Chiasmus
in the
Book of Mormon

John W. Welch, an attorney specializing in tax matters, joined the faculty of the J. Reuben Clark Law School in 1980. He is the author of several articles on literary structure in the Book of Mormon. President of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, he has contributed to BYU Studies and is co-author and general editor of the recently published book, Chiasmus in Antiquity. He received a B.A. in history and an M.A. in classical languages from Brigham Young University, where he was valedictorian and became a Woodrow Wilson Fellow. He went on to study at Oxford University, and received his J.D. from Duke University in 1975. His research into literary forms in ancient scriptures led him to the original discovery in 1967 of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. Chiasmus, a rhetorical device used prevalently in the Bible and in other ancient literatures, was relegated to the intellectual subconsciousness of modern Western civilization until the mid-
nineteenth century. Since there is no evidence that anyone in America understood chiasmus in 1830 when the Book of Mormon was published, the remarkable presence of complex chiasms in the Book of Mormon testifies to the ancient origin of the text. It also amplifies the significance of central events and enhances interpretation of many scriptures.

From the day the Book of Mormon rolled off the press in 1830, those who gave it credence asserted that it obviously read like a Hebrew text. Those who were not so convinced insisted that it obviously read like anything but a Hebrew text.1 Actually, all that became obvious was the failure of both believers and unbelievers to cite much specific evidence. However, numerous Hebrew characteristics of the Book of Mormon have been recognized in recent literature;2 in addition to these we can now cite many specific passages which bear the distinct stamp of an ancient Hebraic literary form which scholars call chiasmus.

**WHAT IS CHIASMUS?**

Chiasmus appears to have begun as a structural form that later developed into an intriguing rhetorical device which has been used sporadically in prose and poetry for nearly three thousand years. Despite its long usage, awareness of the form in its extended instances remained, except in isolated cases, a part of the intellectual subconsciousness of modern Western Europe until frequent chiastic passages were discovered in the Bible. Since that time in the mid-nineteenth century, several reputable scholars, mostly theologians, have published on the subject. Their works indicate that, although chiasms appear in Greek, Latin, English, and other languages, the form was much more highly developed in Hebrew and dates to the oldest sections of the Hebrew Bible and beyond.
Chiasmus can be defined most simply as an inverted type of parallelism. Two lines of poetry are said to be parallel if the component elements of one line correspond directly to those of the other in a one-to-one relationship. There are numerous examples of direct parallelism in Proverbs, e.g.,

A soft answer turneth away wrath:  
But grievous words stir up anger.  
(Proverbs 15:1)

If the second line of a parallelism is inverted, that is to say, if its last element is placed first and the first, last, then a chiasm is created, as, for example, in the following verse:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
Neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.  
(Isaiah 55:8)

And from the New Testament:

He that findeth his life shall lose it:  
And he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.  
(Matthew 10:39)

Formulating this graphically, the simple chiasm takes on the form of a $\chi$:

```
  a
 / \  
 b   a
```

The name *chiasmus*, derived from chi ($\chi$), the twenty-second letter in the Greek alphabet, and the Greek *chiazein* ("to mark with a $\chi$"), is thus descriptive of the form itself.

As a literary device, chiasmus has proved durable and useful because of its many applications. For example, Heraclitus, one of the earliest Greek philosophers, used chiasmus to accentuate his notion of eternal flux and opposition:

Cold things grow warm,  
What is warm cools;  
the moist dries,  
the dry dampens. (Fragment 39)
Immortals are mortal,
mortals are immortal,
each living the others’ death
and dying the others’ life. (Fragment 67)

Several centuries later, Cicero effectively used chiastic lines as a rhetorical device for placing emphasis:

Matrem habemus, ignoramus patrem. (Republic 2:33)

Some English authors, perhaps influenced by their training in the classics, used chiasmus in poetry. In Pope’s “Essay on Man” this short chiasm appears:

. . . flame lawless through the void,
Destroying others, by himself destroyed.

(2.65-66)

Even in our modern nursery rhymes and maxims, the natural rhythm and immediate appeal of chiastic lines is apparent. Thus, “Old King Cole was a merry old soul, and a merry old soul was he” is charming; and “He who fails to prepare, prepares to fail” sounds solid and convincing.

The reader, however, will notice that all these chiasms contain only two elements, whose order is then reversed. This is significant in differentiating the relatively simple chiasmus known for some time in the West from the much more complex chiasmus characteristic of Hebrew and other such ancient languages. Whereas in languages such as Greek, Latin, and English, chiasms are most often composed of two elements, in Hebrew there appears to be no limit to the number of terms or ideas that may commonly be employed. A chiasm may be expanded to include any number of terms written first in one order and then exactly in the reverse order, i.e.,

a-b-c-d- . . . -x-x- . . . -d-c-b-a.

Such structures might be several verses or even several chapters long. A simple illustration of this, with five elements in an inverted parallelism, is found in Psalm 3:7-8:
Save me
  O my God,
  For thou hast smitten
  All my enemies
  On the cheek-bone
  The teeth
  Of the wicked
  Thou hast broken.
  To Yahweh
  The salvation.

A second example comes from Isaiah 60:1-3:

Arise,
  Shine,
  For thy light is come,
  And the glory
  Of Yahweh
  Upon thee is risen.
    For behold, dimness shall cover the earth
    And gross darkness the peoples.
  But upon thee will arise
  Yahweh
  And his glory shall upon thee be seen
  And nations shall come to thy light
  And kings to the brightness
  Of thy rising.

There are several good reasons why a literary form of this peculiar type was particularly attractive to the ancient Hebrews. First, chiasms are easy to memorize. The Hebrew tradition, unlike the written Greek tradition, was oral. Not only were manuscripts and scrolls scarce, but there were also few who could read them. Therefore, the tales of early Israel and the songs of her prophets were handed down through generations by word of mouth, and long passages of the Torah were committed to memory.¹ In their memorization and recitation, the ancients were surely aided by chiastic groupings and repetitions. Second, chiasmus was simply a vogue. Just as sixteenth-century English poets were fond of the sonnet, chiasmus seems to have been preferred by many of the ancient Hebrew writers of the Old Testament. Third, the form can be very pleasing aestheti-
cally because of its vast potential to coordinate abrupt juxtapositions within a single unified literary system while focusing simultaneously on a point of central concern. Furthermore, and perhaps most significantly, chiasmus afforded a seriously needed element of internal organization in ancient writing, which did not have paragraphs, punctuation, capitalization, and other such synthetic devices to demarcate the conclusion of one idea and the commencement of the next. Ancient texts were written in a steady stream of letters from the beginning of a book to the end, sometimes even without spaces between the words. Chiastic or other parallel forms, therefore, could serve an important organizational function by indicating units of thought or sections of text. Finally, ancient religious literature frequently served liturgical purposes, and the structure of chiastic writing may have made it suitable for use in certain ritual settings requiring alternate recitations.

Chiasmus remained a common literary device in much of ancient literature and was one which was expressly recognized, for example, by the scholiasts in Alexandria in the second century B.C. But the form, especially in its more elaborate manifestations, appears to have fallen into disuse and obscurity in the first centuries after Christ, when many ancient institutions from Greek, Roman, Jewish, and other civilizations underwent great change, if not destruction, and when more familiar modern manners of writing began to develop.

The rediscovery of chiasmus in the Bible can be credited to three theologians of the nineteenth century: Robert Lowth, John Jebb, and John Forbes. Lowth, the Bishop of London, and Jebb, the Bishop of Limerick, both wrote 300-page volumes describing Hebraisms in the holy scriptures. Although both made initial observations of the chiastic form, their emphasis was placed almost entirely on poetic imagery and direct parallelism, and only Jebb paid much attention to epanodos (the Greek term he used to describe inverted parallelism). In 1854, however, John Forbes completed a much more extensive study, The Symmetrical Structures of Scripture. With the publication of Forbes’s book, it is possible to begin speaking of relatively well-developed appreciation of chiastic forms in the Bible. Since
then numerous other writers have utilized a knowledge of the
form in critical studies of the holy scriptures, indicating that it
has been recognized as genuine and significant.\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{CHIASMUS IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS}

As the Old Testament represents the earliest extant Hebrew
writings, it is the best evidence of the antiquity and general
nature of chiasmus as developed by the Hebrews. Based on his
detailed modern analysis of biblical chiasmus, Nils Lund has
formulated seven rules of chiastic passages, three of which are
most interesting for this study.\textsuperscript{8} The first states that the center of
the passage is always the turning point. The third notes that
identical ideas will often be distributed so as to occur at the
beginning, middle, and end of a chiasm, but nowhere else. The
seventh claims that there is often a mixture of directly parallel
and inverted parallel lines in the same unit. These characteristics
are readily apparent in the following biblical passages:

\textit{Example 1}

And all flesh \textit{died} that moved upon the \textit{earth},
Both birds,
And cattle,
And beasts,
And every creeping thing that creepeth upon
the earth,
And every man:
All in whose nostrils was the breath of the
spirit of \textit{life}
Of all that was on the \textit{dry land}
Died;
And was destroyed
Every \textit{living} thing
That was upon the face of the \textit{ground}
Both man,
And creeping things,
(And beasts),
And cattle,
And birds of the heavens,
And they were \textit{destroyed from the earth}.
\hfill (Genesis 7:21-23)
Example 2

Seek ye me, and ye shall live.
But seek not after Bethel,
Nor enter into Gilgal.
And pass not to Beer-sheba:
For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,
And Bethel shall come to naught.
Seek Yahweh, and ye shall live. (Amos 5:4b-6a)

Example 3

Do ye indeed, O gods, speak righteousness?
Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

Nay, in the heart ye work wickedness
Ye weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth.

The wicked are estranged from the womb
They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.

Their poison is like the poison of a serpent
Like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear
Which hearkeneth not to the voice of charmers,
The most cunning binder of spells.

O God,
Break
Their teeth in their mouth;
The great teeth of the young lions
Break out
O Yahweh.

They shall melt away like waters,
They shall go away for them,
Like tender grass which withers away.
Like a snail will melt as it goes along.

Abortions of a woman
That have not beheld the sun!

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance
He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

And men shall say, surely there is a reward for the righteous
Surely there is a God that judgeth the earth. (Psalm 58)
Example 4

Therefore I speak to them in parables:
Because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not.
In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which sayeth
By hearing ye shall hear not; and seeing ye shall see not
For this people’s heart is waxed gross
And their ears are dull of hearing
And their eyes they have closed
lest at any time they should see
With their eyes
And hear with their ears,
And should understand with their heart and be converted.
Blessed are your eyes, for they see and your ears, for they hear
Many prophets and righteous men
Have longed to see what you see and hear what you hear and have not.
Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.
(Matthew 13:13-18)

Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon

We now turn to the question of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. The first chapter of the book claims that it was written in “the language of the Egyptians” but according to “the learning of the Jews” (1 Nephi 1:2); that is, it was written with Egyptian characters and elements but in Hebraic style. If the Book of Mormon truly is a direct translation of a text formulated in accordance with ancient Hebrew learning, chiasmus might well be present as an integral part of its literary style. If so, an understanding of chiasmus should be helpful in interpreting and understanding the design of the total book.

If chiasmus can be convincingly identified in the Book of Mormon, it will testify of the book’s ancient origin. No one in America, let alone in western New York, fully understood chiasmus in 1830. Joseph Smith had been dead ten full years before John Forbes’s book was published in Scotland. Even many prominent Bible scholars today know little about chiastic
forms beyond the name and a few passages where they might be found. The possibility of Joseph Smith’s noticing the form accidentally is also remote, since most biblical passages containing inverted word orders have been rearranged into natural word orders in the King James translation. Even had he known of the form, he would still have had the overwhelming task of writing original, artistic chiastic sentences. Try writing a sonnet or a multi-termed chiasm yourself: your appreciation of these forms will turn to awe. If the Book of Mormon is found to contain true chiastic forms in an ancient style, then is not the book’s own repeated claim to be the product of an ancient culture veritably substantiated?

An understanding of chiasmus will also greatly enhance interpretation of Book of Mormon scriptures. If the ancient authors of the Book of Mormon consciously set particular elements parallel to each other, then these elements must be considered together in order to be fully understood in their complete context. Moreover, the thoughts which appear at the center of a chiastic passage must always be given special attention, and any antithetical ideas introduced at the turning point must be contrasted with their properly corresponding ideas. Knowledge of chiasmus will clarify questions of structure within shorter passages and of unity within whole books. For example, why Nephi divided his writings into two books, instead of leaving them all in one, will be explained by chiasmus. Stylistic devices, especially the frequent repetitions which have often been seen as ignorant and redundant, will be appreciated in the light in which they originally shone.

Chiasms may appear anywhere in the Book of Mormon, although they primarily typify the style of only three of the numerous authors—Nephi, Benjamin, and Alma the Younger. These writers use chiasms in practically every possible context, from passages of straight narration or argumentation to others of beautiful poetic eloquence. The following examples speak for themselves and require little further explanation.
Example 1

The Jews
shall have the words
of the Nephites,
and the Nephites
shall have the words
of the Jews;
and the Nephites and the Jews
shall have the words
of the lost tribes of Israel;
and the lost tribes of Israel
shall have the words of
the Nephites and the Jews.

(2 Nephi 29:13)

Example 2

But men drink damnation to their own souls except
they humble themselves
and become as little children,
and believe that salvation . . . is . . . in and through
the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord . . .

For the natural man
is an enemy to God,
and has been from the fall of Adam,
and will be, forever and ever,
unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit,
and putteth off the natural man
and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord,
and becometh as a child,
submissive, meek, humble . . .

(Mosiah 3:18-19)
Example 3

Whosoever shall not take upon him the name of Christ must be called by some other name; therefore, he findeth himself on the left hand of God.

And I would that ye should remember also, that this is the name . . .

that never should be blotted out, except it be through transgression;

therefore,
take heed that ye do not transgress,

that the name be not blotted out of your hearts. . . .

I would that ye should remember to retain the name . . .

that ye are not found on the left hand of God,

but that ye hear and know the voice by which ye shall be called,

and also, the name by which he shall call you.

(Mosiah 5:10-12)

Needless to say, the word order in these last two examples is especially striking. These passages are just two small parts of the very complex chiastic structure of King Benjamin's entire speech.10 His use of chiasmus is not illogical: at the time that he delivered this famous speech, he was acting in a traditional coronation and would naturally be using the most traditional and convincing rhetoric at his command. Benjamin's thoughts had been carefully prepared beforehand and had even been "written and sent forth among those that were not under the sound of his voice" (Mosiah 2:8). This degree of painstaking deliberation in writing was the rule, rather than the exception, among the Book of Mormon prophets. In cases such as these, chiasmus is used to give emphasis to points of special importance.

Example 4

And they said unto me: We have not; for the Lord maketh no such thing known unto us.

Behold, I said unto them: How is it that ye do not keep the commandments of the Lord?
How is it that ye will perish,
because of the hardness of your hearts?
Do ye not remember the things which the Lord
hath said?
— If ye will not harden your hearts,
and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive,
with diligence in keeping my commandments,
surely these things shall be made known unto you.
(1 Nephi 15:9-11)

A chiasm may also appear as a logical device, for its completeness rounds out a thought forcefully and ties in all loose ends tightly. Nephi so successfully used the foregoing line of reasoning against his rebellious brothers that, as he later recorded the events of his family’s lengthy journey to the New World, he could still recall his unanswerable rebuttal. The turning point of the argument is a piercing question: “Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?” The same thought, concerning that which the Lord has said or will say, appropriately appears at the extremes as well as in the middle of this chiasm. Notice also that the first half of the chiasm contains the words of Nephi, while the second half is built from the words of the Lord, comprising a deft shift at the center. What better debate partner could Nephi have in his parallelism than the Lord? The only key terms in the passage which are parallel but not identical are perish and ask in faith. Perhaps Nephi uses them to contrast the living strength of true faith with the fear of death which accompanies any traveler through the wilderness.

Example 5

A  Behold, the Lord hath created the earth that it
     should be inhabited;
     and he hath created his children that they should
     possess it.

B  And he raiseth up
     a righteous
     nation,
     and destroyeth
     the nations
     of the wicked.
B’ And he leadeth away
the righteous
into precious lands,
and the wicked
he destroyeth,
and curseth the land
unto them for their
sakes.

A’ He ruleth high in the heavens,
for it is his throne,
and this earth
is his footstool.

(1 Nephi 17:36-39)

This passage is an intricate gem. It masterfully combines direct parallelisms with inverted parallelisms. Parts A and A’ each contain two directly parallel thoughts, in A the Lord’s creation of the earth and the creation of his children, and in A’ the Lord’s throne and his footstool. It is interesting that the word earth appears in both A and A’. Parts B and B’ are built of four poetical lines, each containing three parts. In both B and B’, two of the three parts are inverted when they reappear the second time, i.e.,

righteous / nation
nations / of the wicked
he leadeth away / the righteous
the wicked / he destroyeth

Furthermore, these inverted parts come at the end of the lines in B but at the beginning of the lines in B’. This leaves the words raiseth up and destroyeth at the beginning of B and precious lands and curseth the land at the end of B’ in direct parallel form. Thus another chiasm is formed between the directly parallel portions of B and B’ and the inverted portions of B and B’, i.e.,

B inverted                    direct
B’ direct                    inverted
For extra measure the first line in B and the first line in B' express the same idea, the blessing of the righteous, while the second line in B and the second line in B' both express the idea of being punished. So in the midst of inverted parallelisms, the direct parallelism is also skillfully maintained.

Example 6

A 1 And, notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses,
   2 and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ,
   3 until the law shall be fulfilled.
   4 For, for this end was the law given;

B wherefore the law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith; yet we keep the law because of the commandments.

C And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ,

C' and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.

B' Wherefore, we speak concerning the law that our children may know the deadness of the law;
and . . . may look forward unto that life which is in Christ,

A' 4 and know for what end the law was given.
   3 And after the law is fulfilled
   2 in Christ, that they need not harden their hearts against him
   1 when the law ought to be done away.

(2 Nephi 25:24-27)
Example 7

A  The meaning of the *word restoration* is to bring back again

B  evil for evil,
or carnal for carnal,
or devilish for devilish—

\[ w_1, w_2 \text{ good for that which is good;} \]
\[ x_1, x_2 \text{ righteous for that which is righteous;} \]
\[ y_1, y_2 \text{ just for that which is just;} \]
\[ z_1, z_2 \text{ merciful for that which is merciful.} \]
Therefore, my son, see that you are

\[ z_2 \text{ merciful unto your brethren;} \]
\[ y_2 \text{ deal justly,} \]
\[ x_2 \text{ judge righteously,} \]
\[ w_2 \text{ and do good continually;} \]

and if ye do all these things then shall ye receive your reward; yea,

\[ z_1 \text{ ye shall have mercy restored unto you again;} \]
\[ y_1 \text{ ye shall have justice restored unto you again;} \]
\[ x_1 \text{ ye shall have a righteous judgement restored unto you again;} \]
\[ w_1 \text{ and ye shall have good rewarded unto you again.} \]

B′  For that which ye do send out shall return unto you again, and be restored;

A′  therefore, the *word restoration* more fully condemneth the sinner, and justifieth him not at all.

(Alma 41:13-15)
The twist here is clever: after listing four pairs of terms, Alma pairs two lists of four terms and reverses their order at the same time. Or to use a chiasm to describe this chiasm: Alma writes a list of pairs and then a pair of lists. The chiasmus here reaches yet a further level, since the first nominatives in the list of pairs \((w_1, x_1, y_1, \text{ and } z_1)\) and the last list in the pair of lists \((w'_1, x'_1, y'_1, \text{ and } z'_1)\) both describe the reward to be received, while the second nominatives \((w_2, x_2, y_2 \text{ and } z_2)\) and the first of the separate lists \((w'_2, x'_2, y'_2, \text{ and } z'_2)\) describe the attributes necessary to obtain those rewards. In all seriousness, a great play on words.

By far the most subtle use of chiasmus is its role in the structural design of longer passages and books. The book of Mosiah, for example, utilizes a chiastic structure in its underlying organization, at the expense of chronological order.\(^{11}\) Like the book of Mosiah, the book of 1 Nephi, King Benjamin’s speech, and Alma chapter 36 also use a chiastic framework as a foundation. Of this group, only Alma 36 is sufficiently brief for effective illustration here of the way in which complex chiasmus can be employed in a longer passage to emphasize a central theme.\(^{12}\) In this chapter Alma recounts to his son Helaman the story of his conversion. Contrary to what one might be led to believe from Alma’s earlier account of his conversion (Mosiah 27:10-31), the supernatural events associated with his conversion were not of primary importance to him as he remembered them in his more mature years. The structure of the chapter shows that Alma’s conversion centered instead upon a spiritual confrontation in which Alma turned to Jesus Christ for deliverance from his sins:

*Example 8*

My son, give ear to my words (1)
Keep the commandments and ye shall prosper in the land (1)
Do as I have done (2)
Captivity of our fathers—their bondage (2)
He surely did deliver them (2)
Trust in God (3)
Support in trials, troubles and afflictions (3)
I know this not of myself but of God (4)
Born of God (5)

Alma seeks to harm the church (6)
Limbs paralyzed (10)
Fear of the presence of God (14)
Pains of a damned soul (16)
Alma remembers one Jesus Christ (17)
Christ will atone for the sins of the world (17)
Alma calls upon Jesus Christ (18)
Joy as exceeding as the pain (20)
Longing to be with God (22)
Use of limbs returns (23)
Alma seeks to bring souls unto God (24)

Born of God (26)
My knowledge is of God (26)
Supported under trials, troubles, and afflictions (27)

Trust in him (27)
He will deliver me (27)
Egypt—captivity (28-29)
Know as I do know (30)
Keep the commandments and ye shall prosper in the land (30)
This is according to his word (30)
(Alma 36)

Given our twentieth-century understanding of chiastic writings and their historical occurrences, this one chapter is strong evidence that the Book of Mormon was not written in the nineteenth century.

This chapter is as extensive and precise as any chiastic passage I am aware of in ancient literature. Besides having practical structural value, chiasmus has a distinct charm and beauty in a passage such as this. The first ten verses and the last eight form an artistic frame around the central motif which contrasts the agony of conversion with the joy of conversion. In the center Alma makes this contrast explicit, when he says in verse 20, "my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain." No literary device could make this contrast more force-
fully than chiasmus. Moreover, chiasmus allows Alma to place the very turning point of his entire life exactly at the turning point of this chapter: Christ, because of the effects of the future atonement, belongs at the center of both. Compared with the abrupt antithetic parallelisms found in the recounting of this incident recorded in Mosiah 27, the chiasmus in Alma 36 is monumental and meaningful. The chiastic structure amplifies the significance of Alma's conversion and the centrality of spiritual realities around which it turned.

CONCLUSION

The intent of this article is to introduce one concept of formal analysis into Book of Mormon studies. The form which has been examined is chiasmus, a basic element of ancient literature, particularly that of the ancient Hebrews. Although all knowledge of this form lay dormant for centuries, it was rediscovered and reexplored in the nineteenth century when formal criticism began to emerge. But by the time the concept of chiasmus received currency or recognition, the Book of Mormon had long been in print. Since the Book of Mormon contains numerous chiasms, it thus becomes logical to consider the book a product of the ancient world and to judge its literary qualities accordingly. The book reviewed in this way is moving; it deserves to be read more carefully.

NOTES


2. Hugh Nibley has researched Hebrew and Near Eastern aspects of the Book of Mormon in detail; his previous works dealing with the subject include Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1952), An Approach to the Book of Mormon, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964), and Since Cumorah: The Book of Mormon in the Modern World (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1967).

3. Many chiasms have not survived the King James translation although they may be crystal clear in the Hebrew. To the extent the following examples
vary from the King James Version, they are verbatim translations from the Hebrew or Greek.


7. An extensive bibliography of scholarly works utilizing chiasmus can be found in John W. Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981).

8. Nils Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), pp. 40-41. To these rules, I would add the following principles for use in testing for chiasmus: (1) chiasmus should be relatively self-evident, encompassing a complete literary unit within the text, and not forced upon a partial passage artificially; (2) it generally does not occur where other organizing schemes are primary (i.e., "Hickory, Dickory, Dock" is not chiastic because it is a limerick); (3) it should take into account every predominant word or thought in the unit, and similarly should not rely upon insignificant or dispensable parts of speech; and (4) in the absence of a very well-defined crossing effect or inversion at a center point which is also the central or turning point in the meaning of the passage, only the most obvious patterns should be called chiastic.

9. The first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed in standard paragraph form without verses. Arbitrary chapter divisions appear in the 1830 edition (1 Nephi with seven, 2 Nephi with fifteen, etc.). The current chapter divisions and separation into verses were made by Orson Pratt in 1879. Therefore, one need not be concerned to take chapter and verse into account when studying the structure of a passage.


11. Ibid., pp. 150-51, 170.

12. Such a detailed analysis of a twenty-two-chapter book, 1 Nephi, is attempted by Noel B. Reynolds in chapter 3 of this volume.