

Rediscovering the Story of the Old Testament – Session 2 Lesson 3

Design Patterns

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Design Patterns

Main Idea

Recognizing design patterns in the TNK

Exercise

What do our daily and weekly routines reveal about our life overall?

Core questions

1. What patterns can be found in the characters in the TNK that resemble Christ?
2. What patterns can be found in the characters in the TNK that resemble us?

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Intertextual links

One of the main features of the TNK is its sparse language. Compared to modern texts, there is not a lot of description. While this may make the text seem easy to read – easy to quickly read – we should do just the opposite. The lack of descriptive words actually indicates that all the words are important. The only details are important details. When studying the TNK we should try to identify the important “key words” (hyperlinks – or intertextual links) within a text, so that when we find those key words in another text, we can know that the texts should be linked together.

Photomosaic – Identifying Literary Units

Luke 24:25-27 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

The Bible is like a photomosaic with identifiable smaller literary units crafted and arranged to work together to construct a larger, overarching message. The following portrait of Louis Armstrong, created by Robert Silvers (www.photomosaic.com) was created by putting together hundreds of smaller photos taken from actual recording sessions with Louis

Armstrong. Each photo by itself is not as significant as the resulting portrait. Each of the individual photos are used to a tool for the artist who created the portrait. Louis Armstrong may not be in every picture, but when we look at the sum total of all the pieces we see his portrait emerge.



In Luke 24:44, Jesus suggested that the TNK displays this kind of “mosaic unity.” As we read the Bible, we first learn to identify each literary unit, where they begin and end, where they change focus, etc. Then the next challenge is to put all those literary units all together so that we can see the larger picture of how all those pieces together point to Jesus. Developing the skill of identifying literary units and the patterns within each unit will help in identifying literary patterns in one text and the identifying those patterns elsewhere. Example: The Eden Narrative

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You may not see all the levels of units that are identified in this chart. But even if you can see some of the patterns here, it will help you recognize patterns like this later on. Example: This pattern can be applied to the nation of Israel's creation to its folly and fall which then led to its exile.

2:4-6 - No garden, humans, or rain	2:4-17 From wasteland to Eden	2:4-25 From isolated wasteland to communion in Eden	2:4-3:24 The Eden Narrative: From Garden to Exile		
2:7-9 - God plants a garden and forms human					
2:10-14 - The Eden river flows to become 4 rivers					
2:15-17 - Human put in the garden + divine command					
2:18-20 - Problem: a human alone	2:18-25 From isolation to communion				
2:21-23 - Solution: two humans out of one					
2:24-25 - Two humans married					
3:1-5 - Dialogue between snake and woman	3:1-13 Folly and the Fall	3:14-24 The Fallout			
3:6-7 - Woman and man eat from the tree					
3:8-13 - Dialogue between God and humans					
3:14-15 - Curse on the snake					
3:16 - Consequences for the woman					
3:17-19 - Consequences for the man					
3:20-21 - Provision of garments					
3:22-24 Humans exiled from Eden					

Repeated Motifs

Modern day movies often create a cohesive unity to the themes and plot lines of a story by repetition and variation. By building up viewer expectations through repetition, the artist can introduce variation and surprise. (Ex: Lord of the Rings)

- In the Lord of the Rings trilogy, consider the motif of the ring temptation scene.
- Some characters are tempted by the ring's power, and they succumb to it (Smeagol, Boromir, Frodo).
- Other characters resist its power, but in different ways: Bilbo (just barely), Gandalf and Galadriel (through fear and trembling), and Aragorn (like it's no problem!).
- This diverse set of responses to the ring's power creates a rich palette of characters and a complex portrait of power in the story.

The biblical authors were masters of the technique of patterned repetition and analogy. And it's accomplished through the simplest of means: strategic repetition of key words which serve as intertextual links.

The following examples the use of these techniques in the TaNaK.

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Pattern of Sin

See something, Desire what we see, Grab what we see.

1. Two humans are created to rule the world on Yahweh's behalf. They are told everything is good to eat except for one tree. They see, desire and take.
2. Abraham and Sarah – see the Egyptian slave, take her and do what is good in their eyes
3. Aaron at Mt Sinai sees the gold and takes it to make the golden calf.
4. Achan sees the gold of the Canaanites and desires it and takes it.
5. Israelites, see Saul and take him as their king
6. David sees Bathsheba, desires her and takes her
7. CONTRAST: Jesus sees, then says not my will but your will be done.

Emergence from Chaos

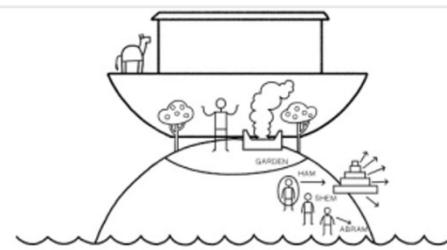
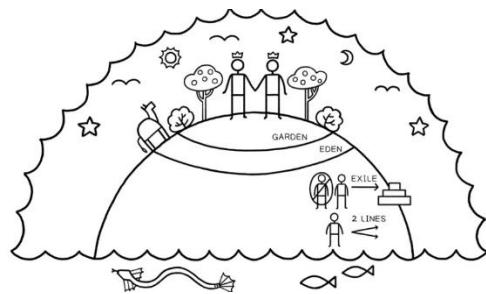
Yahweh bringing humans out of chaos and into a new world

1. God separates land from water, making a place for humans to flourish
2. God rescues Noah's family from chaotic waters of flood where they can step on dry land.
3. Exodus story
4. Joshua and Jordan River
5. Isaiah hoped for a new exodus with a new king into a new creation (nations are the chaotic waters)
6. CONTRAST: Jesus goes into Jordan River and back out again (baptism) and God announces Jesus is God's son who will lead us out of our chaos and violence and into new creation by going through death himself.

The Temple

Creation of the world, order imposed from chaos, humans rule with Yahweh in a garden which is the sanctuary of the Creation temple

1. Introduction of sin, a decreation event, order turns to chaos
2. The flood as a decreation event: the waters above and below collapse together
3. Noah's ark has elements of the Creation temple.
4. The tabernacle, and later the temple, has elements of the Creation temple
5. In the New Testament: Jesus is the temple and then Jesus' followers together are the temple.



In the temple paradigm of Creation, the garden of Eden serves as a sanctuary in the temple, giving us the conceptual structure above. The center of the garden is the Holy of Holies. The rest of the garden is the Holy Place. Just outside the garden is the courtyard, where we see Cain and Abel offering sacrifices. The rest of the world is outside of that. We see this structure repeated in many other places: in Noah's ark, the tabernacle, the temple in Jerusalem and in the temple described by Ezekiel (Ezek 40-48).

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The Mountain

- **Eden** was on a mountain – a river flowed out of Eden and separated into 4 rivers that watered the world, and Eden was a garden where humans met with Elohim. Because the rebellion caused them to be banished from that mountain, humans have been trying to get back to “the mountain.”
- **Mount Sinai (Horeb)**, where Yahweh gave Israel the commandments and the instructions for building the tabernacle where they could continue to encounter Him. (Exo 19-20; Ex 40)
- **Mount Hor**, where Aaron died because of his sin
- **Mount Hermon** – the highest peak in ancient Israel
- **Mount Gerizim** – where the blessings were shouted from during a ceremony of blessings and curses. Where Gideon’s son Abimelech convinced the people of Shechem to make him king
- **Mount Ebal** – was where the curses where shouted from during a ceremony of blessings and curses.
- **Mount Nebo** – where Moses viewed the Promised Land before he died.
- **Mount Zion**, originally the southeastern part of the city where the ancient city of David was located. Over time it expanded to include all of Jerusalem or even the “spiritual center” of the Jewish faith.
- **High places** – It was common for Israel and other ANE cultures to make sacrifices on “high places” because that is where they thought they were closer to God.

Christ

Prophecies fulfilled

- Before His crucifixion, Jesus had pointed to [Isaiah 53:12](#) and said, “It is written: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors’ and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment” ([Luke 22:37](#)).
- His unique birth ([Isaiah 7:14](#)),
- His earthly ministry ([Isaiah 61:1](#))
- the way He would die ([Psalm 22](#)).

Christophanies

Christophanies pre-incarnate **appearances** of the Son of God. The Old Testament uses the term angel of the Lord interchangeably with the Lord in reference to these visitations.

- [Genesis 18:1–33](#) when the Lord appeared to Abram in human form. Such tangible encounters with deity are scattered throughout the Old Testament:
- [Genesis 16:7–14](#);
- [22:11–18](#);
- [Judges 5:23](#);
- [2 Kings 19:35](#);
- [Daniel 3:25](#).

Types

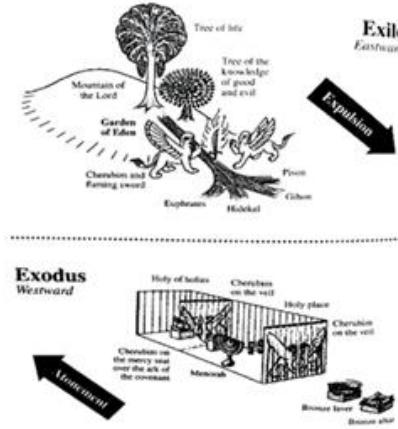
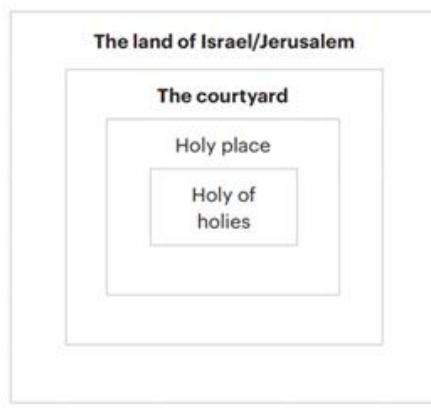
A type is a person or thing in the Old Testament that **foreshadows** a person or thing in the New Testament. The following foreshadow elements of the life of Christ.

- Moses confronted the evil powers of the day and led his people to freedom through a miraculous deliverance.
- The life of Joseph modelled the life of Christ.

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- God called Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham uttered these prophetic words in response to Isaac's question about a lamb: "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son" ([Genesis 22:8](#)). God did provide a ram in Isaac's place, symbolizing what He would do thousands of years later on that very mountain when His own Son was offered as a sacrifice in our place ([Matthew 27:33](#)). Events surrounding the sacrifice of Isaac thus serve as a type of the sacrifice of Christ.
- Jesus' crucifixion modelled when the people following Moses in the wilderness had sinned, and God sent serpents among them to bite them. The people were dying, and they appealed to Moses for help. God told Moses to make a bronze serpent and place it on a pole. All those who looked to it would be healed ([Numbers 21:4–19](#)). Jesus alluded to this incident in [John 3:14–15](#): "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life in him."
- God's design for the tabernacle. The altar in the courtyard symbolizes the need for Jesus' sacrifice to atone for our sin. The laver shows Jesus as providing the water of life ([John 4:14](#)). Inside the Holy Place, the lampstand is suggestive of Jesus as the light of the world ([John 9:5](#)). The table of showbread is Jesus as the bread of life ([John 6:35](#)). In the altar of incense is seen Jesus as our heavenly intercessor, continually offering prayers for us ([Romans 8:34](#); [Hebrews 7:25](#)). According to [Hebrews 10:20](#), the veil before the ark of the covenant is a picture of Jesus' human flesh.



Michael Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord*, p. 54.

Chiasms and the story-line chiasm of the Bible

Later on, we will examine many of the literary devices of the Bible, but there is one that is appropriate to mention right now. Chiasms are literary structures where a sequence of ideas are presented and then repeated in reverse order. This creates a "mirror" effect where we see a sequence of ideas that begin to flow in one direction and then are "reflected" back by another sequence of ideas. The second sequence that reflects back the ideas may be either parallel ideas from the first sequence or they may be inverted from the first sequence. The term chiasm comes from the Greek letter chi, which looks like our letter X. The result is a symmetrical structure that enhances and connects the ideas being conveyed.

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Here's a chiasm contained in the story of Noah's Ark.

- A – Noah is commanded to enter the ark and bring animals on board.
 - B – The rains fall, and the floodwaters cover the earth.
 - C – The earth is flooded for forty days and forty nights.
 - B' – The waters recede, and the ark comes to rest on Mount Ararat.
- A' – Noah and the animals leave the ark.

This chiasm starts and ends with Noah and the animals entering and leaving the ark. The middle section mirrors the events of the flood. This chiasm structure emphasizes the central message of God's protection and provision for His creation. When we recognize and decipher these chiastic structures, we uncover hidden layers of meaning within the biblical text.

Chiasms can be as simple as a sentence or may cover an entire book of the Bible. While we will look at some other chiasms later there is one chiasm worth mentioning now. The chiasm that covers the entirety of the Bible. This chiasm links the Old and New Testaments together.

A - God formed an ordered universe of life and flourishing out of chaos, intending the universe to be a temple where he would rule with creatures who bore his image. God began his rule with his image-bearers in a special garden, Eden. But his image-bearers were instructed to fill the earth so that God's rule would extend, with them, to the entire earth.

B --- The image-bearers rebelled, bringing increasing chaos and death to the world.

C ---- The image-bearers continue to defy God's desire and build a tower in Babel to make a name for themselves and God found it necessary to confuse their language to force them to spread through the earth and form nations.

D ----- Out of the nations, God chooses one family through which He will form a new nation, Israel, through whom he will accomplish his goals.

E ----- God raises a leader, Moses, to bring that chosen nation, Israel, out of captivity in Babylon. Moses serves as a prophet, priest and king for Israel, but fails to be the perfect human who can deliver the people from their sin.

F ----- Israel continues to rebel, even rejecting God as king so that they could be "like everybody else." In the generations of Israel that follow. The continued rebellion causes God Israel to be brought into captivity and they live in exile for 70 years. No one like Moses arises.

F' ----- After the time of exile, only a remnant of Israel returns to the promised land which is now controlled by foreigners. Even Jerusalem and its temple are only a remnant of what they were. People increasingly anticipate a political rescuer.

E' ----- God raises a rescuer like Moses, Jesus, to bring his chosen nation out of the captivity of sin. Moses serves as a prophet, priest and king for Israel and succeeds in being the perfect human who can deliver the people from their sin.

D' ----- Out of Israel, God creates a new spiritual Israel, through which he will accomplish his goals

C' ---- At the celebration of Shavuot, Jews gather from throughout the world and the confusion of languages set in place at Babel is reversed.

B' --- Enabled by the Holy Spirit, the chosen nation is now sent to all the nations to bring the Kingdom of God and life and flourishing to the world.

A' -- The image-bearers continue the project of extending the life and flourishing of the Kingdom of Heaven to all the earth. At the appointed time King Jesus will return to complete the ordered universe, by fully eradicating chaos and death and making the whole earth a place of only life and flourishing.