INTERPRETING
THE PSALMS
Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis
David M. Howard Jr., series editor

Interpreting the Pentateuch: An Exegetical Handbook (forthcoming)
Peter T. Vogt

Interpreting the Historical Books: An Exegetical Handbook
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Interpreting Apocalyptic Literature: An Exegetical Handbook (forthcoming)
Richard A. Taylor
To my parents,
Rudolph D. Futato and June E. Futato,
for all of their love and support through the years.
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AN APPRECIATION FOR THE RICH diversity of literary genres in Scripture is one of the positive features of evangelical scholarship in recent decades. No longer are the same principles or methods of interpretation applied across the board to every text without regard for differences in genre. Such an approach can, however, lead to confusion, misunderstanding, and even wrong interpretations or applications. Careful attention to differences in genre is, then, a critical component of a correct understanding of God’s Word.

The Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis series (HOTE) offers students basic skills for exegeting and proclaiming the different genres of the Old Testament. Because there is no one-size-fits-all approach to interpreting Scripture, this series features six volumes covering the major genres in the Old Testament: narrative, law, poetry, wisdom, prophecy, and apocalyptic. The volumes are written by seasoned scholar-teachers who possess extensive knowledge of their disciplines, lucid writing abilities, and the conviction that the church and the world today desperately need to hear the message of the Old Testament. These handbooks are designed to serve a twofold purpose: to present the reader with a better understanding (principles) of the different Old Testament genres, and provide strategies (methods) for preaching and teaching these genres.
These volumes are primarily intended to serve as textbooks for graduate-level exegesis courses that assume a basic knowledge of Hebrew. There is no substitute for encountering God’s Word in its original languages, even as we acknowledge the limitations of language in plumbing the depths of who God is. However, the series is also accessible to those without a working knowledge of Hebrew, in that an English translation is always given whenever Hebrew is used. Thus, seminary-trained pastors for whom Hebrew is a distant memory, upper-level college students, and even well-motivated laypeople should all find this series useful.

Each volume is built around the same six-chapter structure as follows:

1. The Nature of the Genres
2. Viewing the Whole
3. Preparing for Interpretation
4. Interpreting the Text
5. Proclaiming the Text
6. Putting It All Together

Authors are given freedom in how they title these six chapters and in how best to approach the material in each. But the familiar pattern in every volume will serve students well, allowing them to move easily from one volume to another to locate specific information. The first chapter in each handbook introduces the genre(s) covered in the volume. The second chapter covers the purpose, message, and primary themes in the individual books and canonical sections under consideration. The third chapter includes such diverse matters as historical and cultural backgrounds, critical questions, textual matters, and a brief annotated bibliography of helpful works. The fourth chapter sets forth guidelines for interpreting texts of the genre(s) under consideration. The fifth chapter details strategies for proclaiming such texts. The final chapter gives one or two hands-on examples of how to move through different stages of the interpretive process, in order to demonstrate how the principles discussed previously work out in practice. Each volume also includes a glossary of specialized terms.
The Scriptures themselves remind us in many ways about the importance of proper interpretation of God’s words. Paul encouraged Timothy to “do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15 NRSV). In an earlier day, Ezra the scribe, along with the Levites, taught God’s Word to the postexilic community: “So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading” (Neh. 8:8 NRSV). It is my prayer, and that of the authors and publisher, that these handbooks will help a new generation of God’s people to do the same.

*Soli Deo Gloria.*

—David M. Howard Jr.
Series Editor
THE BOOK OF PSALMS IS perhaps the most frequently used book of the Old Testament. We read psalms in public worship and private devotion. We sing them, pray them, and contemplate their application to our lives. In the psalms we encounter God, others, and ourselves in life’s joys and sorrows, tragedies and triumphs. The psalms capture our imaginations, engage our thoughts, stir our emotions, and move our wills. They also present interpretive challenges. Their poetic form has few if any points of contact with English poetry. Their images come from a world quite different from our own. Their ethics at times seem to go against the grain of the teachings in the New Testament. How to interpret the psalms in order to use them effectively in our own lives and in the lives of others is the focus of this volume.

Upon successful study of this volume, you will be able to (1) understand the nature of Hebrew poetry and use this understanding as a key tool for interpreting the psalms, (2) understand the purpose and message of the Psalms as a literary whole, so that you can interpret specific psalms in their proper literary context, (3) understand the primary categories of psalms so that you can interpret specific psalms in their proper generic context, and (4) understand how to shape your interpretation of the psalms, so that you can present your understanding with clarity and conviction.

Part of the interpretive process involves the use of English translations
of the Hebrew text. Unless otherwise indicated, the translation used in this volume is the NIV. I also use the NLT quite often and for the most part cite the second edition (2004); on a few occasions I prefer the first edition (1996) and indicate this with NLT 1.0.

The verse numbers in the Hebrew text and English translations often differ by a verse (or two), because the titles are counted in the versification of the Hebrew text but not in English translations. So, for example, Psalm 3:1 in English is Psalm 3:2 in Hebrew. The English versification is given first with the Hebrew in brackets—for example, Psalm 3:1 [2].

Technical terms have been kept to a minimum. When used, all such terms are marked with bold font the first time they occur in a given chapter and are included in the glossary at the end of the book. I use italics when I provide my own definition for terms and when I wish to draw attention to key terms in scripture quotations. All abbreviations used are given in the abbreviations list that follows this preface.

While this volume is focused on interpreting the book of Psalms, many of the principles apply to other portions of the Old Testament, especially those principles discussed in chapter 1. Chapter 1 deals with the poetry of the Psalms. Poetry is found in many other places in the Old Testament: the wisdom books (Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes) are predominantly poetic, as are Lamentations and the Song of Songs. Isaiah and the Minor Prophets (minus Jonah) are also predominantly poetic. In addition, poems are scattered throughout numerous prose texts (e.g., Exodus 15, Judges 5, 2 Samuel 18). The principles for interpreting the poetry of the Psalms apply equally to interpreting these other poetic texts.

I am grateful for all of the authors from whom I have learned much about the psalms over the years, for the many students with whom I have studied the psalms, and especially for my wife and children with whom I have lived the psalms. I also want to thank David M. Howard Jr. for his patient and painstaking editing of the manuscript, which has been greatly improved through his efforts.
ABBREVIATIONS


**AOTC** Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries

**BASOR**  *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*


**BETL** Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium


**ESV** English Standard Version

**FOTL** Forms of the Old Testament Literature
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HKAT</td>
<td>Handkommentar zum Alten Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSOTSup</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXX</td>
<td>Septuagint</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Masoretic Text</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAB</td>
<td>New American Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>New American Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASB</td>
<td>New American Standard Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCBC</td>
<td>New Century Bible Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIB</td>
<td><em>The New Interpreter’s Bible</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICNT</td>
<td>New International Commentary on the New Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICOT</td>
<td>New International Commentary on the Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIV</td>
<td>New International Version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIVAC</td>
<td>The NIV Application Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKJV</td>
<td>New King James Version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLT</td>
<td>New Living Translation, 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLT 1.0</td>
<td>New Living Translation, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRSV</td>
<td>New Revised Standard Version</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTG</td>
<td>Old Testament Guides</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTL</td>
<td>Old Testament Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>RevExp</td>
<td><em>Review and Expositor</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLDS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDOT</td>
<td><em>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</em>. Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis,</td>
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</table>


*TOTC* Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries


*TZ* Theologische Zeitschrift

*WBC* Word Biblical Commentary

*WTJ* Westminster Theological Journal
APPRECIATING THE POETRY

Beautiful words stir my heart.
I will recite a lovely poem about the king,
for my tongue is like the pen of a skillful poet.
(Ps. 45:1 NLT)

DO YOU APPRECIATE POETRY? You may or may not. Not everyone does. I didn’t appreciate poetry very much until I began to study Hebrew poetry a good number of years ago. If you’re like me, this chapter may open up a new world for you. What is a “lovely poem” in your estimation, and who is a “skillful poet”? Which, if any, of the following do you appreciate?

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
“'Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door;
Only this, and nothing more.”¹

September tenth . . . the year starts home.
Morning broke clear today
no fog . . . no rain
only a clear cold September morning.
It’s autumn all right.
You can feel it
with the taste of summer still in my mouth
my lungs breathe autumn.\(^2\)

coffee
in a paper cup—
a long way from home\(^3\)

The metered rhyme of Poe, the free verse of McKuen, and the haiku of Hotham are just three of many styles of English poetry. Yet as great as the difference is between the poetry of Poe, McKuen, and Hotham, even greater is the difference between these English poets and the poets who wrote the psalms.

To appreciate a lovely poem found in the Psalms and written by a skillful Hebrew poet requires at least a basic knowledge of what makes Hebrew poetry poetry. And the more you appreciate the poetry of the psalms, the more you will get their message. So one key to interpreting the psalms is understanding and appreciating their poetic features. This is the task of chapter 1.

Before getting into the specific characteristics of Hebrew poetry, let’s look at a brief definition: *Hebrew poetry is a type of literature that communicates with terse lines employing parallelism and imagery in high fre-

\(^3\) Gary Hotham, “Coffee,” in *Breath Marks: Haiku to Read in the Dark* (Moscow: Canon Press, 1999), 20.
The definition of Hebrew poetry you may be familiar with describes it as rhyming, but this feature is not universal. Hebrew poetry does not rely on rhyme, as seen in Psalms 121:3:

'ål-yittēn lammōt ṭagēlekā ("he will not permit your foot to slip")

'ål-yānūm šōmērekā ("your guardian will not sleep.")

The absence of rhyme and meter in Hebrew poetry is a unique characteristic. It focuses on the concise and equal length of poetic lines, emphasizing parallelism and imagery. This terseness is due to grammatical features that are less common in Hebrew prose.

poetry employs the *waw*-relative imperfect, the direct-object marker, the relative pronoun, and the definite article with far less frequency than does Hebrew prose. The minimal occurrence of these grammatical features in poetry adds to the terseness of the poetic line. The following chart shows the statistics on these grammatical features as they occur in the prose account of Creation in Genesis 1 and the poetic account of Creation in Psalm 104.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Genesis 1</th>
<th>Psalm 104</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Waw</em>-relative Imperfect</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct-object Marker</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Pronoun</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite Article</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since terseness, parallelism, and imagery are relative measuring tools, the boundary between poetry and prose at times will be fuzzy. We are, after all, dealing here with literature in general and poetry in particular, and not with algebraic equations. So we need to give the poets sufficient space to be creative within the parameters of their own literary conventions. The poetic lines of Psalm 1, for example, do not scan with anything like the regularity of the lines in Psalm 2. Poetry and prose thus are better viewed as types of literature occurring on a continuum rather than in isolated boxes.

**ANALYZING THE PARTS**

While we could begin with a study of Hebrew phonology (sounds) and morphology (words) as the basic building blocks of poetry, we will

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5. Also known as the “*waw*-consecutive plus imperfect” construction, this grammatical feature, along with the others listed here, is not accessible in English translation.


instead start at a higher level, the level of the poetic line. Then we will look at how poets batch lines together to form strophes and how they, at times, go on to batch strophes into stanzas.

### The Line

A **line** can be viewed as the basic unit of Hebrew poetry. A line is not to be confused with a sentence in English, because many lines contain more than one complete sentence. Psalm 117:1 is a case in point.

Praise the **LORD**, all you nations.
Extol him, all you peoples.

Also a line is not to be confused with a verse in the Bible, because many verses contain more than one line, as is the case in Psalm 47:9.

Line 1: The rulers of the world have gathered together with people of the God of Abraham.
Line 2: For all the kings of the earth belong to God.
He is highly honored everywhere.

(NLT)

This one verse contains two lines and three sentences. What, though, comprises a line?

Before defining a line, I will describe one. The most frequent line in Hebrew poetry is made up of two halves. Each half line is called a **colon**, so the basic line is called a **bicolon**. Look at Psalm 92:1 for example.

It is good to give thanks to the **LORD**, to sing praises to the Most High.

(NLT)

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9. Many scholars, but not all, distinguish line and colon as I do. Others, such as Michael O’Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1980), 32, do not.
Notice that the cola (plural of colon) correspond: “to give thanks to the LORD” corresponds with “to sing praises to the Most High.” This correspondence is the essence of parallelism, which is discussed in detail below. For now, we can define a line as one complete parallelistic expression of thought.10

While most lines are made up of two cola, some contain three. We call such a line a tricolon. Psalm 112:9–10 provides two clear examples.

They [the righteous] share freely and give generously to those in need.
Their good deeds will be remembered forever.
They will have influence and honor.
The wicked will see this and be infuriated.
They will grind their teeth in anger;
they will slink away, their hopes thwarted.

(NLT)

Sometimes a line can contain four cola. We call such a line a tetra-colon or a quatrain as in Psalm 29:1–2 and Psalm 96:11–12.

Honor the LORD, you heavenly beings;
honor the LORD for his glory and strength.
Honor the LORD for the glory of his name.
Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.

(NLT)

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice!
Let the sea and everything in it shout his praise!
Let the fields and their crops burst forth with joy!
Let the trees of the forest rustle with praise!

(NLT 1.0)

On occasion, a psalm contains the somewhat anomalous “mono-colon,” of which the expression הֵרִי נְבוֹעַ (“Praise the LORD!”) is

one example. This Hebrew expression occurs twenty-three times in the book of Psalms and only at the beginning or ending of a poem. Hebrew הָלַלְךָ is best understood as an opening and closing exclamation, as indicated by the exclamation point used in the NLT.

Numerous modern translations, like the NIV and NLT, use a series of indentations to indicate the cola in a line. The first colon (colon A) will be on the left margin. The second colon (colon B) will always be differentiated by one indentation, as in the examples above. Tricola will keep the second and third cola at the same level of indentation. Sometimes a third level of indentation is employed, meaning simply there was not enough room in the column to get the entire colon on one line of print, so the publisher wrapped that colon down to the next line. Thus, a single column edition makes for a more aesthetically pleasing presentation of the poetic lines of Hebrew poetry, since it virtually eliminates the need for this third level of indentation.

The basic unit of a poem, then, is the line, usually made from two cola, but sometimes made from one, three, or four.

The Strophe

When writing prose, we group related sentences together to form a paragraph. When writing poetry we group related lines together to form a strophe. A strophe is in poetry what a paragraph is in prose.

Numerous modern translations indicate the division between strophes by placing extra space between them. This extra space functions like the indentation that marks the beginning of a new paragraph in English prose.

The primary basis for grouping lines into a strophe is sense. A strophe is a group of lines that focus on a common theme; one idea holds the verses in the strophe together. In the NLT of Psalm 13, for example, extra space appears between verses 2–3 and verses 4–5, indicating three strophes: verses 1–2, 3–4, and 5–6. Note that verses 1–2 focus on the question, “How long?” Verses 3–4 make specific requests: “Turn,” “Restore,” “Don’t let,” “Don’t let.” Verses 5–6 are united by the note of confidence they express: “But I trust,” “I will rejoice,” “I will sing.”

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11. The one exception is Psalm 135:3, but here הָלַלְךָ is followed by a יִפְרוֹע (“for”) clause and is, therefore, not used absolutely as in the other occurrences.
Hebrew poets used other techniques for grouping lines into strophes. One technique is the alphabetic acrostic. An alphabetic acrostic uses the letters of the alphabet to structure a poem. Psalm 119 is an eightfold acrostic: each group of eight lines is joined together by the use of the same letter of the alphabet as the first letter in the first word of each line. So, for example, the first word in each line of verses 1–8 begins with aleph (the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet), the first word in each line of verses 9–16 begins with beth (the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet), and so on through verses 169–176, where the first word in each line begins with tav (the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet).

A poet can also use grammar to group lines into strophes, as in Psalm 148. This psalm is naturally divided into two strophes: verses 1–6 and verses 7–14. (Note that the NLT puts extra space between v. 6 and v. 7.) The theme of verses 1–6 is found in verse 1a: “Praise the LORD from the heavens!” The theme of verses 7–14 is found in verse 7a: “Praise the LORD from the earth.” The universe is often pictured as two-layered in the Old Testament: heaven above and earth beneath (see Gen. 1:1). Corresponding to this division, the poet divides this poem into two strophes. In the first, the poet invites the heavens to praise the Lord, and in the second he invites the earth to do so. In addition to the unity of subject matter, the poet employs head linkage to mark the beginning of each strophe. Head linkage is the literary technique of marking the beginning of two sequential sections by repeating grammar or vocabulary:

(v. 1a) הַלְּלוּי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶרְכָּבָתָם
Praise the LORD from the heavens.

(v. 7a) הַלְּלוּי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶרְכָּבָתָם
Praise the LORD from the earth.

In both strophes, a variety of subjects are called upon to praise the Lord (vv. 2–4 and vv. 8–12). The poet then shifts from the imperative to the jussive\(^\text{12}\) in verse 5 and verse 13:

\[^{12}\text{The jussive is a form of the Hebrew verb that is used to express the will of the speaker with regard to the third person, e.g., “Let him go up.” See Paul Josion and T. Muraoka, A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), §46a.}\]
Each of these shifts to the jussive is then followed by a reason clause:

(v. 5b) כי הוא צב האברא וו
for he commanded and they were created

(v. 13b) כי נברא והשם Łם
For his name alone is exalted

The following lines each begin with a waw-relative imperfect verb:

(v. 6a) נטמנו
He set them

(v. 14a) נברא
He has raised up

In Psalm 148 the poet has used repeated grammatical structures to create a parallel pattern, which, taken together, summons the whole universe to praise the Lord. Paying attention to the strophic structure of Hebrew poems, then, is a key to following the poetic thought, and keeps the interpreter from getting lost in the forest of trees/verses.

The Stanza

Some poems, in particular longer ones, will have two or more strophes that focus on the same theme. We call a group of closely related strophes a stanza.

Psalm 139, for example, is comprised of two stanzas—verses 1–18 and verses 19–24. The first stanza focuses on the nature of God and is divided into four strophes. Verses 1–6 reflect on God’s knowledge.
Note how the poet uses the repetition of words (reflected in the NLT) to focus our attention on God’s knowledge: “know” (v. 1b), “know” (v. 2a), “know” (v. 2b), “know” (v. 3c), “know” (v. 4a), “knowledge” (v. 6a). Verses 7–12 reflect on his presence: “I can never escape from your spirit” (v. 7a), “I can never get away from your presence” (v. 7b), “you are there” (v. 8a), “you are there” (v. 8b), “even there” (v. 10a), “I cannot hide from you” (v. 12a). Verses 13–16 reflect God’s care: “You made . . . my body” (v. 13a), “and knit me together” (v. 13b), “You watched me” (v. 15a), “You saw me” (v. 16a). Verses 17–18 conclude this stanza by repeating its themes: “How precious are your thoughts” (v. 17a) and “you are still with me” (v. 18b).

In the second stanza the poet responds to this reflection in two strophes. Verses 19–22 are a request for the elimination of evil by eliminating “the others.” Verses 23–24 are a request for the elimination of evil from “me.”

One other technique employed by this poet is called inclusion.\(^\text{13}\) An inclusion is the use of the same or similar grammar or content at the beginning and end of a poem or stanza or strophe. In the first verse of the first strophe the poet says,

\[
\text{O LORD, you have examined my heart}
\]
\[
\text{and know everything about me.}
\]
\[
\text{(NLT)}
\]

And in the first verse of the last strophe the poets says,

\[
\text{Search me, O God, and know my heart;}
\]
\[
\text{test me and know my anxious thoughts.}
\]
\[
\text{(NLT)}
\]

This repetition of the examination motif provides a sense of closure and shows that the overarching concern of the poem is an ever deepening relationship between the poet and God. This theme is underscored in the concluding verse.

\(^{13}\) Also referred to as an inclusio.
Point out anything in me that offends you,
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

(NLT)

As with strophes, so with stanzas: segmenting a poem into stanzas helps us to better understand the flow of the poet’s thought and thereby helps us to better understand the poem.

It is clear that understanding the parts of a poem (lines, strophes, and stanzas) is basic to understanding Hebrew poetry. We can now build on this foundation by taking a closer look at how Hebrew poets expressed their thoughts in parallel lines.

PENETRATING THE PARALLELISM

Hebrew poets expressed their thoughts in poems comprised of lines, strophes, and, at times, stanzas. We have seen how strophes and stanzas are put together, but what comprises a line? Since Hebrew poetry has no apparent meter or rhyme, what makes a line a line? At the heart of the answer to this question is “parallelism.” In a line there is a particular relationship between the cola, a certain flow of thought from one colon to the next. We call this flow of thought or relationship “parallelism.”

What Is Parallelism?

Correspondence

At its core, parallelism is correspondence. Adele Berlin has said that correspondence is the very essence of parallelism.14 Similarly, Tremper Longman has said that “parallelism refers to the correspondence which occurs between the phrases of a poetic line.”15 We can say, then, that parallelism is a relationship of correspondence between the cola of a poetic line.16

15. Longman, How to Read the Psalms, 95.
The correspondence between the cola can occur on a number of levels. It may occur, for instance, on the level of grammar or on the level of meaning. Since English grammar and Hebrew grammar are quite different, appreciating grammatical parallelism requires knowledge of basic Hebrew grammar. Correspondence on the level of meaning, however, can be appreciated to a large extent by those reading Hebrew poetry in translation. Let’s take a look at both levels.\textsuperscript{17}

\textit{Correspondence in Grammar}

At times the degree of correspondence on the grammatical level is so high that the grammar of each colon is identical. Psalm 103:10 is an example.

\begin{quote}

לֹא כְּחַפְשֵׁנוֹת עִנְיָנָה לָנוּ

Not according to our sins has he done to us.

(author’s translation)

ולֹא כְּעִנְיוֹתֵנוּ הֵסֵל עָלָנוּ

Not according to our iniquities has he repaid upon us.

(author’s translation)

\end{quote}

Both cola are comprised of the identical grammar: negative adverb + preposition governing a noun with pronoun suffix + verb + preposition with pronoun suffix. This example should not lead us, however, to equate grammatical parallelism and \textit{grammatical identity}.

More often than not grammatical parallelism is expressed through \textit{grammatical equivalence}, that is, the substitution in the second colon of something grammatically different from, but equivalent to, an element in the first colon.\textsuperscript{18} Psalm 117:1 provides an example of grammatical equivalence:

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\textsuperscript{17} For much more detail on this topic see Berlin, \textit{Dynamics of Biblical Hebrew Parallelism}, 31–102.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 32.