

The Alpha and The Omega: Upgrade Your Mental Toolkit

The Hebrew Scriptures

Luke 24:27

Luke 24:44-47

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Organization of the Scrolls

TaNak

Torah - Law - Moses

Nevi'im - Prophets

Ketuvim - Writings

Luke 11:49-51

Deuteronomy 34:10-12

Malachi 4:4

Perspective

Scripture is like a photomosaic

John Walton - Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament

“Effective communication requires a body of agreed-upon words, terms, and ideas, a common ground of understanding. For the speaker this often requires accommodation to the audience by using words and ideas they will understand. For the audience, if they are not native to the language and cultural matrix of the speaker, this means reaching common ground may require seeking out additional information or explanation. In other words, the audience has to adapt to a new and unfamiliar culture.”

Literary Design

Poetics: unique set of literary techniques, conventions, and strategies employed by the biblical authors

Robert Alter - The Art of Biblical Narrative

“A coherent reading of any work of art, whatever the medium, requires some detailed awareness of the grid of conventions upon which and against which this particular work operates. Usually, these are elaborate sets of tacit agreements between artist and audience that create the enabling context in which the complex communication of art occurs. Through our awareness of convention we can recognize significant or simply pleasing patterns of repetition, symmetry, or contrast; we can detect subtle cues and clues as to the meaning of the work; we can spot what is innovative and what is traditional at each part of the artistic creation. ... One of the chief difficulties modern readers have in perceiving the artistry in biblical narrative is precisely that we have lost most of the keys to the conventions out of which these texts were shaped.”

Parallelism

Comparison/Analogy

Contrast

Complement
Sequence

Comparison

Psalm 33:6 NASB

By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made, and
by the breath of his mouth all their host.

Contrast

Proverbs 10:11 NASB

The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence

Complement

Psalm 133:1 NASB

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for
brothers to dwell together in unity!

Symmetry

ABBA - Psalm 137:5-6

ABAB - Psalm 33:10-11

Dynamic Analogy / Typology

Early stories become templates for later stories - like parts in a play, different actors play the parts from early in genesis - dynamic, meaning they can move in and out of their slots

Toolkit

- Think thematically about the text.
- Meditate, Reread, look for callbacks and hyperlinks.
- Use an ancient encyclopedia to interpret the text.
- Understand the function of repetition and literary design. Look for repeated words.
- Assume you have something to learn.

ADVENTURE

IS OUT THERE!

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ



Beginning
Created
God
The
Heavens
And The
Earth

בראשית
ברא
אלהים
את
השמים
ואת
הארץ

CHRISTIAN

Pentateuch
History
Poetry
Prophets

JEWISH

Torah
Nevi'im
Ketuvim

Torah **N**evi'im **K**etuvim



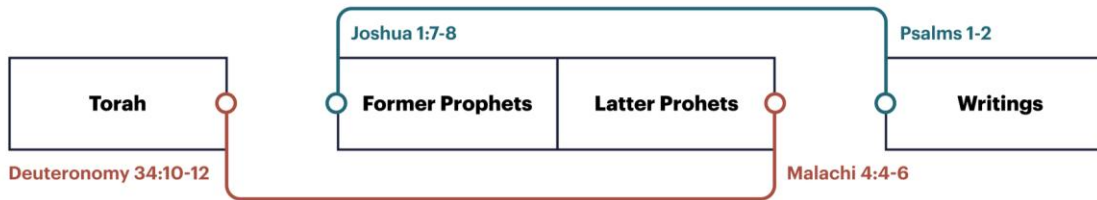
TNK



Ta**N**a**K**



**Think thematically
about the text.**



Tanak Editorial Design. Created by Tim Mackie for BibleProject Classroom: Adam to Noah (2020).

PERSPECTIVE









**Meditate, Re-read,
Look for callbacks
and hyperlinks.**



**Use an ancient
“encyclopedia” to
interpret the text.**

JOHN WALTON Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament

“Effective communication requires a body of agreed-upon words, terms, and ideas, a common ground of understanding. For the speaker this often requires **accommodation** to the audience by using words and ideas they will understand. For the audience, if they are not native to the language and cultural matrix of the speaker, this means reaching common ground may require **seeking out additional information** or explanation. In other words, the audience has to **adapt** to a new and unfamiliar culture.”

**LITERARY
DESIGN**

ROBERT ALTER The Art of Biblical Narrative

“A coherent reading of any work of art, whatever the medium, requires some detailed **awareness** of the grid of conventions upon which and against which this particular work operates. Usually, these are elaborate sets of tacit agreements between artist and audience that create the enabling context in which the complex communication of art occurs. Through our awareness of convention we can recognize significant or simply pleasing **patterns** of repetition, symmetry, or contrast;

ROBERT ALTER The Art of Biblical Narrative

we can detect subtle cues and clues as to the meaning of the work; we can spot what is innovative and what is traditional at each part of the artistic creation. ... One of the chief difficulties modern readers have in perceiving the artistry in biblical narrative is precisely that we have **lost most of the keys** to the conventions out of which these texts were shaped.”



Look for repeated words.

Understand the function of repetition and literary design.

PARALLELISM

Comparison

Contrast

Complement

Sequence

Psalm 33:6

COMPARISON

By the **word of Yahweh** the heavens were made,

And by the **breath of his mouth** all their host.

Proverbs 10:11

CONTRAST

The **mouth** of the **righteous** is a fountain of life,

But the **mouth** of the **wicked** conceals violence.

Psalm 133:1

COMPLEMENT

Behold, how good and how
pleasant it is

For brothers to dwell together
in unity!

SYMMETRY

ABBA

ABAB

Psalm 137:5-6

ABBA

A If I forget you, O Jerusalem,

B Let my right hand forget its skill!

B Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,

A If I do not remember you

Psalm 33:10-11

ABAB

A The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;

B he frustrates the plans of the peoples.

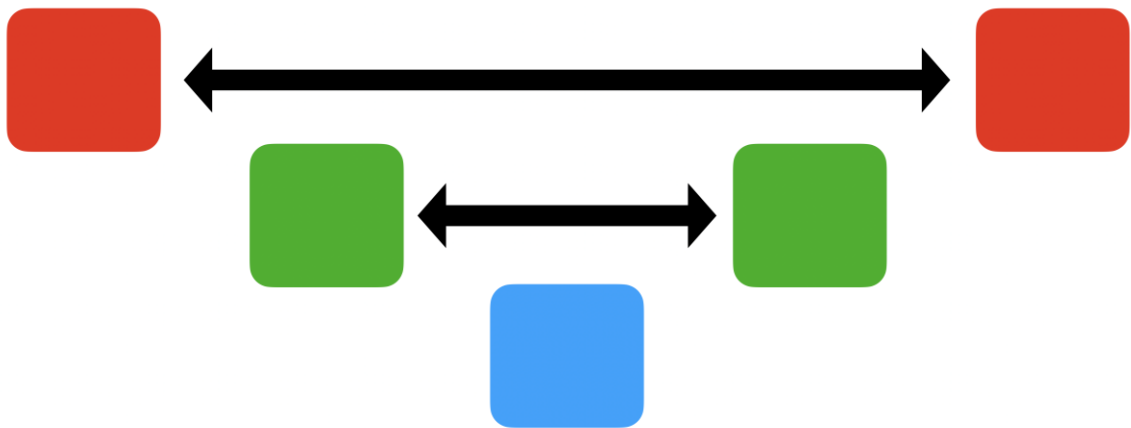
A The counsel of the Lord stands forever,

B The plans of his heart to all generations.

ORDER



MATCHING



DYNAMIC ANALOGY



**Assume you have
something to learn.**



Modern Eye



Hebrew Literature

One does not simply walk into Hebrew Literature