

Yahweh's Emphasis - Grammatical Inversion

Yahweh directs his children to what is important, in his Word, by way of Emphasis. Our common way of emphasizing words today is to underline them, put them into *italics*, placing them in **bold print**, and by using many more techniques that direct the eye to what we are Emphasizing. A grammatical construction called, 'inversion,' is a technique that our Father uses throughout his Word. The Rotherham Emphasized Bible maintains these inversions and draws attention to them by using the symbols, < >. The most popular Bibles today (NIV & NLT) remove thousands of Yahweh's emphasis, displayed through grammatical inversion, by uninverting Yahweh's sentences.

What is a Grammatical Inversion?

One of the most effective ways to make language more emphatic is by inverting a sentence's regular word order. Emphasis in this way is often presented through written language and is of a highly formal register. Let's take a look at the following sentence:

1) *She had never seen such an impressive live performance.*

The sentence above displays a regular, relatively common word order in English. We have our subject (She), followed by a negative verb form in the past (had never seen) and a modified object (such an impressive live performance). Now let's look closely at a second example:

2) *Never had she seen such an impressive live performance.*

Our second sentence clearly demonstrates a shift in the first example's word order. Never is what is known as a 'Negative Adverbial'. Above, Never has been taken away from the sentence's main verb phrase and inserted at the beginning. Additionally, the past auxiliary had is placed in front of the subject, she. The basic formula for transforming common sentences into more emphatic statements is as follows:

Negative Adverbial or 'Only'/'No' Expression + Auxiliary or Modal Verb + Subject + Main Verb + Object

3) *Never had we heard such a fascinating story.*

Despite using the past perfect in sentences 2) and 3), this formula remains reliable with the present tense also. For example:

4) *Rarely will I eat chocolate during the week.*

5) *Under no circumstances should you leave your children unsupervised.*

Other Negative Adverbials include: rarely, not since, hardly, never before, not until, little, at no time etc.

'No'/Only' Expressions include: under no circumstances, not only, no sooner, in no way, only when etc.

Examples of sentences inverted are illustrated below.

I have played little tennis since I was a child.

Inverted to

Little have I played tennis since I was a child.

He had hardly taken a seat before he started to talk.

Inverted to

Hardly had he taken a seat before he started to talk.

Fruit and vegetables are not only good for your health, but they are also extremely delicious.

Inverted to

Not only are fruit and vegetables good for your health, but they are also extremely delicious.

The cyclist was in no way held responsible for the recent accident.

Inverted to

In no way was the cyclist held responsible for the recent accident.

Yahweh's Grammatical Inversions

Now let us examine how Yahweh uses grammatical inversion in his Poetic Masterpiece, his Word. The very first sentence, Genesis 1:1 is inverted. Yahweh could have written,

God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning

or

God, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth

but rather, he inverted the sentence to read

<In the beginning,> God created the heavens and the earth.

The last grammatical inversion, used in his Word, is Revelation 22:19. Yahweh could have written,

God, will take away one's part,—from the tree of life, and out of the holy city,—from the things written in this scroll, if anyone shall take away from the words of this prophetic scroll.

but rather, he inverted the sentence to read

And, <if anyone shall take away from the words of this prophetic scroll,> God, will take away his part,—from the tree of life, and out of the holy city,—from the things written in this scroll.

Rotherham gives examples of inversions in his introduction to his Bible, one of which is Job 29: 14-15:

<Righteousness> I put on, and it clothed me,
<Like a robe and turban> was my, justice;
<Eyes> became I to the, blind,
And <feet to the lame> was, I!

He comments, "It would be difficult to name a passage more studded with the beauties of combined parallelism and emphasis than this. Observe that, here again, there are two couplets ; then, that an emphatic inversion leads off in the first line of the first couplet—an accusative before its verb; next, that the thought of "clothing" oneself, given in the first line, is emphatically and rhetorically amplified in the second line, "robe" and "turban" forming not merely clothing, but an adornment fit for any assembly; further, that the term "righteousness" at the beginning of the first line is answered by its synonym "justice" at the end of the second—a not infrequent device in Hebrew poetry, and that as the two substantives respond to each other and ending words also have a natural advantage, a slight stress is marked on "justice." In line three, note how the word "eyes" at the opening comes into rhythmic relation with the term "blind" at the close, the verb "to become" being unemphatically thrown in between them, with no stress on the pronoun "I," which is merely implied in the verb ; and how finally, in the last line, "feet" and "lame," instead of being parted like "eyes" and "blind" in the third line, are swiftly and unexpectedly welded into a single emphatic phrase at the head of the line, to be simply followed by the pronoun "I," which, though having primarily to serve, after Hebrew fashion, for the verb "to be," yet, with its long-drawn pausal vowel, lingers on the ear with an unspeakable pathos.

The NIV Bible uninverts this sentence, as seen below:

I put on righteousness as my clothing;
justice was my robe and my turban.
I was eyes to the blind
and feet to the lame.

Rotherham states in his Bible, "when there is an inversion (marked as < > in his Bible), in the English arrangement as well as in that of the Hebrew. Sometimes the inverted and emphatically preplaced portion of the sentence is of some length, extending to a line or more. In such cases the angular marks (< >) frequently appear in darker type (thus < >), so as to be conspicuous, thereby also setting free the lighter marks to show a short inversion within a longer one (cp. Jer. 7: 5-7). If it be remembered that a closing angular sign never completes a sentence, but always demands a sequel before the statement is finished, both mind and voice will be materially assisted.

Jeremiah 7:5-7, has three small inversions within one large inversion.

But < if ye shall, thoroughly amend, your ways, and your doings,
Shall, thoroughly execute, justice, between a man and his neighbour;
1<The sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow> shall not oppress,
And 2<innocent blood> shall not shed in this place,
And 3<after other gods> shall not walk, to your own hurt>
Then will I cause you to dwell,
In this place,
In the land, which I gave to your fathers,
From one age even unto another. (Jer. 7:5-7)

Yahweh is Emphasizing, 'the conditions' that must be met to be able to dwell in the land. These conditions are the topics of, 'the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow,' 'innocent blood' and 'after other gods.'

The NIV Bible will keep the large inversion but uninvert the three smaller inversions, thereby losing Yahweh's Emphasis, as can be seen below.

If you really change your ways and your actions
and deal with each other justly,
1) if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow
2) and do not shed innocent blood in this place,
3) and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm,
then I will let you live in this place,
in the land I gave to your forefathers for ever and ever.

Robert Young's Bible is faithful to the text, as can be seen below, but he did not mark the Emphasis, as does Rotherham, in his Emphasized Bible.

For, if ye do thoroughly amend your ways and your doings,
If ye do judgment thoroughly Between a man and his neighbour,
Sojourner, fatherless, and widow, ye oppress not,

And innocent blood do not shed in this place,
And after other gods do not walk, for evil to yourselves,
Then I have caused you to dwell in this place,
In the land that I gave to your fathers, From age even unto age.

Conclusion

Special importance, value, or prominence given to something is the meaning of Emphasis. Emphasis can be displayed by stress laid on a word or words to indicate special meaning or particular importance. Yahweh has unveiled special importance on selected words and verses through grammatical inversion. It behooves us to seek out what Yahweh has Emphasized, as one would who is seeking treasure. Rotherham's Emphasized Bible has done the majority of this work. It is up to those, 'who have eyes to see and ears to hear,' to treasure and seek out Yahweh's Emphasis!

Exercise

Examine the below, popular verses used in the first three chapters of Genesis and perceive their <inversions>; distinguish what Yahweh is Emphasizing in each verse; examine the NIV or NLT Bible's and determine if they univert the inversions or univert them yourself and see how the emphasis is lost.

And God created the man, in his own image,
<In the image of God> created he, him,
<Male and female> created he, them. (1:27)

And Yahweh God laid command, on the man, saying,
<Of every tree of the garden> thou mayest, eat;
but <of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil> thou shalt not eat of it,
for <in the day> thou eatest thereof, thou shalt, die. (2:16-17)

<For this cause> will a man leave his father, and his mother,
and cleave unto his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (2:24)

And the woman said unto the serpent,
<Of the fruit of the trees of the garden> we may eat;
but <of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden> God hath said,
Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it,—lest ye die. (3:2-3)

And he said, <The sound of thee> heard I in the garden,
and I was afraid, for <naked> was I, so I hid myself. (3:10)

And the man said
<The woman whom thou didst put with me>
she, gave me of the tree, so I did eat. (3:12)

<In the sweat of thy face> shalt thou eat bread,
until thou return to the ground, because <therefrom> wast thou taken,
For <dust> thou art,
And<unto dust> shalt thou return. (3:19)

A SYNOPSIS OF THE PRINCIPAL LAWS OF EMPHASIS DISCOVERABLE IN THE BIBLE ORIGINALS.¹

Words are emphatic—

A. By POSITION.

- a. Nominatives before verbs--always.
- b. Genitives, datives' and accusatives' before verbs—always.
- c. Verbs before nominatives—slightly; but able to command strong emphasis reduplication, see below.
- d. Adjectives before nouns—chiefly in N.T., and slightly.!
- e. Words brought into juxtaposition—sometimes, in prose, internal evidence concurring; more frequently in poetry, where the last word of one line is of varied and emphatically echoed by the first *in* next line.
- f. Words postponed to end of sentence—sometimes in prose, sense concurring more frequently in lyric poetry, in which the last word is mostly weighty and claims secondary stress.

g.

B. By REPETITION.

- a. Separate nominative pronoun. Prolific source of emphasis both in Hebrew Greek, as the separate pronoun is independent of position. Always relit when construed with finite verb, which has the pronominal element also with itself. Sometimes also, when used instead of a verb, seems by association of ideas to lend itself to some little stress.
- b. Reduplicated verb—chiefly in Hebrew, reappearing by quotation in N. T. Always indicates lively emphasis. Infinitive verb generally set before its finite—then emphasis only : occasionally placed after its own finite—' perhaps sometimes suggesting continuance or repetition of action.
- c. Independent words, phrases, and sentences. The mere repetition of the one of the most simple and obvious devices for indicating stress.

C. By FORMAL EXPRESSION.

This chiefly applies to Hebrew particles. Owing to the extraordinary facility which the consecution of facts and thoughts can be carried forward by peg-letter *waw*, it follows that when more formal and precise connecting particles are employed, some emphasis can generally be felt. Hence springs the stress; more or less vigorous, which in THE EMPHASISED BIBLE is frequently marked on such connectives as "now" (*'attah*), "therefore" (*laken*), "for this cause" (*a' ken*), and so on; in respect of which appeal is confidently made to elocutionary instinct as to the validity of the result.

¹ Taken from Rotherham's Emphasized Bible; pg. 16