

LAMENT, IMPRECCATION, & JOB

OPENING POEM |

“PIED BEAUTY”

-GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS (1844-1889)

Glory be to God for dappled things –

For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;

For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;

Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;

Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;

And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;

Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)

With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;

He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:

Praise him.

MORE PARALLELISM |

**BERLIN: HOW DOES LINGUISTICS
HELP US READ THE PSALMS?**

Contiguity & Similarity (Nearness & Likeness)

Paradigmatic & Syntagmatic

PARADIGMATIC & SYNTAGMATIC

~~PARADIGMATIC & SYNTAGMATIC~~ SUBSTITUTION & POSITIONING

Substitution:

What happens if we switch one word with another?

Positioning:

What happens if we move this word somewhere else?

PSALM 23: A PSALM OF DAVID.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He
makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

PSALM 23: A PSALM OF DAVID.

A The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

B He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

C Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

D I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

C

B

A

ALTER: INTENSIFICATION

The default mode of Hebrew Poetry.

The rule of thumb:

If the first verset is general, the second verset is specific.

If the first verset is spatial, the second verset is more focused.

If the first verset is stationary, the second verset is moving.

Etc.

ALTER: INTENSIFICATION

De-intensification in Hebrew parallelism is very rare (6 times!)

Static parallelism is more common.

Non-intensive parallels take place in the midst of global intensification.

LAMENT



TYPICAL PARTS OF A LAMENT PSALM

Address – To whom is the lament directed?

Lament – What's gone wrong?

Confession of Trust – Why did they turn to God?

Petition and Motivation – What do they want from God? Why will he help?

Promise to Praise – If God helps, praise will be offered.

PSALM 6

○ Lord, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.

Be gracious to me, ○ Lord, for I am languishing;
heal me, ○ Lord, for my bones are troubled.

My soul also is greatly troubled.

But you, ○ Lord—how long?
Turn, ○ Lord, deliver my life;

save me for the sake of your steadfast love.

For in death there is no remembrance of you;
in Sheol who will give you praise?

I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.

My eye wastes away because of grief;
it grows weak because of all my foes.

Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping.
The Lord has heard my plea;
the Lord accepts my prayer.

All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled;
they shall turn back and be put to shame in a
moment.

IMPRECCATORY |

THOUGHTS ON IMPRECCATORY PSALMS

Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip, for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly.

-Deuteronomy 32:35

If any man inflicts a permanent injury on his neighbor, whatever he has done is to be done to him: fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. Whatever injury he inflicted on the person, the same is to be inflicted on him.

-Leviticus 24:19-20

The Final Judgment

PSALM 137

By the waters of Babylon,
there we sat down and wept,
when we remembered Zion.
On the willows there
we hung up our lyres.

For there our captors
required of us songs,
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”

How shall we sing the LORD’s song
in a foreign land?

If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand forget its skill!
Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem
above my highest joy!

Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites
the day of Jerusalem,
how they said, “Lay it bare, lay it bare,
down to its foundations!”

O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be destroyed,
blessed shall he be who repays you
with what you have done to us!
Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones
and dashes them against the rock!

JOB |

INTRO

No one's really sure on the date of Job's composition.

- Sometime between 300 and 2000 BCE!

In the category of Wisdom literature.

Pay close attention to the speaker.

- Is this Job? His friends? God?
- Am I supposed to agree with this?

**BONHOEFFER, DIETRICH,
“SEMINAR PAPER ON JOB”
THE YOUNG BONHOEFFER (MINNEAPOLIS, MN: FORTRESS
PRESS, 2003)**

“The fact that God tests the pious is as natural, although extraordinary, as is the expectation that the those who are tested will not protest but will humbly subject themselves to the trial. The fact that Job’s suffering is presented as a test is not recounted to explain Job’s behavior (Job knows nothing of these motives) but to let the reader know that God’s action is not simply an arbitrary power play unconnected to the afflicted person. God and the human person stand in a personal relationship, and this relationship must have ethical character.”

JOB 19

Why do you, like God, pursue me?
Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?

“Oh that my words were written!
Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
Oh that with an iron pen and lead
they were engraved in the rock forever!

For I know that my Redeemer lives,
and at the last he will stand upon the earth.

And after my skin has been thus destroyed,
yet in my flesh I shall see God,

whom I shall see for myself,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

My heart faints within me!

If you say, ‘How we will pursue him!’
and, ‘The root of the matter is found in him,’

be afraid of the sword,
for wrath brings the punishment of the sword,

that you may know there is a judgment.”

CLOSING POEM |

“GOD’S GRANDEUR”

-GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS (1844-1889)

The world is charged with the grandeur of God. And for all this, nature is never spent;
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil; There lives the dearest freshness deep down
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil things;

Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod? And though the last lights off the black West went
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod; Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward,
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared springs —
with toil; Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
And wears man's smudge and shares man's World broods with warm breast and with ah!
smell: the soil bright wings.

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.