

# Dr. David Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Lecture 5, Whole Book Survey Structural Relationships

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This is Dr. David Bower in his teaching on Inductive Bible Study. This is session 5, Whole Book Survey Structural Relationships.

We're ready now to talk about the central feature, really, of a book survey, and that is structure.

As I mentioned before, there are two components to structure. The first involves the identification of main units and subunits, which really has to do with the linear progression of the book, the breakdown of the book into its, of course, main units and subunits. Now, there are two ways of identifying main units and subunits.

The first is to note the major shifts of emphasis. In a book, let's say, a hypothetical book, as you're reading through, and you may note that, let's say, in this hypothetical book in 1.1 through 3.10, you have one major emphasis here that binds this material together and sets it off from that which follows. Then, again, we might say 3.11 through 9.50 may have a shift of emphasis so that this first major emphasis is replaced by a second one that binds this material together and, of course, sets it off both from the material that precedes and the material that follows.

Then, let's say here in 10.1 through 12.14, the third main unit may be bound together by a third emphasis that sets this off from the material that follows. Now, it's important to realize that when you're talking about shifts of emphasis, it's not a matter of absolute exclusion. In fact, very seldom will you have a case where you have a major emphasis here that's not mentioned at all later in the book, but it ceases in our hypothetical example here.

This first major emphasis ceases to be a major emphasis in 3.10. So, although it may or may not be mentioned later on, it's no longer an emphasis, so this emphasis binds this material together. Then, the major shift of emphasis in 3.11 through 9.50 becomes this other element here that binds this material together and, as I say, sets it off both from material that precedes and that follows. Now, when it comes to subunits, it's helpful to ask yourself the same question.

That is to say, where are the major shifts of emphasis within each of the main units? And so, we might say, in a case like this, 1.1 through 2.10 would involve within 1.1 through 3.10, within that material, you have an emphasis here in 1.1 through 2.10 and then a shift of emphasis within this first main unit, let's say in 2.11 through 3.10,

and of course, that would mark your subunit there. So, that's one way to identify main units. Now, it's actually at this point that your identification of general materials becomes significant because you would expect that if your general materials say, are biographical, you will have major shifts of emphasis in the presentation of persons.

So, if I identified my general materials as biographical, I would ask myself when I got to this point, where are the major shifts of emphasis in the presentation of persons, or maybe the leading person here? Whereas, if I identified the general materials, let's say, as ideological, I would ask, where are the major shifts in the presentation of ideas? Or, if I had identified the general materials, say, as geographical, I'd ask, where are the major shifts in the presentation of places and the like? Now, of course, everything that we do, really, in survey is tentative. This really, particularly the survey of the book, is a kind of an initiation, kind of an orientation to the book itself. And so, we're not making any observations here that are absolutely definitive or final.

In other words, we may change our mind. One of the beauties of this kind of study is that it is self-correcting. So, we may, as we go into further stages of study, correct observations that we made at the point of the survey of the book, but the self-correcting character of a survey actually comes to the fore even here because if, let's say, I identified my general materials as biographical when I come to this point, it may very well be the case that I find that the book does not break down naturally along biographical lines.

I may say, well, although I identified my general materials as biographical, actually, the book seems to divide more along geographical lines or along ideological lines. And if that's the case, that may cause me to rethink the identification of general materials and to say, well, now I see that although I originally thought that the general materials were biographical, I now see that it's more likely that they were geographical because the book really seems to move more according to geographical breakdown. Now, a second possible way of identifying the main units within a book is implications from major structural relationships.

And I haven't talked yet about major structural relationships. As a matter of fact, we're going to mention those relationships next. But just to anticipate what we're going to say, if, for example, you see one of the major structural features of the book as what we'll call causation, the movement from cause to effect, so that you say, well, 1.1 through 3.10 seems to be cause for the effect which is found in 3.11 through 12.14, the effect, that would be a case of causation.

But if you do, in fact, have causation as a major structural relationship within the book, it follows that there will be a major break between the presentation of the cause and the presentation of the effect. That's an implication, a breakdown implication from that structural relationship. So that then would cause you, in fact, to

see a major break within a book, in this case, between 1.10 through 3.10 and 3.10 and 11 on the basis of major shifts of emphasis.

And then, having done that, you look at that and say, well, it appears that 1.1 through 3.10 is the cause and 3.11 and following is the effect. Or, conversely, it may be that you'd see the causation first, that you'd see this causal movement from the cause in 1.1 through 3.10 to the effect in 3.11 and following, and say, okay, that causation there suggests a major break here. So, as I say, you may see the major break on the basis of major shifts of emphasis first, and then ask yourself, subsequently, is there a structural relationship between this first main division and the rest of the book? Identify then that cause, that structural relationship.

Or, you may see the cause of the structural relationship first, and on the basis of that, say, well, if this structural relationship is present, that implies that there must be a break here. And whichever way that goes may depend on what day it is. Some days you may see the breakdown on the basis of major shifts of emphasis, and then go ahead and inquire about the structural relationships operative between these major units that you've identified.

Or, it may be that you identify the structural relationship first and, on the basis of that, come to a decision with regard to the breakdown. Now, there are basically, well, there are a few reasons or purposes, I mentioned six, for the identification of main units and subunits. I hope you're seeing that I'm careful to identify and discuss the reasons or purposes why we do these things in observation.

What difference it makes in terms of interpretation, because we don't do these things just to do them. These tasks that we do in observation are not ends in themselves. All observation exists for the sake of interpretation.

So there's a reason for all of these things. For one thing, the identification of main units and subunits will help us to identify the main concern or focus of large or significant sections of the book. It will give us a sense of what this book is really concerned with.

The main points of concern of this book. Because what you want to do when you identify main units especially, well subunits too, is to give descriptive headings for them. If in fact you have a major emphasis here that binds this material together and sets it off from the material that follows, it's helpful to give a descriptive heading to this main unit here that reflects the major emphasis that we have.

So, as you do that, you'll actually be able to discern the major emphases in the book. In this case, in this hypothetical book where we have three major divisions, this book is concerned about this and this, this main emphasis, this main emphasis, and this

main emphasis, and of course their relationship to each other. It will also help us, as we mentioned here, to identify the overall movement of the book.

This reflects the fact that writers communicate meaning through placement, through how they place things in relation to other things within the book. Another way of putting it is that readers gain meaning or understanding through linear progression. The fact that this is discussed first and then this other passage follows this and the third passage follows them, the fact that passages are placed in that kind of sequence is part of the arsenal that a writer has to build meaning in the mind of the reader.

Scholars refer to this as a principle of primacy and subsequency. So that what we read first is significant in terms of its placement, and that we understand that in terms of what follows in sequence and the like. So, the overall movement of the book is important.

Also, it will help us to identify the relative amount of space given to various themes or issues. Now, I'm not really a stickler when it comes to how to format and how one puts these things down, but I do think it's helpful in working with main units and subunits in a book, the breakdown of the book, to use a chart. Because it gives you a visual sense of the flow or the movement of the book that aids in understanding.

And, if you draw your chart according to scale, it pertains to what we're talking about now. It gives you some idea as to the relative amount of, one might say, of space or of attention, just in terms of mass, that the writer gives to various themes or issues. In this case, you see, the relative amount of space, one might say, that the writer gives to the second major emphasis is much greater than what he gives to the first and to the last.

Now, I hesitate to use the word space because we know in ancient times that all reading was oral. And, as a matter of fact, in most of these cases, these books were experienced and encountered through hearing. So, say, someone read them out, and most people heard.

As a matter of fact, we don't know, as a matter of fact, the percentage of the population that were literate in ancient times, either in the ancient Near East, in ancient Israel, or in the first-century Greco-Roman world. There's a great range of opinions with regard to the percentage of literacy and the like, but it wasn't high. And so, most people did hear.

And, as a matter of fact, even in terms of individual reading, it was oral, it was out loud. So, as a matter of fact, there's an interesting passage. This is illustrated in the eighth chapter of Acts.

It's the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch, where, you remember, Philip the apostle, or not apostle, but the evangelist approaches the Ethiopian eunuch in his carriage. And he's, presumably, his driver is there, but he is reading to himself the Isaiah scroll. And Philip hears him reading it.

There's just, really, an offhanded comment there on the part of Luke that reflects the fact that we know otherwise, and that is that even when persons read to themselves, they read out loud. And so, when you talk about space, you know, the relative amount of space, that's true with regard to the visual presentation of this on a chart. Really, in terms of how readers experienced it, it was a relative amount of time that it took to read through it.

But, anyway, the relative mass, you might say, which we refer to as quantitative selectivity. So, it helps in that way, selectivity. Now, a further purpose, and by the way, let me see here, let me just indicate, show what this might look like in an actual book.

So, let me see if I can bring that up a little bit. This would be my survey of the Book of Amos. Incidentally, you'll note the specific materials, the chapter titles that I give there at the top.

But, in the Book of Amos, as I stand back and get a sense of the broad overarching movement, and once again, let me urge you, who are watching, to have the Bible in hand and open and look at the text itself here. But you'll notice that you have a general, what I call a general heading, in 1.1. And then, you really have a general declaration in 1.2. That statement actually encapsulates, in a nutshell, the message of the entire book. But, in 1.3 through 2.16, you have a major emphasis on judgment upon the nations in the area.

And you remember, as a matter of fact, if you have the Bibles open, you'll see that you have a repeated formula there for three transgressions and for four. And the writer, who is actually recording these prophecies of Amos, begins with those nations that are relatively geographically remote from Israel, and in each one, then, you find that the nation gets closer. So, you have a kind of increasing focus upon Israel until it ends, really, with Israel almost as a target in the middle of the ring there.

But, you have the litany of judgment upon various nations there, including Israel. Finally, Israel. But then, in 3.1 through 9.15, the focus is entirely and exclusively upon Israel.

So, once again and again, this is drawn to scale. So, you see that, in terms of quantitative selectivity, the relative amount of space that is given, you have about, well, really more than three times as much space given to the declarations of

judgment and mercy upon Israel as you do the litany of judgment upon the various nations. But, of course, it's also important to note that the reader comes to the declarations of judgment and mercy upon Israel after having read the litany of the judgment upon the various nations.

So, in terms of sequence and the building of meaning on the part of the reader, it's significant for the reader to begin with, to encounter, first of all, this litany of judgment upon the various nations, and then to read the declarations of judgment and mercy upon Israel in light of and against the backdrop of the litany of judgment upon the various nations there in chapters 1 and 2. Now, a further reason for doing, or purpose for identifying main units and subunits, is to begin to discern where a given passage fits in the scheme of the book. So, it's very important, for example, to note that in 2.6 through 16, that is the judgment upon, that passage discusses a judgment upon Israel, but as part of that cycle of judgment upon the various nations that you have throughout 1.3 through 2.16. And its placement there is significant. Or, to note that the book ends with this last subunit of the declarations of judgment and mercy upon Israel, and that is the promise of the restoration of Israel there in 9.8b through 15.

See, the point is that where a passage falls within the scheme or the program of the book may determine, in large measure, the meaning of that passage itself. Now, just imagine if you had this promise of restoration, 9.8b through 15, which is at the end of the book, if you had that passage not here, but up here at the beginning. And the difference that that would make in terms of the impact, and really the meaning of this passage.

The meaning of this passage is in large measure determined by the fact that it comes at the end of the book, that it forms a combination of the book. It comes after the declarations of guilt and judgment. It would mean if this passage itself, intact, would mean something quite different if it appeared somewhere else in the program of the book.

And then the final purpose I will mention in identifying main units and subunits is it will help us to identify turning points in the book, which are often significant in discerning the message of the book. Quite often, the most significant passage of a book has to do with passages that are placed, or that stand, at the end of one main unit and the beginning of the next. So, you would expect a significant passage here to be somewhere at the end of chapter two and the beginning of chapter three.

Now the second component of structure, beyond linear development, main units and subunits, breakdown, are what we call major structural relationships. And we want to turn to that now. And so just getting ourselves back here to the right place in the overheads.

There are really two broad types of structural relationships. The first we'll call primary relationships, and then the other type are auxiliary relationships. We'll talk about the difference between primary and auxiliary relationships when we get to auxiliary relationships.

It's important only at this point to remember that these relationships that we're talking about presently are primary relationships. Notice that we mention and identify major structural relationships. In the survey of the book, you want to identify only major relationships.

A major relationship is one that controls the book as a whole, or more than half the material within the book. Now that's important because what we're after in a book survey is the macro structure of the book. You want to avoid getting bogged down in details or focusing upon details in the book, but rather, at this point in the book survey, get a broad sense of the book's broad overarching movement.

To do that, you want to limit your observations to those structural relationships that control more than half the material within the book. Otherwise, you would be identifying relationships that are not major but minor and do not deal with the structure of the entire book, the book in the large, but only with smaller passages within the book. For example, you have a contrast between Cain and Abel in Genesis 4 and 5.

Now, that is a major contrast within the book of Genesis. Excuse me, that is a contrast within that passage. That's a contrast within that passage, but it is not a major structural relationship.

It's not a major contrast in the book of Genesis as a whole, because it controls only about two chapters of a book of 50 chapters in length. It does not control more than half the material within the entire book of Genesis, and therefore does not address really the macro structure of Genesis, and is not helpful in observing at the point of book survey. Now, the first primary relationship we'll mention is that of recurrence, which really involves the notion of repetition.

It has to do with the repetition of the same or similar terms, phrases, or other elements. An example of recurrence in a book would be, as I suggest here, the recurrence of witness or testimony in the book of Acts. I might also mention the recurrence, the constant repetition throughout more than half the book, of the Spirit, or the Holy Spirit, in the book of Acts.

You might note also, if you would think about the book of Proverbs, the recurrence of wise or wisdom in the book of Proverbs, and also, incidentally, in Proverbs, a recurrence of its opposite, of foolishness or a folly. So, what we have in the book of

Proverbs is actually a recurrence of contrast. Repeatedly, the writer contrasts wisdom and foolishness.

So, you see that you can actually have a recurrence even of another structural relationship within a book. Now, recurrence involves really three things. One is, to have recurrence, you must have, of course, frequency.

That is to say, the term or the phrase or the other element, even if it's another structural relationship, needs to appear more than once. It does not necessarily need to appear a lot of times to have recurrence as a major structural relationship, but it certainly needs to recur. But it can be a major structural relationship, as I say, even if it doesn't recur a lot of times if it meets the following two criteria as well.

To have recurrence as a major structural relationship involves not only frequency, but also distribution. That is to say, the occurrences need to be found throughout most of the book. In Matthew 5, 21 through 48, you have, within that passage, six times the phrase, you have heard that it was said, but I say to you, or the like.

So, you have frequency there six times, but you don't have distribution. That contrast, you have heard that it was said, but I say to you, is found only in Matthew 5, verses 21 through 48. It does not have distribution throughout most of the book and, therefore, is not a major recurrence.

And the third criterion that is necessary for recurrence as a major structural relationship is importance. To cite perhaps a too obvious example, you have in the book of Mark a repetition of the word and. Now, that really recurs throughout Mark.

But so what? It doesn't really carry any weight, and therefore it has very little meaning. It will not be helpful for us in ascertaining the macro structure of the book. So, frequency, distribution, and importance.

Now, recurrence is important in the book because, for one thing, it indicates emphasis. A writer tells you that something, or a theme, a word, a phrase, an element, is important, is really important. You need to pay attention to it by way of recurrence.

About the twelfth time you find a term repeated within a book, you begin to think, and this seems to be important from the point of view of the writer. I need to pay special attention to it. Also, of course, recurrence can mark development throughout the book.

So that the writer will indicate actually a kind of development or movement of that theme by way of recurrence throughout the book. An example of this would be the



fact that you have recurrence of judges in the book of Judges. And actually there is a development in those judges.

Of course, you begin with Othniel there, and Ehud. Those are the first two judges in the book of Judges, in that series of judges. And they basically are without fault.

They're presented as without warts. There's no problem, really, suggested with either one of them. But then you find that as you move into Deborah and Barak, you begin to have slight indications of deficiencies, of problems with the judges.

That becomes even more pronounced with Gideon, and more pronounced still with Jephthah. And by the time you get to the last of the judges in that series of judges, in the recurrence of judges in the book of Judges, Samson, you have a judge who is no better than the people that he is sent to deliver. And as a matter of fact, may be even somewhat worse than, may represent the very worst of what's going on in Israel at that time.

So, you have that downward progression, you see, that is suggested by the development, in this case, the downward development, in the recurrence of judges, in the book of Judges. Now, a further type of relationship that we sometimes find in books is that of contrast. Contrast involves the association of things whose differences are stressed by the writer.

The key term in contrast is but, or however, although you can have contrast used implicitly. That is to say, where you have the association of things whose differences are stressed by the writer when the writer doesn't explicitly use the word but. Nevertheless, when you have the word but, you know that that contrast is present.

And if you think you may have contrast, if you put but or however between those things, and that makes sense, then you know that contrast is a real possibility. Now, we already mentioned an example of contrast in a book, and that is that in Proverbs, we have the recurrence or repeated contrast between wisdom and foolishness. What the writer, of course, is inviting the reader to do here is to pause and ask him or herself exactly what are the differences between wisdom and foolishness and what is the meaning of those differences.

What is the full significance, as presented in this book of Proverbs, between wisdom and foolishness? Again, this should illustrate really the principle that we talked about earlier, and that is that you never have content without form. The writer is using this form, this structure of contrast, to communicate meaning.

His point is the difference between wisdom and foolishness. Now, that's an example of recurring contrast within a book. In terms of a kind of simple contrast within a book as a whole, we might cite the book of Amos, which we just looked at in terms of

the chart of its breakdown, and that is, that we noted that in most of the book running from 1:2 through 9:8a, you have imminent judgment and destruction, which then is contrasted to that last passage in the book, ultimate restoration and glory of Israel.

So, judgment, which dominates the book, 1:2 through 9:8a, is contrasted with the promise of restoration in 9:8b through 15. Again, the writer wants us to consider what exactly is involved in the differences between God relating to His people in terms of judgment, near, and imminent judgment, and the difference between that and what God will do ultimately for His people, Israel, in terms of restoration. Now, a further type of, and of course, we mentioned another example here, again, a repeated contrast in the book of Amos between Haman, Haman's family, and really the enemies of the Jews, versus Esther and Mordecai and the Jews in general, in the book of Esther.

Again, the message of the book of Esther is carried along by this contrast, by the difference, and really to understand in depth the meaning of the book, the message of the book of Esther, we need really to think seriously and consider seriously the meaning of the differences between Haman, his family, the enemies of Jews on the one hand, and Esther, Mordecai, and the Jews on the other hand. Well, a further type of relationship that we might mention is, let me see here, that of comparison, which involves the association of things whose similarities are stressed by the writer. You notice in Philippians, again, I think examples are very helpful here.

In the book of Philippians, if you have it before you and have a chance to look at it, or if you remember it, you'll remember that Paul compares his expectations for the readers, really the exhortations and commands that he gives to his readers, with persons who serve as models for them. So, he'll give exhortations and then say, really, I'm urging you to be like these models that I am describing here. The model of Jesus, of course, in 2:1-11, is that great famous kenosis passage, the emptying passage.

The model of Timothy in 2:19-24, Epaphroditus in 2:21-30, actually that should be 2:25-30, and of Paul, *passim* really means throughout. Throughout, Paul presents himself as a model in terms of, in comparison with what he wants his readers to be and to do. Of course, in terms of smaller units of material, the parables serve as an example of comparison.

The kingdom of heaven is like. So, you have an explicit there, an explicit comparison between the kingdom of heaven and the story of the parable in each case. Incidentally, this suggests that the key terms for comparison are as or like.

Although, you can have a comparison implicitly. When those key terms do not explicitly appear, even if the term is absent, you can have an association of things

whose similarities are stressed by the writer. A further type of relationship, a further relationship is that of climax, which is a movement toward a high point of combination.

We give here as an example the book of Daniel, where in the book of Daniel, the struggle of God and God's people throughout history, which is really found in chapters 1-11, comes to a high point of combination, a climax in the description of the victory and resurrection of the righteous, along with the eternal blessings for those who endure in chapter 12. Of course, a number of examples of climax could be given. The book of Exodus, as we mentioned earlier, comes to a climax in the worship of Yahweh at the Tabernacle on Sinai in chapter 40.

The whole book is moving toward a high point of combination where God really does what he said he would do back in chapter 3, and that is that he would bring the people to this place so that they will worship me, he says, on this mountain. And in chapter 40, the tabernacle is completed, the Shekinah glory of God descends upon the tabernacle, and the people do in fact worship Yahweh there on Sinai. The whole book of Exodus is moving toward that high point of combination.

Each of the gospels, of course, comes to a climax, is structured according to a climax, and it's quite interesting that the four gospels really reach a climax in a slightly different way in each case, which suggests really the distinctive emphasis of each of the gospels. In the gospel of Mark, the climax is really with a cross. There is relatively little said at the end of Mark with regard to the resurrection.

That's especially the case, of course, if one recognizes that the gospel of Mark, as Mark wrote it, ends at 16.8. 16.9 through 20 is the so-called long ending of Mark, which was not produced by Mark. It's not part of the original gospel of Mark but was added by a later scribe, probably at the beginning of the second century, in order to round out a book that, in his judgment, ended all too abruptly. But the book as Mark composed it, at least as we have to assume that he composed it, ends at 16.8, and really, there's little attention given to the resurrection there.

It's not that he denies the resurrection by any means, that's not the case, nor that the resurrection is unimportant, but in terms of the structure of the book, the book comes to a high point of culmination in the crucifixion, in the death of Jesus. In Matthew, though, by way of different emphasis, the ultimate climax of the book comes with the resurrection appearance, the final resurrection appearance of Jesus, the only resurrection appearance of Jesus to his disciples, in the so-called Great Commission in 28.16 through 20. In the gospel of Luke, and by the way, we might mention here, that Matthew does not have an account of the ascension.

There is no mention of ascension in Matthew's gospel. When you go to Luke, though, you find that Luke comes to, the gospel of Luke, comes to a high point of

culmination, a climax, in the ascension. So the ascension is really the ultimate, the primary thing in Luke's thinking.

And really, in his theology, in some ways. In the gospel, of course, the gospel of John comes to a high point of culmination in the resurrection. And really, finally, in the statement of purpose that is linked to and is at the end of the resurrection narrative in John's gospel.

This is John chapter 20, verses 30 and 31. Now, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not mentioned or written in this book. But these things are written in order that you may believe that Jesus is a Christ, the Son of God, and believing might have life in his name.

So, you notice, as I say, that each of the gospels comes to a climax, really in the cross and resurrection, but within the cross-resurrection matrix in somewhat different ways. And that marks, as I say, the distinctive concerns and emphases of the four gospels. Now, of course, when you have a climax, it's important to probe exactly how the climactic passage actually culminates what you have in the preceding material.

And that is to say, how the fact that this book comes to a climax here in this passage actually illumines passages earlier in the book. Because those passages earlier in the book are heading towards and are leading up to the climactic passage. So, the climax actually illumines the meaning of earlier passages.

And obviously, earlier passages illumine the meaning of the climax. Because the climax is a climax precisely because it builds and culminates those earlier passages. A further relationship we might mention is that of cruciality, which actually employs a device of the pivot.

This involves actually a radical reversal or change of direction because of the pivot. Now, that's why we say cruciality involves a pivot, a pivotal passage or event that produces a radical reversal or complete change of direction. So, what we mean by cruciality here is not simply a shift of emphasis.

But more than that, it involves a radical reversal. So that which comes after the pivot actually undoes that which precedes the pivot because of the pivot passage. Now, in this example from the book of Esther, what we have in chapters 1 through 4 is a commitment to and a movement towards destroying Mordecai and the Jews.

Everything is moving in that direction. Until you get to the pivot passage in chapters 5 and 6, which is Queen Esther's appeal to King Ahasuerus. And on the basis of Esther's appeal, you have a radical reversal.

So rather than Mordecai and the Jews being destroyed by their enemies, it's actually the enemies of the Jews who are destroyed by Mordecai and the Jews. And the Jews, far from being destroyed, are actually exalted there in the second half of the book. All because of this pivot.

So, you notice you have a radical reversal, an undoing of that which precedes a pivot because of the pivot itself. Of course, this relates to perhaps the most famous line in the book of Esther. Who knows whether you'd have not appeared for a time such as this?

Esther's role, you see, in this radical reversal. Now, I think it's clear from this example how important, again, recognizing, observing, this structural relationship is to understanding the book of Esther. The message of the book of Esther.

The claim of the book of Esther. And also, in interpreting even individual passages in the book of Esther. By recognizing this cruciality in Esther, if you're working with interpreting any passage in the book of Esther, you want to ask, how does that passage fit in with and contribute to this overarching program? And how does the role, the function of that passage in this cruciality illumine the meaning of that passage itself? Now, this example from Esther actually represents what we might call positive cruciality.

Things begin badly and then turn around in a positive direction. An example from, and this, of course, is found, this second example, it really has to do not with a major relationship within a book, but it's found only in a portion within the book. But it is helpful in terms of illustrating what's involved in the relationship.

And that is the account of creation and fall in Genesis 1 through 3. Where you have, of course, in the passage, particularly in the second creation account in Genesis 2 and 3, the passage begins with innocence, the enjoyment of the garden, and fellowship with God. And then you have the sin of Adam and Eve of eating the forbidden fruit, which is the pivot, involves a radical reversal away from innocence, enjoyment of the garden, fellowship with God, towards guilt, shame, expulsion from the garden, judgment, broken relationship with God. Now, you note that implicit within cruciality is a recurrence of causation.

This is sometimes more obvious than in others, but there is typically a causal movement from the material that precedes the pivot to the pivot passage. This is clearly seen in the example from Esther, where the movement to destroy Mordecai and the Jews causes or leads to, results in, Esther's appeal to King Ahasuerus. In cruciality, though, there is an even clearer causal movement from the pivot passage to that which follows the pivot passage.

Here, of course, it is clear that Esther's appeal to King Ahasuerus is a cause for the destruction of the Jews' enemies and the exaltation of Mordecai and the Jews. Okay, a further type of relationship is particularization, which really involves a movement from general to particular. This can actually take various forms, but let me just mention a couple of them.

You can have what we might refer to as ideological or logical particularization. Well, let me begin with, you can have what we might refer to as identificational particularization. We have this when a writer begins with a heading, and a general heading that sets forth the essential character of the rest of the book.

An example of this would be, I'll give a couple of examples I give an example from Nahum 1.1, which is a decent example here but which begins an oracle concerning Nineveh, the book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh. So, you note that he describes this book in terms of its essential character as book of the vision so that the particulars that follow in Nahum 1:2 through following are to be understood according to the general heading of the book of the vision. And apparently, the notion of vision here is extremely significant as a general heading, according to which to understand the rest of the book of Nahum.

Another example would be, of course, the Song of Solomon. The Song of Songs, which are Solomons. So, that book begins with a general heading, Song of Songs.

And that really helps us to understand then that we are to read the rest of the book according to the general heading or the general character of Song of Songs, whatever that might mean. You can also have identificational, or I should say, logical particularization or ideological particularization. You have this when the writer begins with a general statement, essentially a thesis.

The main idea, the main theme that the writer wants to get across, is a kind of general thesis, with the rest of the book developing or unpacking that thesis. A good example of this kind of particularization is found in Proverbs. Proverbs 1:7, and this does pertain to the entire book of Proverbs.

I at least consider Proverbs 1:7 to be a general heading, a general statement, I should say, a general statement for the rest of the book. In this one verse, you have the essential claim, the essential meaning, the essential message of the book of Proverbs, and all the individual Proverbs unpack, specify, develop, particularize, and give particular content to this general thesis. Proverbs 1.7, of course, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Fools despise wisdom and instruction. Incidentally, I think that recognizing that verse as a general statement in the book of Proverbs is quite important for understanding what you have in many of the individual Proverbs because many of the Proverbs do

not mention the Lord at all. They seem to be just good advice with regard to life, almost secular.

But the fact that they are placed within the book, a book that is structured according to verse 1:7 as a general heading, means that even in those Proverbs where the Lord is not explicitly mentioned, we are to read them as developing this theme here in 1:7, the fear of Yahweh. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Now, you can also have, in addition to logical and mentioned, what we call ideological here, or identificational particularization, you can also have historical particularization.

We have this when a writer begins by describing a historical period or historical epoch in very general terms, in terms of its general character, and then he goes ahead and develops that historical period or historical event in detail. I think a good example here is the 105th Psalm. Psalm 105, especially 105 verse 5. Remember the wonderful works that Yahweh has done, His miracles, and the judgments He uttered.

See that really describes the history of God's dealings with Israel in a general way. That history is described as the wonderful works that the Lord has done, His miracles and the judgments He uttered, and then the rest of the Psalm, beginning in 105 verse 7 all the way through verse 45, talks about specific events, one event after the other in Israel's history up to the time of the psalmist, which goes ahead and unpack or particularize that general way of describing the history of Israel as a whole. So that if you're going to preach or teach on Psalm 105.5, remember the wonderful works that He has done, His miracles, and the judgments He uttered, you'll want to use the rest of the particulars of that history that, as I say, are presented in verses 7 and following.

The particulars will give specific content to what He means by the wonderful works that Yahweh has done, His miracles, and the judgment that He has uttered. He invites us to interpret the general statement in light of the particulars that follow. On the other hand, if you're going to work with the interpretation of passages within verses 7 through 45, these individual events that are recounted here, you want to interpret those individual events here in this Psalm in light of the general description in verse 5. Now, you can also have geographical particularization.

We have this when the writer begins by describing a broad general geographical area, and then he goes ahead and focuses; having done that, he'll go ahead and focus upon a particular place, a specific place within that broad geographical area with which he began. The book of Genesis is helpful in this regard and is a good example in this regard. Almost certainly, the book of Genesis breaks is a major breakpoint between chapters 11 and 12.

In chapters 1 through 11, we have an emphasis upon the cosmos as a whole, and at least upon the whole earth. Now, you do, of course, have some, you really have, well actually, you have very little reference to specific places in chapters 1 through 11. The focus throughout chapters 1 through 11 is upon the whole earth.

But you'll notice in chapters 12 through 50 the emphasis shifts. No longer is the focus upon the whole earth, but now he narrows or particularizes the focus from the earth to one particular place on the earth, and that is the land of Canaan. This, of course, is highly significant because the notion of land, and especially the land of Canaan, is central to covenant and to covenant theology in the Old Testament, and certainly within the book of Genesis.

And so, by structuring the book this way, the writer indicates that the significance of the land of Canaan is to be seen in terms of God's purposes and God's plan for the entire earth. Now, you can also have, beyond geographical particularization and identificational, logical particularization, types historical, you can also have biographical particularization. We have this when the writer begins by describing a larger or broader group of people and then focuses his attention on one person or one subgroup within that larger group of people.

Now, it so happens that the book of Genesis offers a good example of biographical particularization as well because, in chapters 1 through 12, the focus is on the human race as a whole. It's true, of course, that you do have certain people mentioned there. Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Seth, and, to some extent, Noah.

But, insofar as those individuals are described, they actually represent, their function is to represent what's going on with the human race as a whole. The focus is really upon the human race as a whole in chapters 1 through 11, but in chapters 12 through 50, the focus narrows to one person, one man, and his family, of course, Abraham. Well, in chapter 12, he's, at that point, Abram, so Abram or Abraham, and his family.

Now, of course, this is very significant because this has to do with the people of Israel. And again, the particularization in the structure of Genesis is theologically significant because it indicates the significance of, well, it indicates a couple of things. One is that the family of Abraham, and especially the family of Jacob, the people of Israel, have a special role to play in relation to humanity as a whole.

This is not simply another man. This is not simply another nation. Israel has a unique role to play, a special role to play, in the world.

But it does have a role to play in relation to the world, so that covenant is not directed to Israel, in a sense, as an end in itself, but to Israel as part of the human race, suggesting then that the purpose of the covenant is for the sake of humanity as



a whole. The purpose of the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the sons of Jacob, the people of Israel, pertains to God's plan and purpose for humanity as a whole, even as the land of Canaan. The covenant land of Canaan has significance in terms of God's plan and purpose for the whole earth, we might even say, for the whole cosmos.

Now, generalization involves the same two components as particularization, only in reverse sequence. Whereas particularization involves a movement from general to particular, generalization involves a movement from particular to general. If you're inclined to get confused between particularization and generalization, remember that the relationship is named for the last thing.

So that particularization is a movement from general to particular. Whereas generalization is a movement from particular to general. And, of course, as you might expect, you have the same specific types of generalization as you had particularization.

You can have, again, identificational generalization, where the essential character of the book is found not at the beginning of the book, as we saw, say, with Song of Solomon or with Nahum, not at the beginning of the book, but at the end of the book. A really very good example of identificational generalization, where the essence of the book, the essential character of the book, is indicated at the end, is the Book of Hebrews. And you remember, the Book of Hebrews ends at, practically ends at 1322, where the writer says, I implore you, bear with my word of exhortation, so that the writer says that the essential character of this whole book is, in Greek, ὁ λόγος τῆς Παρακλήσεως, word of exhortation.

And increasingly, scholars who work with the Book of Hebrews take that seriously in terms of indicating the essential character of the Book of Hebrews, and that is that Hebrews is primarily exhortation. That is to say, it has especially to do with the exhortations, with the urgings, with the commands, that the writer gives in the Book of Hebrews, suggesting then that the great Christological exposition, the great theological argument with regard to Christ, and especially Christ's high priesthood and the like, really exists for the sake of that which is most significant in the Book of Hebrews, and that is the Christian lifestyle that is to grow out of that, and is suggested by the blocks of exhortations or commands. Christian instruction that we have throughout the book.

You can also have a kind of logical generalization where the thesis, the message, and the encapsulation of the whole message of the book are found not at the beginning of the book but at the end of the book. And I think a good example of this is actually the last verse, practically, of the Book of Romans, namely Romans 16, 25 through 26. Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for

long ages, but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations according to the command of the eternal God to bring about the obedience of faith.

To the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ, amen. Now that's clearly, of course, a doxology, but it's a doxology that includes, that contains this general statement. And arguably, the whole message of the book of Romans, as I say, is encapsulated in this one statement.

The rest of the book of Romans unpacks really this statement. To him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations according to the command of the eternal God to bring about the obedience of faith. An extremely significant term within that book.

As a matter of fact, that very phrase you might remember appears also in the first chapter of Romans, the obedience of faith. So that you have a kind of bracket there as well, now you can also have, of course, what we might refer to as biographical generalization.

And we talked about that already in relation to Genesis, as well as geographical generalization. We mentioned that in relation to Genesis as well. But you can also have, and we mentioned another example, like Psalm 5 moves from the description of one righteous man, the psalmist, in verses 10, to the description of righteous persons in general, in verses 11 and 12 and the like.

But also, in the book of Acts, you have a generalization, which is actually suggested by the statement in 1:8, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. And so, you'll note that the book of Acts moves in terms of geographical generalization, in that in chapters 1 through 7, you have the witness in Jerusalem. And then, in chapters 8 through 12, the witness is expanded not only to Jerusalem but also to all Judea and Samaria.

Now, it's important to note that in chapters 8 through 12, Luke is careful to indicate within these chapters that the gospel continues to be proclaimed in Jerusalem. Now, that's very significant because if he had not made that clear, you'd have the gospel being proclaimed from one particular place to another particular place. But he wants to emphasize, even in chapters 8 through 12, that the witness continues to be made in Jerusalem.

So, in chapters 1 through 7, in Jerusalem, and then chapters 8 through 12, in Jerusalem and beyond that also, all Judea and Samaria. And then, of course, in

chapters 13 through 28, to the ends of the earth. But again, Luke is careful here to indicate that although the emphasis here is that the witness of the gospel is expanding to areas beyond Jerusalem and Judea, even here, he notes he punctuates these chapters with references to continuing witness in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria as well, so that you have a true broadening out geographically of the witness.

And, of course, this is one of the main claims that the writer of Acts, Luke, wants to make here. Clearly, this broadening geographical expansion and this geographical generalization are central to the message of the entire book of Acts. But it's not important only; this recognition, this observation of this relationship is important not only in terms of understanding the program of the entire book but once again, in terms of interpreting individual passages within the book.

So that in interpreting any passage within the book of Acts, you'll want to ask yourself, where does it fit in this broadening geographical witness? And how does its role within the broadening geographical witness in the book in the large actually illumine the meaning of this passage itself? This is a good place actually to pause. And so, we'll pause here and transition from one segment here to the next.

This is Dr. David Bower in his teaching on Inductive Bible Study. This is session 5, Whole Book Survey Structural Relationships.