

# Jesus and the Shape of Judgment

## Heptadic Design in Divine Verdicts

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*In Search of the Biblical Order*, published in 2012 by RedeemerPress.org, and available through Northwestern Publishing House, demonstrates, via numerous examples spanning Scripture, the Biblical writers' employment of subject-related numeric patterns based on 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, 6s, 7s, 10s, and 12s.

Heptadic patterns, or heptads, are texts arranged in 7 consecutive thoughts about divine judgment. This article applies conclusions about the data from the fourth chapter of *In Search of the Biblical Order* as a basis to examine judgments spoken about Jesus or spoken by Jesus. In other words, Christ not only speaks as God, but words about Him or spoken by Him also have the same shape as God's judgments.

Popular opinion is that anything dealing with judgment is negative. However, all of God's opinions are judgments, and His judgments are either blessings or curses. The following two examples appear to be a paradigm for Biblical heptadic judgments.

[1] And all these <b>blessings</b> shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.
[2] <b>blessed shalt thou be</b> in the city, and
[3] <b>blessed shalt thou be</b> in the field.
[4] <b>blessed shall be</b> the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.
[5] <b>blessed shall be</b> thy basket and thy store.
[6] <b>blessed shalt thou be</b> when thou comest in, and
[7] <b>blessed shalt thou be</b> when thou goest out.
<b>Deut. 28:2-6</b>

if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God...that all these
[1] <b>curses</b> shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:
[2] <b>cursed shalt thou be</b> in the city, and
[3] <b>cursed shalt thou be</b> in the field.
[4] <b>cursed shall be</b> thy basket and thy store.
[5] <b>cursed shall be</b> the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.
[6] <b>cursed shalt thou be</b> when thou comest in, and
[7] <b>cursed shalt thou be</b> when thou goest out.
<b>Deut. 28:15-20</b>

The above heptadic motif for judgments is found throughout Scripture. In Revelation the word for blessing appears 7 times, as it does here in Deut. 28:2-6. *In Search of the Biblical Order* addresses this point in detail on pages 124-29.

The following two examples from Isaiah are messianic prophecies about Christ, and they have the same heptadic shape as those about Christ found in Revelation. Each of these examples exhibit a 3-4 or 4-3 division, 3 symbolizing God, and 4 symbolizing mankind and all creation. These two symbols are combined to form a heptad, the symbol for judgment.

For unto us a <b>child</b> is born,	But he was <b>wounded</b> for our transgressions,
unto us a <b>son</b> is given:	he was <b>bruised</b> for our iniquities:
and the government shall be upon his <b>shoulder</b>	the <b>chastisement</b> of our peace was upon him;
and his name shall be called <b>Wonderful Counselor,</b>	and with his <b>stripes</b> we are healed.
The <b>Mighty God,</b>	All <b>we</b> like sheep have gone astray;
The <b>Everlasting Father,</b>	<b>we</b> have turned everyone to his own way; and
The <b>Prince of Peace.</b>	the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of <b>us</b> all.
<b>Isa. 9:6</b>	<b>Isa. 53:5-6</b>

I am the <b>First</b>	I am the <b>root</b>
<b>and the Last</b>	<b>and the offspring</b> of David,
<b>and the Living One</b>	the bright and morning <b>star</b>
<b>and</b> I was dead,	<b>and</b> the Spirit and the bride say, <b>Come</b>
<b>and</b> .behold I am alive forever,	<b>and</b> let him that heareth say, <b>Come</b>
<b>and</b> I have the keys of death	<b>and</b> let him that is athirst <b>come</b>
<b>and</b> of Hades.	let the one who wishes <b>take</b> the water of life freely
<b>Rev. 1:17-18</b>	<b>Rev. 22:16-17</b>

The *kais* (*ands*) in Greek and the *waws* (*ands*) in Hebrew are often used to keep the meter in these patterns. In Hebrew this is called the *waw-consecutive*, and in Greek it is called polysyndeton (many ands). Prepositions, articles, and other words are sometimes used in the same manner. The result is a uniquely Biblical pattern that is aligned with the subject of the words.

The most significant judgment is not the last judgment, but God’s judgment of Christ on the cross. The following examples from Matthew, Mark, and Luke give the same account of Christ teaching His disciples what must happen to Him at Jerusalem. Rather than a 3-4 division, these patterns are in a 2-5 division. Duads (2 parts) symbolize teaching, confession, and faith, and pentads (5 parts) symbolize suffering, joy, worship, and the human experience. Each of the following pentads is prefaced by a duad where Christ begins to explain how he must suffer. The word *suffer* actually introduces all three pentads. It is remarkable to see how the three Gospel writers are careful not only to give the same list, but also the same shape to the text.

In this article, introductory duads on communication appear in the following examples from the Gospels: Matt. 16:21, *shew/go*; Mark 8:31, *teach/suffer*; Luke 9:21-22, *charge/command*; Mark

9:31-32, *taught/said*; Matt. 24:37-39, *days of Noe were/so shall also the coming*; Luke 13:32-33, *go/tell*; and Matt. 16:17-19, *answered/said*.

At first glance, the 5 words in bold type appear to be identical among the following three Gospel texts, but further observation shows that each list differs slightly. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are quoting Christ, and they are quoting the same pattern.

From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples,	And he began to teach them,
how that he must go unto Jerusalem,	that the Son of man must suffer many things,
and suffer many things of the <b>elders</b>	and be rejected of the <b>elders</b> ,
and chief <b>priests</b>	and <i>of</i> the chief <b>priests</b> ,
and <b>scribes</b> ,	and <b>scribes</b> ,
and be <b>killed</b> ,	and be <b>killed</b> ,
and be <b>raised</b> again the third day.	and after three days <b>rise</b> again.
<b>Matt. 16:21</b>	<b>Mark 8:31</b>

And he straitly charged them,
and commanded them to tell no man that thing; Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things,
and be rejected of the <b>elders</b>
and chief <b>priests</b>
and <b>scribes</b> ,
and be <b>slain</b> ,
and be <b>raised</b> the third day.
<b>Luke 9:21-22</b>

The following three examples address a judgment similar to those above, and are parallel quotes from Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The shape of these patterns is predicated on the use of *kais*. All three motifs include a triad (3-part set). The example in Luke reverses the pattern used by Mark. Matthew 20:18-19 includes a pentad on suffering, and is the only one to use the word *crucify*. Matthew maintains the triad as found in Mark and Luke, but then follows the form for a pentad instead of a heptad. Mark and Luke use the same heptadic motif they employed in the three examples above.

Behold, we go up to Jerusalem;	Behold, we go up to Jerusalem;
and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests	and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests,
and unto the scribes,	and unto the scribes;
and they shall <b>condemn</b> him to death,	and they shall <b>condemn</b> him to death,
And shall <b>deliver</b> him to the Gentiles to <b>mock</b> ,	and shall <b>deliver</b> him to the Gentiles:
and to <b>scourge</b> ,	And they shall <b>mock</b> him,
and to <b>crucify</b> him:	and shall <b>scourge</b> him,
and the third day he shall <b>rise</b> again.	and shall <b>spit</b> upon him,
	and shall <b>kill</b> him:
	and the third day he shall <b>rise</b> again.
<b>Matt. 20:18-19</b>	<b>Mark 10:33-34</b>

For he shall be <b>delivered</b> unto the Gentiles,
and shall be <b>mocked</b> ,
and spitefully <b>entreated</b> ,
and <b>spitted on</b> :
And they shall <b>scourge</b> him,
and put him to <b>death</b> :
and the third day he shall <b>rise</b> again.
And they understood none of these things:
and this saying was hid from them,
neither knew they the things which were spoken.
<b>Luke 18:31-33</b>

The following example from Mark 9:31-32 shows the same heptadic pattern Mark used in 8:31 and 10:33-34. Instead of a heptad on judgment, he uses a pentad to show suffering and sorrow. Jesus must also constantly suffer being misunderstood.

Matthew also quotes Jesus within pentads dealing with suffering. Matthew 17:22-23 ends with the word *sorry*, and speaks about Christ's suffering on the cross. Matthew 24:7-8 follows the same pentadic format and ends with the word *sorrows*, but it speaks about suffering at the end of the world. The same quote from NASB, which follows Nestle's text instead of the Majority Text, Greek Orthodox Text, or Textus Receptus, is missing *and earthquakes in divers places*. However, the longer reading is probably more accurate because it maintains the pentadic format.

For he taught his disciples,
and said unto them, the Son of man is delivered into the hands of men,
and they shall kill him;
and after that he is killed,
he shall rise the third day.
But they understood not that saying,
and were afraid to ask him.
<b>Mark 9:31-32</b>

And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them,	For nation shall <b>rise against</b> nation, and kingdom against kingdom:
The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:	and there shall be <b>famines</b> ,
And they shall kill him,	and <b>pestilences</b> ,
and the third day he shall be raised again.	and <b>earthquakes</b> , in divers places.
And they were exceeding <b>sorry</b> .	All these are the beginning of <b>sorrows</b> .
<b>Matt. 17:22-23</b>	<b>Matt. 24:7-8</b>

For nation shall <b>rise against</b> nation, and kingdom against kingdom:
and there shall be <b>famines</b> ,
and <b>pestilences</b> , in divers places.
All these are the beginning of <b>sorrows</b> .
<b>Matt. 24:7-8 NASB</b>

There are a number of heptads on judgment in Christ's prophecies about the end of the world. The following prophecies are based on quotations from Joel. Each of the heptads begins with a tetrad (4 parts) about the creation, followed by a triad that is joined to the tetrad to form a heptad on the last judgment. Luke adds another triad to arrive at a decad (10 parts), signifying completion. It is fascinating to observe how each writer similarly adapts the tetradic pattern found in Joel 2:10, even as they change the word order. Are they consciously adapting an undocumented traditional Hebrew genre into Greek, or are they being directed by the Holy Spirit to replicate the divine style?

All three Gospel writers appear to have combined Joel's tetrad in 2:10 with his heptads in 2:30-31 and 3:15-16. Acts 2:19-20 quotes the heptad in Joel 2:30-31 as a prophecy of Pentecost, with some slight changes. Luke is more careful to follow the pattern than the actual quotation.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the <b>sun</b> be darkened,
and the <b>moon</b> shall not give her light,
and the <b>stars</b> shall fall from heaven,
and the powers of the <b>heavens</b> shall be shaken:
And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:
and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn,
and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
<b>Matt. 24:29-30</b>

But in those days, after that tribulation, the <b>sun</b> shall be darkened,
and the <b>moon</b> shall not give her light,
And the <b>stars</b> of heaven shall fall,
and the powers that are in <b>heaven</b> shall be shaken.
And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.
And then shall he send his angels,
and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.
<b>Mark 13:24-27</b>

And there shall be signs in the <b>sun</b> ,
and in the <b>moon</b> ,
and in the <b>stars</b> ;
and upon the <b>earth</b> distress of nations, with perplexity;
the sea and the waves roaring;
Men's hearts failing them for fear,
and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.
And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up,
and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.
<b>Luke 21:25-28</b>

The <b>earth</b> shall quake before them;
the <b>heavens</b> shall tremble:
the <b>sun</b> and the <b>moon</b> shall be dark,
and the <b>stars</b> shall withdraw their shining:
<b>Joel 2:10</b>

And I will shew wonders in the <b>heavens</b>
and in the <b>earth</b> ,
<b>blood</b> ,
and <b>fire</b> ,
and pillars of <b>smoke</b> .
the <b>sun</b> shall be turned into darkness,
and the <b>moon</b> into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.
<b>Joel 2:30-31</b>

The <b>sun</b> and the <b>moon</b> shall be darkened,
and the <b>stars</b> shall withdraw their shining.
And* the LORD also shall roar out of Zion,
and utter his voice from Jerusalem;
and the <b>heavens</b> and the <b>earth</b> shall shake:
and* the LORD <i>will be</i> the hope of his people,
and the strength of the children of Israel.
<b>Joel 3:15-16</b> (*and missing from KJV)

And I will shew wonders in <b>heaven</b> above,
and signs in the <b>earth</b> beneath;
<b>blood,</b>
and <b>fire,</b>
and vapour of <b>smoke:</b>
The <b>sun</b> shall be turned into darkness,
and the <b>moon</b> into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:
<b>Acts 2:19-20</b>

The following are additional judgments by Christ that employ heptadic format. Matthew 24:37-39 compares the end of the world with conditions before the flood. In Luke 13:32-33 Christ predicts His own death in Jerusalem. Matthew 16:17-19 is Christ’s heptadic blessing on His church. John 16:16-19 explains Christ’s departure and return.

A comparison of Matt. 16:17-19 with John 16:16-19 illustrates the prevalent use of *kais* to maintain heptadic meter, but this meter is not limited to *kais*. We arrive at the pattern in Matt. 16:17-19 by setting the major *kais* in these verses to the left. The minor *kai* in the subordinate clause, “for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee...,” is not set to the left.

The polysyndeton (many ands) forming the heptadic blessing in Matt. 16:17-19 was at the same time anticipated and a bit of a surprise. Is it possible that such a configuration of *kais* was intended to direct chanting of the text? The chanting may even have changed tones depending on the correlation between meter and the subject. In any event, the pattern is evident.

Not all statements about judgment in the Bible are set in heptadic meter; rather, it is a commonly employed genre when the subject is addressed. The existence of these patterns verifies the meticulous structure and accuracy of the text we possess today. The occurrence of these motifs is more frequent and consistent in apocalyptic, visionary, and prophetic literature than in narrative and didactic portions of Scripture.

The reader is invited to consult this author’s *In Search of the Biblical Order* for further information on the preceding subject matter and related topics.

But as the days of Noe were,
so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
For as in the days that were before the flood they were <b>eating</b>
and <b>drinking,</b>
<b>marrying</b>
and <b>giving in marriage,</b> until the day that Noe entered into the ark,
And knew not until the flood came,
and took them all away;
so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
<b>Matt. 24:37-39</b>

And he said unto them, Go ye,
and tell that fox,
Behold, I cast out devils,
and I do cures today
and tomorrow,
and the third day I shall be perfected.
Nevertheless I must walk today,
and tomorrow,
and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.
<b>Luke 13:32-33</b>

And Jesus answered
and said unto him,
<b>Blessed</b> art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.
<b>And</b> I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter,
<b>and</b> upon this rock I will build my church;
<b>and</b> the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
<b>And</b> I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven:
<b>and</b> whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven:
<b>and</b> whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
<b>Matt. 16:17-19</b>

<b>A little while,</b>
and ye shall not see me:
and again,
<b>a little while,</b>
and ye shall see me,
because I go to the Father.
Then said <i>some</i> of his disciples among themselves,
What is this that he saith unto us,
<b>A little while,</b>
and ye shall not see me:
and again,
<b>a little while,</b>
and ye shall see me:
and, Because I go to the Father?
They said therefore,
What is this that he saith,
<b>A little while?</b>
we cannot tell what he saith.
Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him,
and said unto them,
Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said,
<b>A little while,</b>
and ye shall not see me:
and again,
<b>a little while,</b>
and ye shall see me?
<b>John 16:16-19</b>