Healing Patterns in the 4 Gospels
An Analysis of Pentadic Adaptation by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
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Why do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John use the same poetic motifs to describe the same subject? How are these motifs applied in the Gospels? What is their significance to the Christian faith?

The recently-published second edition of *In Search of the Biblical Order* presents a wide range of heretofore unidentified poetic motifs spanning the Old and New Testaments. These motifs are found in every book of the Bible except Song of Solomon. The advantage of finding patterns in the text is that they can be used to identify the correct ancient manuscript. If we know the correct pattern, we also know the correct manuscript. The correct manuscript completes the pattern.

This article focuses on just one of these motifs, namely pentads (5-part forms), as found in all 4 of the Gospels. A pentad is a sequence of 5 words or thoughts in the Bible that deal with suffering, joy, the human experience, the 5 senses, and worship. In comparison, a heptad is a sequence of 7 words or thoughts that deal with judgment, either blessings or curses.

In Search of the Biblical Order dedicates two chapters with more than 225 examples of these two patterns. Many more could have been published.

Pentads first appear in the Pentateuch—the first 5 books of the Bible written by Moses—and are repeated throughout the Old and New Testaments. Pentads on suffering, joy, the human experience, the 5 senses, and worship are found only in the Bible, and appear more consistently in prophetic and apocalyptic literature than in narrative portions of Scripture, such as the 4 Gospels.

We arrived at this study of the 4 Gospels through a circuitous route. The original goal was to examine symbolic, numerically-arranged poetic forms in Revelation. Their origin was traced to narrative literature in the Pentateuch. Arranging all of these poetic forms according to their number and content led to unexpected observations of their profusion in the 4 Gospels, and thus to further research.

The history of Gospel criticism is pockmarked with the writings of Bible doubters like Adolf von Harnack, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, Hans Conzelmann, members of the *Jesus Seminar* and Andrew Phillip Smith, and many other so-called Biblical scholars and academics. Similar literary motifs, ignored in the text for nearly 2,000 years, point to one Author, the last thing university Biblical scholars would acknowledge. Their sole mission is to prove there are no miracles in the Biblical text, as they crown themselves God's masters.

Matthew, Mark and John are Jews who write and think like Jews, and in this study we see that Luke, a Greek Gentile, thinks and writes like the other three.

The chiasm, or chiasmus—a pattern found throughout the Old Testament—is a thought process that ends where it began. This is sometimes described as circular thought, although, like the Greek letter chi (χ), the shape of a chiasm goes in and out. For example, a well-known chiasm appears in Genesis chapter 3, wherein God speaks to Adam, God speaks to Eve, God speaks to the Devil, God speaks to the world, God speaks to the Devil, God speaks to Eve, and God speaks to Adam.

Hebrew scholar Eyal Rav-Noy's amazing new book, *Who Really Wrote the Bible?*, explains in marvelous detail how heptadic patterns throughout the Pentateuch prove Mosaic authorship.[1] Rav-Noy masterfully analyzes chiasmus in the Old Testament. He described to this author the following chiasm about the 10 Commandments: It is a progression of *thought*, *word*, *deed*, *word*, and *thought*. The 1st Commandment is what we think, the 2nd Commandment is what we say, the 3rd through 7th Commandments are what we do, the 8th Commandment is what we say, and the 9th and 10th Commandments are what we think. This would give us 5 laws on deeds (3-7), which also reminds us of the Pentateuch.

The progression is A B C C C C' C' B' A' A'. On the other hand, identifying "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" as the 2nd Commandment (Baptists, Reformed, etc.), rather than as part of the 1st (Lutheran, Roman Catholic), interrupts the chiasm and places *deed* before *word*, changing the progression to A C B C C C' C' C' B' A'.

Our response to Rav-Noy is that this chiasm may actually have 7 parts, such as *thought*, *word*, *deed*, *body*, *deed*, *word*, and *thought*. Both the 5th and 6th Commandments ("Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not commit adultery") are laws governing the body, and mark the center of the Commandments, dividing them into 5 and 5. The progress is not even, but it is a progression: A B C C D D' C' B' A' A'. All of this would be in addition to Christ's all-important division of the Commandments into 2 tables: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself* (Luke 10:27).

In his excellent book, *The Shape of Biblical Language: Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond*, John Breck explains that Anglican Bishop Robert Lowth of Oxford coined the term *parallelism,* a form of Hebrew poetry associated with chiasmus.[2] He also notes there is abundant use of chiasmus in ancient Semitic prose such as Akkadian and Ugaritic literary texts.[3]

To what extent these pentadic and heptadic patterns found only in the Bible are related to chiasmus presents fascinating possibilities. Breck writes, "To interpret Scripture fully and accurately, therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we detect the presence and function of chiastic patterns wherever they occur."[4]

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[1] Eyal Rav-Noy and Gil Weinreich, *Who Really Wrote the Bible*, Richard Vigilante Books, Minneapolis, 2010.
[2] John Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language: Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond*, reprint of St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1994, Kaloros Press, Wadmalaw Island, SC, 2008, p. 19.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., p. 17.

The following figures include pentadic patterns on joy, suffering, the 5 senses, relief from suffering, and the human experience, as found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. At least fourteen of the nineteen pentads from the Gospels are combined with a heptad.

Matthew

A voice was heard on high	In Rama was there a voice heard,
of **lamentation**	**lamentation**,
of **mourning**,	and **weeping**,
and **weeping**,	and great **mourning**,
of Rachel **weeping** for her children	Rachel **weeping** *for* her children,
and refusing to be **comforted** for them,	and would not be **comforted**,
because they are not.	because they are not.
Jer. 31:15 DRA	**Matt. 2:18**

And his fame went throughout all Syria:	
and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers **diseases**	
	and **torments**,
	and those which were **possessed** with devils,
	and those which were **lunatick**,
	and those that had the **palsy**;
and he healed them.	
Matt. 4:24	

And there followed him great multitudes of people,	But **go** rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go,
from **Galilee**	**preach**, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
and *from* **Decapolis**,	**Heal** the sick,
and *from* **Jerusalem**,	**cleanse** the lepers,
and *from* **Judaea**,	**raise** the dead,
and *from* beyond **Jordan**.	**cast out** devils:
	freely ye have received, freely **give**.
Matt. 4:25	**Matt. 10:6-8**

Provide neither **gold**,	And great multitudes came unto him, having with them
nor **silver**,	**lame**,
nor **brass** in your **purses**,	**blind**,
Nor **scrip*** for *your* journey,	**dumb**,
neither two **coats**,	**maimed**,
neither **shoes**,	and **many others**,
nor yet **staves**: for the workman is worthy of his meat.	and **cast** them down at Jesus' feet;
	and he **healed** them:
Matt. 10:9-10	**Matt. 15:30**

* In KJV, *scrip* is a bag or wallet carried by wayfarers.

And Jesus **went about** all the cities and villages,
teaching in their synagogues,
and **preaching** the gospel of the kingdom,
and **healing** every sickness
and every **disease** among the people.
Matt. 9:35

But woe to those who are **pregnant**
and to those who are **nursing** babies in those days!
But pray that your flight will not be in the **winter**,
or on a **Sabbath**.
For then there will be a great **tribulation**,
such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now,
nor ever will.
Matt. 24:19-21

Matthew 2:18, which paraphrases Jer. 31:15, follows the pentadic motif designated for suffering found throughout the Old Testament. The King James Version and NASB are both in error when they agree that the Hebrew word for *bitterness* in Jer. 31:15 is in a construct state. *Bitterness* should be translated as an absolute, as is *lamentation.* In the original Hebrew, *weeping* appears before *bitterness* (a noun)*,* but KJV and NASB reverse the order to *bitter weeping*, thereby changing *bitterness* into an adjective: *Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation,* and *bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they* were *not* (KJV).

Jeremiah 31:15 should be retranslated as, *Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah; lamentation, weeping, bitterness; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they* were *not*. Agreement for this correction is found in the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Douay-Rheims American Edition (1899) translations of the verse, as well as in Matt. 2:18, which follows this form. Therefore, Matthew not only quotes the same thoughts found in Jeremiah, but also the same pattern.

The most common use of pentadic motif in the Gospels is the pentad within a heptad, which is a 5-2 (or 2-5) division. There are fourteen 5-2 divisions in the nineteen examples from the 4 Gospels in this article.

The 5-2 division of 7 (pentad in a heptad) found in Matt. 4:24 is arranged in 1-5-1 format. The first phrase of the verse—*And his fame went throughout all Syria*—should probably end with a period. First, people are brought to Christ; next, 5 diseases are listed; and finally, the people are healed by Christ. The following verse, Matt. 4:25, repeats the pentadic motif by stating that the people who were suffering from 5 diseases came from 5 different locations. In the Bible, a decadal pattern (10 parts) often depicts completion, here represented by the end of suffering.

In Matt. 10:6-8, which repeats the 5-2 division and 1-5-1 format of Matt. 4:24, the 12 disciples are commissioned into the same ministry conducted by Jesus in Matt. 9:35. In the first and last phrases, Christ commands the disciples to *go* and *give*, respectively.

The next two verses, Matt. 10:9-10, follow with another 5-2 division. *Brass* overlaps[5] the same line with *purses*. The purses contain *gold*, *silver*, and *brass*. The pentad is *purses*, *scrip*, *coats*, *shoes*, and *staves*.

Matthew 15:30 names 5 groups who are suffering, followed by 2 statements explaining what happened to them.

Mark

and a great multitude	And commanded them that they should **take nothing** for their journey,
from **Galilee** followed him,	save a **staff** only;
and from **Judaea**,	no **scrip**,
And from **Jerusalem**,	no **bread**,
and from **Idumaea**,	no **money** in their purse:
and from beyond **Jordan**;	*But* be shod with **sandals**;
and they about **Tyre**	and not put on **two coats**.
and **Sidon**, ….	
Mark 3:7-8	**Mark 6:8-9**

And they **went out**,	And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall
and **preached** that men should repent.	**they** cast out **devils**;
And they **cast out** many devils,	**they** shall speak with new **tongues**;
and **anointed** with oil many that were sick,	**they** shall take up **serpents**; and if
and **healed** *them*.	**they** drink any **deadly thing**, it shall not hurt them;
	they shall lay hands on the **sick**,
	and they shall recover.
Mark 6:12-13	**Mark 16:17-18**

Mark 3:7 gives a list similar to Matt. 4:25.   However, Mark adds 2 more groups of Gentiles from Tyre and Sidon for a 5-2 division. As in Matthew, these groups are all coming to Christ for healing.

Mark 6:8-9 repeats a similar list to that of Matt. 10:9-10, but with 6 items instead of 5, and makes a 5-2 division with the word *but*. In Mark, *purse* overlaps *money*, which parallels the overlap of *purses* and *brass* in the third line of Matt. 10:9-10. Notice that there is no contradiction in the two texts. One says take only one staff and the other says do not take multiple staves.

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[5] Gioacchino Michael Cascione, *In Search of the Biblical Order*, 2nd edition, RedeemerPress.Org, St. Clair Shores, MI, 2012, pp. 10, 42, 68, 101, 110-112, 126, 131-132, 198, 263.

In Mark 6:12-13 the disciples conduct the same ministry that Jesus performs in Matt. 9:35. Also note the similarity between Mark 6:12-13 and Matt. 10:6-8.

Mark 16:17-18 lists 5 kinds of healing. *New tongues* should not be understood as unintelligible speech, but as new, God-pleasing speech. As in Matt. 4:24 and 10:6-8, Mark 16:17-18 follows the 1-5-1 format on the subject of healing.

In Search of the Biblical Order publishes a number of motifs that are found only in the so-called Western texts. However, according to the pentad in Mark 16:17-18, there is no question that the last twelve verses of Mark 16, which are missing from most modern translations, but which are found in the Majority Text and Textus Receptus (KJV Greek), are part of the original text.

We say this for three reasons. First, to our knowledge, prior to publication of the first edition of *In Search of the Biblical Order* in 1987, no writer had identified pentadic motifs in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation arranged around the five senses, human emotion, the human experience, or worship. Hence, information about pentadic structure was unavailable to those researching the validity of Mark 16:9-20. Second, pentadic motifs are not found in any ancient literature outside of the Bible. Hence, it would be impossible for the uninformed writer to forge Biblical motifs of which he was unaware, and surreptitiously add them to the text. Third, this article is the first to publish nineteen pentads on healing found in the Gospels that were unknown to exegetes prior to this writing. Therefore, based on heretofore unknown internal evidence, the original, authentic, inspired words of Mark include Mark 16:9-20.

Luke

I the LORD have called thee in righteousness,	The Spirit of the Lord *is* **upon me**,
and will hold thine hand,	because he hath **anointed me**
and will keep thee,	to preach the gospel to the **poor**;
and give thee for a **covenant** of the people,	he hath sent me to heal the **brokenhearted**,
for a **light** of the Gentiles;	to preach deliverance to the **captives**,
To open the **blind** eyes,	and recovering of sight to the **blind**,
to **bring out the prisoners** from the prison,	to set at liberty them that are **bruised**,
and **them that sit in darkness** out of the prison house.	
Isa. 42:6-7	**Luke 4:18**

And he came down with them,
stood in the plain,
and the company of his disciples,
and a great multitude of people out of all **Judaea** and **Jerusalem**,
and from the sea coast of **Tyre** and **Sidon**,
which came to hear him,
and to be **healed** of their diseases;
And they that were vexed with unclean spirits,
and* were **cured**
And the whole multitude sought to touch him:
because there went virtue out of him,
and **healed** *them* all.

Luke 6:17-19 (modified)	

*SCR, STE, BYZ, and GOC add *kai*.

And stood at his feet behind *him* **weeping**,	Then he **called** his twelve disciples together,
and began to wash his feet with **tears**,	**gave** them
and did **wipe** *them* with the hairs of her head,	**power** and **authority**
and **kissed** his feet,	over all **devils**,
and **anointed** *them* with the ointment.	and **to cure** diseases.
	And he sent them **to preach** the kingdom of God,
	and **to heal** the sick.
Luke 7:38	**Luke 9:1-2 (A)**

Then he **called** his twelve disciples together,	And he **said** unto them,
gave them power and authority over all devils,	**Take nothing** for your journey,
and **to cure** diseases.	neither **staves**,
And he sent them **to preach** the kingdom of God,	nor **scrip**,
and **to heal** the sick.	neither **bread**,
	neither **money**;
	neither have two **coats** apiece.
Luke 9:1-2 (B)	**Luke 9:3**

But woe unto them that are **with child**,
and to them that **give suck**, in those days!
for there shall be great **distress** in the land,
and **wrath** upon this people.
and they shall **fall** by the edge of the sword,
and shall be **led away** captive into all nations:
and Jerusalem shall be **trodden down** of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.
Luke 21:23-24

Luke 4:18 repeats a pentadic prophecy from Isa. 42:6-7. Notice how Luke copies the pentadic format but paraphrases and reorders the content. Isaiah's *covenant*, *light*, *blind*, *prisoners*, and *darkness* become Luke's *poor*, *brokenhearted*, *captives*, *blind*, and *bruised*.

This is the human suffering the Messiah will relieve. Isaiah introduces his pentad with a Trinitarian sequence spanning the first three phrases of 42:6. Luke does the same thing within the first phrase of 4:18 with *Spirit*, *Lord* (Father), and *me* (Son). Who is more equipped to quote Himself in form and content than the Holy Spirit? Just to make things interesting, He also enjoys communicating with some linguistic razzle-dazzle. As in Matt. 4:24-25 and Matt. 10:6-10, Luke 4:18 actually presents a double pentad, with *gospel*, *heal*, *deliverance*, *sight*, and *liberty* forming the 5-5 division. As stated previously, decadal patterns (10 parts) often depict completion.[6] If we compare the lists in Luke and Isaiah, the *gospel* is the fulfillment of the *covenant*.

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[6] Ibid., pp. 95-113.

Luke 6:17-19 includes another double pentad preceded by 2 lines on Christ's presence. The double pentadic pattern is illustrated with 10 words in bold italic. The *and* in the 9th line of the figure (marked with an asterisk) is found in Textus Receptus and the Majority Text, and is necessary to complete a double pentad. This *and* is missing from nearly all translations except the King James Version. *Healed* appears three times in these verses, but the second occurrence (in the same line as *and**) is a different Greek word than the other two. Notice that *healed* appears at the fifth line of each pentad. For the sake of differentiation in this context, the second occurrence is translated as *cured*. Heptads, as stated earlier, are 7-part motifs on judgment, either blessings or curses. Tetrads are 4-part motifs often introduced by the words *people* or *earth*, and deal with the creation, world, nature, or man. Within Luke's double pentad on healing are 4 groups of people and 3 words for healing and curing.

Luke 9:1-2 and 9:3 are double pentads combined with heptads, and are nearly identical in content and form to those found in Matt. 10:6-8 and 9-10. Luke 9:1-2 has overlapping patterns, as illustrated above by two figures, labeled (A) and (B). The first line of the pentad in the Luke 9:1-2 (A) figure contains both *power* and *authority* because they are descriptions of the same thought. The *and* separating *power* and *authority* is distributive and addresses one action. To assist the reader in visualizing these five actions, the same text is rearranged in the Luke 9:1-2 (B) figure. The list in Luke 9:3 repeats the content and format of Mark 6:8-9 and Matt. 10:9-10.

John

In these lay a great multitude	Here a great number of disabled people used to lie
of **impotent** folk,	the **blind**
of **blind**,	the **lame**
halt,	the **paralyzed**
withered, waiting for the moving of the water.	
John 5:3 KJV	**John 5:3 NIV**

In these lay a great multitude
of those who are **ailing**,
of **blind**,
of **halt**,
of **withered**,
of those who are **waiting**.
for the moving of the water
John 5:3 BYZ, GOC, SCR, and STE

Textus Receptus and the Majority Text must be followed in order to view the pentad in John 5:3. Actually, it is also a double pentad because the previous verse states there are 5 porches surrounding the pool at Bethesda where suffering is relieved. You can see that words are missing from the NIV and other translations. Following some very unusual Greek, KJV has 5 consecutive words in the genitive (possessive) case: *of sick*, *of blind*, *of halt*, *of withered*, and *of those who are waiting*. If the first word (a participle) is translated *of those who are ailing*, the

last word (also a participle) should also be translated *of those who are waiting.* Also notice the 1-5-1 format, as seen in Matt. 2:18; 4:24; 10:6-8; and Mark 16:17-18.

All 4 Gospels speak about 5 loaves of bread and 2 small fishes in the feeding of the 5,000. The pentadic-heptadic motif to relieve human suffering is found in all 4 Gospels.

We arrive at the following conclusions:
1. All 4 Gospel writers arrange their thoughts in Hebrew poetic forms.
2. A New Testament scholar unfamiliar with Hebrew will find much that cannot be adequately understood. Part of Luther's genius is that he was first an Old Testament scholar. Therefore, he interpreted the New Testament in view of the Old Testament.
3. Identification of Hebrew poetic forms in the Gospels is useful in determining the correct ancient Greek manuscript. The correct variant reading is selected based on its potential to complete a Hebrew motif used in the Greek.

There are a few hurdles to overcome. It must be shown that:
1. There are, indeed, numerically-ordered thought progressions in the Bible.
2. These numerically-ordered progressions originate in the Pentateuch.
3. These motifs are just as much a part of Hebrew grammar as any other figure of speech.

For those who question this process, we offer the following response. While the Bible does not say that we must have a proper understanding of Greek and Hebrew grammar in order to translate it, nevertheless, there must be a proper understanding of simile, metaphor, polysyndeton, the *waw*-consecutive, hendiadys,[7] etc., to achieve a proper translation. For example, those who do not understand the Hebrew infinitive absolute have no hope of understanding the original Hebrew. Yet, the Bible does not explain what the infinitive absolute is.

At no place in the Bible does it say that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John employ Hebrew pentadic motifs when they write about human suffering and healing, yet these motifs are clearly present in the text. If we cannot speak and write about what is before our eyes in the text because others have not seen it or written about it, then how is it possible for God to teach us without someone else's approval?

God used human language to write the Bible, while including some of His own innovations, which we continue to explore.

Note: This article displays just a few of the more than 1,000 figures published in the second edition of In Search of the Biblical Order, *available through Christian News, Northwestern Publishing House, Biblical Horizons, and RedeemerPress.Org.*

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[7] Cf. books like Bullinger, *Figures of Speech in the Bible*; Aune, *Westminister Dictionary of New Testament & Early Christian Literature & Rhetoric*; and/or Blass, Debrunner and Funk, *Greek Grammar of the New Testament.*