contains "archaic material"! It is a tribute to the true greatness of the man's contribution to Biblical studies that this explanation of repetitive parallelism has not been abandoned long ago.

Other problems with the article:

1. If the "sixty . . . eighty . . ." alternation in Song

of Songs 6:8 is to be explained as a later substitution for an original "seventy . . . eighty . . ." how is this "substitution" to be accounted for? On the contrary, this difficilior lectio argues its own authenticity.

2. (page3) Exodus 15 does contain a single-word repetition (15:3) which however Albright refuses elsewhere on the grounds that the tetragrammaton in the first half-verse is actually a verb!

3. The meaning of 5:9 is "How much you must be in love" etc., the mem of middod being a mem comparativum. "What is wrong with thy lover as a lover" not only requires emendation but it is awkward, nonsensical in context, and not Hebrew. (Where else does "mah X" mean "what is wrong with X"?)

4. Verse 8:5-7 What happened to "taḥat hattapuah . . ."

5. Verse 8:6--the emendation requiring a second šimēnî is another instance of changing the text to fit one's theory. There are innumerable examples of verses in which A's verb applies to B as well. Indeed, there is even "repetitive parallelism" which skips the first word in its repetition:

שְׁקַמְתִּי אִם בִּישְׂרָאֵל

עַד שְׁקַמְתִּי דְּבוּרָה

(Judges 5:7)

ADDITIONAL NOTE 1.3 SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE IN UNGARITIC

Even in Ugaritic there are many instances where the parallelism is not based on a parallelism of meaning, but a sequence of acts, as in Hebrew.

Thus:

tqh ytpn mhr št	She takes Ytpn St's henchman
tstū knšr bhḫbšh	She makes him as a vulture in her mantle
km d'ey bt'ṛth	As a bird in her quiver
'apnk (ttr (rz	Thereupon Attr the arrogant
y(1 bšrrt špn	Goes up to the crags of Safon
yṭb lkḫt 'al 'eyn b(1	He sits on the throne of mighty Ba(1
ttb(btlṭ (nṭ	The Virgin (Anath departs
'edk lttṇ pnm	Then she sets her face
(m nrt 'elm špš	To Špš the light of the gods
tš'n gh wtšh	She lifts up her voice and cries:

Quite regularly, a line introducing direct discourse (such as the last) stands alone; this is the rule in Hebrew as well. One need not look far for the purpose: it was to set off the discourse from the narrative (cf. Note 1.1). Perhaps the "short verse" was followed by a silence, or maybe even a musical phrase or instrumental punctuation.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 3.1

In medieval Spain and Provence, extreme allegorical exegesis was sometimes practiced by Jews, and became the subject of heated debates (see, for example, Y. Baer, The History of the Jews in Christian Spain, [Phila. 1971], I 289-304). But in general the necessity for such interpretation was denied, and this was felt by Jews to be one of their religion's strengths. Thus the attitude of Yosef Albo, a fifteenth century Jewish disputationist: "The moral instruction in the Gospels and the teaching of right conduct come in the form of parables and allegories (במשלים וחדויות), but such is not the way of the Torah, for everything that is said allegorically or figuratively is difficult to interpret. And this is what the Bible means when it discusses the prophetic powers of Moses and shows his prophecy did not come in allegories [Numbers 12:8]: the fact that the Torah is given through him shows that it is right that it not speak allegorically, which is the way of prophets prophesying at a lower level . . . Teaching which is expressed allegorically has therefore a substantial defect, and this is just the reverse of what Jesus taught. [Ikkarim (Phila. 1930) III 222-3.]

This view is partially derived from Maimonides' view, articulated fully in the Guide of the Perplexed,

Introduction and Part II Chapters 43, 44, and 45. See also his Mishneh Torah, Hilkot Yesodei haTorah 7:3-5--"The things that are shown to the prophet in prophetic visions are shown to him figuratively (דבר ממשל) and he immediately imprints in his heart the interpretation of the figure in the prophetic vision and he knows what it is, like the ladder that Jacob saw on which angels were climbing up and down; this is a figure of kingdoms and their downfall . . . Some prophets give both a figure and its interpretation . . . and some the interpretation alone; and sometimes they say the figure alone without the interpretation, like some of Ezekiel's prophecies, and Zechariah's, in which they prophecy entirely in figures and allegorically. . . . All this applies to the manner of prophecy of all the former and latter prophets save Moses . . . for all the prophets prophecy through a dream or a vision and MOses prophecied while he stood wide awake . . . Therefore [other prophets] see what they see through a figure and allegory, but Moses had no intermediary, as it is written, 'Mouth to mouth I speak with him . . . [Numbers 12:8]"

Unlike Albo, Maimonides did not consider the use of figures an inferior form of instruction per se, but a concomitant of the form of transmission. See on this the introduction to the Guide.

PSALMI CXVIII, CXXVIII

VII.

Psalmus CXVIII.

v. 1. Μακάριοι οἱ ἄμωμοι ἐν ὁδῷ, οἱ πορευόμενοι ἐν νόμῳ Κυρίου.

Οὕτω γὰρ στίχος ἐστίν· οἱ γὰρ παρ' Ἑβραίοις στίχοι, ὡς ἔλεγε τις, ἑξαμετροί εἰσιν· ἐξαμέτρῳ μὲν ἢ ἐν τῷ Δευτερονομίῳ ᾠδὴ· ἐν τριμέτρῳ δὲ καὶ τετραμέτρῳ οἱ ψαλμοί. Οἱ στίχοι οὖν, οἱ παρ' Ἑβραίοις, ἕτεροί εἰσιν παρὰ τοὺς παρ' ἡμῶν. Ἐάν θέλωμεν ἐνθῆδε τηρῆσαι, τοὺς στίχους ποιοῦμεν· Μακάριοι οἱ ἄμωμοι ἐν ὁδῷ, οἱ πορευόμενοι ἐν νόμῳ Κυρίου. Καὶ οὕτως ἀρχόμεθα δευτέρου τοῦ ἑξῆς. Ἰστέον τοίνυν ὅτι οἱ Ἕλληνες οἱ ἐρμηνεύσαντες πεποίηκασι τὸν παρ' Ἑβραίοις στίχον ἐν τούτοις δύο (ὡς [ὁ] τοῦτο ἀντίγραφον γράψας οἰοῦναι πεποίηκε τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ στίχου μετ' ἐκθέσεως)· τὸν δὲ δοκοῦντες δευτέρον, μὴ ὄντα δευτέρον, ἀλλὰ λείμμα τοῦ προτέρου μετ' αἰσθήσεως· καὶ τοῦτο πεποίηκεν ἐπὶ ὅλου τοῦ ῥήτου.

VII. Ex Vat. 11. Vix putem antiquius esse testimonium de re metrica Hebræorum, ac etsi arioletur interpres conferens metra classica cum biblicis, notatu dignissimum est, eum suspicionem de parallelismo stichorum satis apertam ha-

v. 1. *Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulant in lege Domini.*

Sic se versus habet. Quos enim habent stichos Hebræi, ut quidam dixit, metrici sunt, et quidem in hexametro canticum Deuteronomii; psalmi vero senarii aut octonarii. Στίχοι igitur qui existunt apud Hebræos, alii sunt quam apud nos. Si volumus eos servare, hos versus facimus: *Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulant in lege Domini.* Et eodem modo incipimus secundum: *Beati* etc. Sciendum interea quod Græci, qui fuerunt interpretes, στίχον Hebræorum in duos diviserunt (fere sicut fecit ille qui hoc exemplar transcripsit, ac si στίχον exorsus esset a clausula propositionis), ita ut pro secundo illum habuerint, qui secundus non erat, sed residuum primi cum eodem sensu. Et sic factum est pro quacumque sententia.

buisse. Similia ex hoc fortasse loco Hieronymus haud semel edisseruit. — Interpres ex ambone loqui videtur in parenthesi, et codicem digito ostendere coram apertum: ὡς [ὁ] τοῦτο ἀντίγραφον γράψας.

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BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft (Berlin)
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual (Cincinnati)
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature (New York etc.)
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies (Chicago)
JPOS	Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society (Jerusalem)
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review (Philadelphia)
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies (Manchester)
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies (Oxford)
PIW	S. Mowinckel, <u>The Psalms in Israel's Worship</u>
SB	E. Werner, <u>The Sacred Bridge</u>
SVT	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum (Leiden)
VT	Vetus Testamentum (Leiden)
YGC	W.F. Albright, <u>Y. and the Gods of Canaan</u>
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft (Berlin)

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