

## **Dr. Knut Heim, Proverb, Lecture 10, Proverbs 10 - 5 Variants Clusters**

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Welcome to lecture 10 on the biblical Book of Proverbs. Until now, I have been teaching we have been focusing mainly on chapters 1 to 9 of Proverbs, and then in the last two lectures we have been looking at a theme that stretched through the whole of the book, namely the theme of prosperity teaching in the Book of Proverbs, how to become financially well-off. In this lecture, I want to begin to look at the different kinds of materials, especially in chapters 10 to 29 of Proverbs, where we now have a different kind of arrangement of the materials.

In chapters 1 to 9, we had 10 lectures interspersed with several speeches by Lady Wisdom, the so-called wisdom interludes. In chapters 10 to 29, we have largely sequences of independent grammatically and syntactically independent sayings that are self-contained within themselves and that are usually not grammatically or syntactically connected or related with the surrounding verses before and after. A number of years ago, I think it was in 2013, when I published a book, that turned out rather hefty, on variant repetitions in the Book of Proverbs.

In this particular lecture, I want to look at a section in this book that helps us to understand the nature of these individual proverbs in, I believe, in a fresh way and in a very interesting and exciting way that helps us to read these materials with imagination and also with clear attention to detail. So, what I want to do is showcase an imaginative reading of these proverbial sayings materials as opposed to the lecture materials that we have been looking at so far. The way I will do this is by highlighting a number of issues discussed in Chapter 6 of my book where I am particularly looking at a range of proverbs that have to do with diligence.

Namely, Proverbs 6, verse 8, Proverbs 30, verse 25, and Proverbs 10, verse 5. The reason why I have chosen these is because chapter 10, verse 5, is part of the opening cluster of verses at the very beginning of this new collection of Proverbs of Solomon, as we are told in Chapter 10, verse 1. I believe that verse 5 is part of a deliberate editorial strategy to introduce these individual sayings as a fresh collection and to help us in how to read these verses that are independent, self-contained sayings. Nonetheless, to read them as parts of small groupings, I call them proverbial clusters, usually of between 3 and 10 verses or so, mostly between 5 and 8 verses. There are no less than seven different variant repetitions.

Oh, I should probably say something also about variant repetitions. So, in addition to the Proverbs in Chapter 10, verse 5, we will look at 6, 8, and 3, 25 because the three statements in these three verses are very similar. They seem to be what I call variant repetitions of one another.

They are similar enough to be recognized as variants of each other and as repetitions, but they are also different in characteristic ways from one another. And in this section, we are going to look at that, and we will look at variant repetitions and how they are different and similar and so on, but with a view to understanding the editorial function and the reading strategies that we need for exploring the materials in Chapter 10 to 29. So, let me read them from the chapter.

There are no less than seven different variant repetitions, including six of the 19 verses of Chapter 6, a proportion of 31.6%. All of the first half verse in Chapter 6, verse 8 is repeated in the second half verse of Chapter 30, verse 25, with a change from singular to plural on the initial verb forms and the suffix forms of the final nouns. Let me read these verses to you. It, that is the aunt, prepares its food in summer and gathers its provisions during harvest, 6, 8. The aunts are a people without strength, yet they prepare their food in summer.

So, both of these statements have to do with aunts and them preparing food in summer, but in 6.8a, it's one aunt, and in 30.25b, it's several aunts. I also want to compare this with 10, verse 5, where we also have someone preparing food in summer, but this one is not an aunt, but a son. Let me read.

A son who gathers in summer is prudent, but a son who sleeps in harvest brings shame. And we can see here in this variant repetition interactions that, of course, the illustrations of the aunt's preparing food in summer are really illustrations and examples, models, for human beings, for young men, and sons, to act in a similar way, to be diligent. In Proverbs, Chapter 6, verse 8, every item in the first half verse has a corresponding term in the second.

Here, then, is an example in which the traditional categories of strict parallelism seem to apply. The verse appears to be an example of synonymous parallelism. In the English translation, the corresponding elements look like this.

It prepares. It gathers. In summer. In harvest. Its food. Its provisions.

Parallelism has a counterpart. A closer comparison of the corresponding items reveals, however, that the category synonymous is not especially helpful. The only items that are synonymous in the general sense are in the last set of the lists, its food and its provisions.

While interpreters who work from the premises of precise parallelism may have seen this as a particularly well-balanced example of parallelism, few have considered the precise nature of the parallel relationships between the individual items. However, the nature of the other two sets listed above can be described more precisely than

by using the rough and ready designation synonymous. Summer and harvest are comparable in that they both describe a season in the year.

While the first focuses on the meteorological differences between the seasons, however, the second focuses on the agricultural relevance of the calendar. They are not synonymous, for summer simply refers to one season in the year without a particular focus. Aspects of these seasons that spring to mind are meteorological characteristics, a pleasant time for going on travels, and enjoying the evening breeze at the end of the day.

The time for weeding and watering the growing crops. The time for preparing the field and with some crops for sowing the seed for the next agricultural cycle. The latter aspects, of course, are the characteristics that are relevant here and they are brought into focus through the word prepare.

By contrast, the word harvest centers the attention on one particular agricultural aspect of the season. It is the time for reaping the fruit of one's labor and gathering the provisions necessary for the survival of the community. Harvest, then, corresponds to summer without being synonymous or antithetical.

The two terms are complementary in that harvest adds greater precision to the term summer. Knowledge of the climate and the agricultural cycle in Israel will demonstrate how. Richard Clifford's summary in his commentary provides the necessary information, and I quote, Palestine has only two seasons, the dry summer in April to September and the rainy winter from October to March.

Rain and snow are virtually unknown in summer. Harvest time can be barley harvest in April to May or wheat harvest four weeks later, or the fruit harvest, including olives and grapes, in late summer and early fall, as in Isaiah 16, verse 9, end quote. The main point to glean from this information is that harvest in Israel falls into three separate periods, all during the summer months.

This means that summer and harvest overlap in meaning with regard to some aspects, but have different foci with regard to the agricultural enterprise. The choice of the designation harvest to refer to the season focuses on the significance of summer as that season for making the necessary preparations to ensure a plentiful harvest. Similarly, the words prepare and gather are complementary rather than synonymous.

The direct opposite of together would be to scatter. The two terms refer to sowing and reaping, the activities that together describe the rhythm of the agricultural enterprise. To prepare food, however, is a more generic reference that can refer to the provisional activities of ants congruent with the metaphor.

With regard to humans, it can also refer to a wider range of activities, such as plowing the field, maintaining irrigation systems, weeding, and treating pests and diseases. The point of all this is that the reader or listener is not simply urged to sow, that is, to do the absolute minimum to get by. Even the sluggers knows there is no reaping without sowing.

Rather, young men in a hurry are encouraged not to cut corners on the proper background work so that true success may be ensured. I turn now to Proverbs 30, verse 25. There are two ways to analyze the parallelism here.

The first, imposing the traditional category of antithetical parallelism, would categorize the expression of a people without strength and gathering their food in summer as antithetical in a loose sense. The equivalence would then be, in English translation, ants but no equivalent, and a people without strength and who gather their food in summer. It is doubtful, if we really take these as the correspondences, that they can really be called parallel.

Admittedly, there is a certain amount of correspondence because the two statements, a people without strength and they gather their food in summer, contrast in some way with one another. But this only comes into focus on the contextual level of the surrounding verses. The verse on its own is not constituted by parallelism.

Rather, the parallelism in chapter 30, verse 25, works on the inter- and translinear levels of the surrounding verses, verses 24 to 28. I will consider this in a few minutes in more detail when I look at the wider context of both of these sayings. I now turn to Proverbs 10, verse 5. I include it here for comparison because it has some significant similarities with the other two variants in this set, although it is not, strictly speaking, a variant repetition.

The verse used to be considered an antithetical parallelism. Two sets of these would then have been considered antonyms, and one set of these would have been synonymous, according to this traditional paradigm. The three sets of corresponding expressions are gathered, as opposed to sleep, in summer, in comparison with during harvest, and competent son, in contrast with a disgraceful son.

We begin with some comments on together and to sleep. As mentioned above in the discussion of 6.8, the antonym, or to be more precise, the opposite of together is to scatter. These two terms refer to sowing and reaping, the activities that together describe the rhythm of the agricultural enterprise.

Therefore, to sleep is clearly not a direct antonym of together. Nonetheless, the first set of terms contrasts with one another on the level of the whole phrase, since sleep implies that the sun in the second half of the verse does not gather in harvest. But

the opposition is imprecise, and this imprecision conveys, I believe, a surplus of information.

Sleep implies more than the absence of industrious activity, but hints at laziness and wrong priorities. Some comments on summer and harvest may shed further light on these verses. As mentioned earlier, knowledge of the relationship between climate and the agricultural cycle in Israel is helpful for the interpretation of these verses.

For details, I remind you of what Clifford said in the quotation I shared earlier. Harvest in Israel falls in two to three separate periods during the summer months. This does not mean that the time of summer is the same as the period of harvest, but it does mean that harvest time is during summertime.

The fact that chapter 10, verse 5 speaks of gathering in summer, then, means that in contrast to chapter 6, verse 8, the focus is on summer as being the time of harvest, not all the other activities as well. It is worth pointing out that this focus is not created through the correspondence between summer and harvest on the level of parallelism, but through the combination of summer with the verb together. Similarly, the two terms competent son and disgraceful son are not antonyms.

The antonym of competent would be incompetent, not disgraceful. Conversely, the antonym of disgraceful would be honorable, not competent. The imprecise nature of the opposition between the two terms is, however, not a flaw in the parallelism.

Rather, it enhances the amount of information that the poetic line can convey, because the imprecise contrasts imply their respective antonyms in the opposite half-line. The competent son is, by implication from chapter 10, 5b, also an honorable son. And the disgraceful son is, by implication, also an incompetent son.

I now turn to the contexts of Proverbs chapter 6, 8 and Proverbs 30, 25. Proverbs 6, 8 belongs to a longer unit, verses 6 to 11. Structured around the opening appeal, go to the aunt, in the singular, you sluggard, consider her ways and wise up, the passage falls into two distinct but connected subunits on the aunt's behavior and its consequences, verses 6 to 8, and the sluggard's behavior and its consequences, in verses 9 to 11.

The subject of the verbs in 6, 8 is the aunt, a collective singular, in chapter 6, verse 6, which also serves as the antecedent for the singular of the expression her food. Consequently, the features that distinguish 6, 8 from its counterpart in 3, 25 are conditioned by the context. Similarly, the second half-verse is influenced by the pragmatic impact that the poet-editor wanted to achieve.

This poetic unit urges the pupil to learn diligence by contemplating the aunt's example of self-motivated foresight and diligence, and her implicit self-sufficiency.

Her foresight, diligence, and self-sufficiency are emphasized and illustrated through the parallelism in 6, 8, where the two half-lines mirror each other but also complement each other through describing the entire agricultural cycle for humans through the enterprise of the model aunt. This is contrasted with the vulnerability and poverty that threaten the sluggard.

Consequently, the shape of the second half-verse in 6, 8, very different from its counterpart in 3, 25, is also conditioned by the context. The unit is a locus for variant repetition because half of its verses occur elsewhere. Besides 6, 8a, which reappears in 30, 25b, an entire quadrant of four half-lines reappears in Proverbs 24, 33-34.

As already mentioned above, or earlier, the parallelism in chapter 30, verse 25, works on the inter- and translinear levels of the surrounding verses 24-28 in chapter 30. Here is a translation of the five verses. Four things on earth are small, yet they are exceedingly wise.

The ants are a people without strength, yet they provide their food in summer. The badgers are people without power, yet they make their homes in the rocks. The locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank.

The lizard can be grasped in the hand, yet it is found in king's palaces. The five verses together form a numerical saying, and the parallel elements relate from line to line. After the introductory line in verse 24a, there are four other parallel statements in the first half-lines of verses 25-28.

Four things on earth are small. The ants, the badgers, the locusts, the lizard. The second half-lines in the four verses also contain parallel lines.

After the introductory line in verse 24b, there are four other parallel statements. They are exceedingly wise. They provide food in the summer.

They make their homes in the rocks. All of them march in ranks. It is found in king's palaces.

The connection between the various half-lines is strong. There is inter-linear parallelism from one line to the next, and trans-linear parallelism across the verses. The whole of 30-25b is equivalent to the semantic value of the single word strength in 30-25a.

This amounts to a parallelism that traditionally would have been described as synthetic. But it can now be seen to be a parallelism in which the second half-line expands on but one word, the last one, in the first half-line. This analysis results in both a reassessment of the impact of parallelism in this verse and an appreciation for the poetic strategy of highlighting the communicative intent of the verse and its

surrounding context to emphasize strength, which is acquired through diligence and foresight in spite of these strong beings being rather small, shaped to conform with the requirements of the numerical saying, with its opening line, four things on earth are small, yet they are exceedingly wise.

The verse speaks of ants in the plural, which occasioned the plural verb form and plural pronoun suffix that distinguished it from its variant counterpart in 6-8a. Again, the features that distinguish 6-8a from its counterpart in 30-25b are conditioned by the context. More significantly, the radically different second half-verse is shaped more to conform to the second half-lines in the surrounding verses than to conform to the parallel in the verse itself.

As the translinear parallelisms, which we've just explored, show. Consequently, the second half-verse is influenced by the pragmatic impact that the poet-editor wanted to have. And now turn to chapter 10, verse 5, our third proverb in this sequence.

This is the final verse in a proverbial cluster. Chapters 10, 1-5, that follow immediately after the editorial title Proverbs of Solomon to the Second Major Collection in 10.1-22.16 in the Book of Proverbs. Thus, it may serve as an introduction to the collection similar to the exodia of the lectures in Proverbs 1-9 we have discussed earlier.

This suggestion gains weight especially because there is a clustering of variant repetitions at the beginning of the new collections. Proverbs 10.1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 15. This amounts to 53% of the first 15 verses in Proverbs 10.

If this is correct, the shape of 10.5, particularly the way in which it differs from 6.8, may also have been influenced by the context. This leads to a second conclusion. Proverbs 10.5 and the particular arrangement in which it is now found is the result of the same editorial strategy that shaped the introductory materials in the lectures of Proverbs 1-9.

There is an overarching editorial strategy that deliberately employs variant repetitions across the book. And so we see a larger plan emerging. And this also suggests that 10.1-5 belongs to the latest stages of the book's formation, linking the material of Proverbs 10-31 with the introductory collection of chapters 1-9.

The rationale for these suggestions is now presented. The nature of this material and the second collection is different from chapters 1-9, as we have already noted, with almost all verses consisting of self-contained proverbs. Therefore, the arrangement of the verses is different from most of the material in chapters 1-9.

Groups of proverbs, such as 10.1-5, are linked through various kinds of repetitions, especially catchword repetitions, rather than overt syntactic, syntactic or

grammatical phenomena. Not surprisingly, therefore, there is then neither a consensus on whether conscious groupings of this sort exist or not, nor on what significance such groupings may have for the interpretation of the individual proverbs if their existence were granted. I have discussed these matters in some depth in a monograph published in 2001 entitled *Like Grapes of Gold Set in Silver*.

Two recent commentaries on the Book of Proverbs, namely by Trempe Longman and Bruce Waltke, represent the two opposite sides of the debate. Longman, in his commentary from 2006, argued against coherent groupings. I will mention his three arguments most relevant to the present discussion.

A fourth argument I will discuss a little in a short while. The first is, I quote, there are many near and completely identical proverbs in the book. He refers to what I am calling variant repetitions.

For Longman, quote, it seems logical that proverbs were added over time, either individually or in groups. Longman's assumption then, of course, is that these were added randomly, whereas I am arguing they were added deliberately as an editorial strategy for the whole book. The second and third arguments are encapsulated in a single sentence from Longman.

I quote, the criteria of association are so broad and varied that different scholars will continue to come up with different units. End quote. The second objection is that the criteria for association are so broad that groupings can be imposed on just about any material, however disjointed.

The third argument is that scholars who favor deliberate groupings, such as, for example, Bruce Waltke and myself, continue to disagree about the exact delimitations of the arrangements, which suggests that either the arrangements do not exist or they cannot be defined decisively with the methods usually employed by the likes of Waltke and myself. On the basis of these and other less relevant arguments, Longman concluded that I quote, we should go back to interpreting the proverbs as randomly structured. End quote.

And he then continued to interpret the materials in Proverbs 10 to 31 in a verse-by-verse manner. Longman is aware that his refusal to accept deliberate groupings is, at present, a minority view. I quote, In this I depart from other recent commentaries that I feel have imposed, rather than discovered, structuring devices on these chapters.

I would like to respond to these three arguments one by one. First, regarding the argument about the random addition of variant repetitions. In this volume here, on 680 pages of it, I have demonstrated that the addition of variants was far from random in the vast majority of cases.



Second, regarding the argument that the criteria of association are too broad, I argue that the criteria need to be broad to do justice to the material under investigation. This is, on the one hand, because groups of adjacent proverbs are associated through so many different methods, and, on the other hand, is because the associations are relatively loose. Thirdly, the argument that there is no consensus about the exact delimitation of many groupings appears to be convincing, until, of course, we remember that this is true for most, if not all, biblical texts, including those for which structural arrangements are generally accepted.

So, if we were to look at any discussion of any biblical book, whether that's in the Letter to the Romans, in the New Testament, or the Book of Isaiah, on almost any given paragraph, there will be X number of different scholars who will propose a slightly different structural arrangement. So, if this is true for very obviously, clearly, contextually structured passages, like the very finely honed Letters of Paul in the New Testament, why can we not accept the same for the materials in Proverbs? Finally, I think it is worth pointing out that most commentaries that advocate deliberate groupings present their interpretations anyway, still in verse-by-verse fashion. In light of these considerations, Waltke's approach seems to do more justice to the materials in Proverbs 10-31 that Longman allows in his arguments.

Waltke indeed suggested that the Solomonic aphorisms were, I quote, originally intended to stand on their own two feet and secondarily collected as literature, giving them contexts, end quote. He therefore interpreted them both ways, first as individual verses in their own right, and second with regard to their literary context in various groupings. It seems to me, therefore, that the best way forward is to follow Longman's insistence that individual Proverbs need to be interpreted in their own right.

This, however, needs to be augmented with Waltke's insight that they now have a literary context. And the various variant repetitions, 223 of them, in the book of Proverbs, which seem to be contextually altered to fit nicely where they now appear, as I have just shown with regard to Proverbs 6-8 and 25, and as I also will show in a few minutes with regard to chapter 10, verse 5, all this suggests, indeed, that we should reckon with contextual groupings. But let me continue.

Many and perhaps most of the Proverbs were originally created as independent units to be performed orally in various situations. However, they have now been put into a literary context, and the arguments in a growing number of studies, including the arguments that I'm presenting to you here in my lecture and in my book, show convincingly that the editors who compiled them extended considerable effort in linking them with surrounding verses by slightly altering and adapting them to the context. In fact, the present variant set is a case in point, as I've already shown, and I now intend to show further with regard to 10-5.

For in whatever form it may have existed prior to its inclusion in Proverbs 10, it seems to have been adapted to fit now very nicely into its present context. I now come to Longman's fourth argument against contextual groupings, my proverbial clusters. Longman's fourth argument is that even when adjacent verses are connected in some way, this connection does not change or enrich our understanding of them.

Longman used an example to illustrate this argument. He did recognize that 10-5 was deliberately placed at its present location in the book, citing Proverbs 10, 4-5 as a good illustration of the insight that there is no doubt that proverbs of a similar topic are occasionally grouped together. I now quote at length from Longman in a paragraph in which he shows that contextual groupings, even where they do exist, don't seem to make much of a difference to the interpretation of the meaning of the individual parts and do not add to more than the sum of the individual parts, all of them together.

Let me read. This is quite a long paragraph, so bear with me. There is no doubt that there is a relationship between the two verses.

The first states a general principle, and the second is a specific illustration of laziness versus diligence. But the question is, what brought these together? Was it a conscious structuring device that terminates the book, as Haim and others have argued? He is talking about me. In actuality, though, this type of clear connection between neighboring proverbs is relatively rare.

The explanation is nothing more complex than that one of the redactors at some point along the way saw a connection and placed them next to each other. In other words, one proverb acted as a magnet for the placement of the next. Even more importantly, and contra Haim, reading the proverb in context does not change our understanding of either proverb.

It doesn't even enrich our understanding. Quote. When I wrote these pages a few years ago, I had a lot of fun with them because I know Trempe Longman personally.

I highly respect him as a scholar. To be honest, I took it as a compliment by a fine scholar who takes an opposing view to kind of single me out as a proponent of the position he tries to counteract. We have had conversations about this and we laugh about it.

And even as I now critically respond in turn to Trempe Longman, I do so again with a high level of appreciation for the quality of his work even where and when I disagree with him. So let me start. I've selected this long paragraph from Longman because it raises a number of highly relevant issues.

And there's more of them, but I mentioned just six. First, if there is no doubt, as Longman says, about a relationship between 10.4 and 10.5 on the basis that one is a specific illustration of the general principle stated in the other, why should verses one to three not also be related, as I've argued in my monograph of 2001? Second, what brought the two verses together was indeed a, and I quote Longman again, conscious structuring device that permeates the book. Well, actually, that's Longman quoting me.

Me quoting Longman quoting me. Anyway, this structuring device is the phenomenon under investigation in this book, namely that over 24% of the verses in Proverbs are involved in variant repetition. And this is a case in point.

Third, this type of clear connection is not relatively rare, but frequent. See, for example, the numerous links between adjacent verses presented in a monograph by Ruth Skorolec. Fourth, the explanation for the contextual placement of chapter 10 verses four and five is not that a redactor saw a connection.

Rather, if my argument that 10.5 is a relatively free variant of 6.8 is correct, then it is possible that 10.5 is a conscious adaptation of its source, namely 6.8, to a new context as a specific example not only of 10.4, but also of 10.1 in particular. In support of this statement, I now quote my own justification for the delimitation of 10.1 to 5 as a deliberate grouping in my earlier monograph. And again, this is a rather long quotation, so bear with me.

A chiastic pattern of positive and negative statements in verses one to five combines each verse with the following, as the proposition of the second line of one verse corresponds with the first of the following. The word *son* occurs four times, each time in bound form, twice in verse one and twice in verse five, thus forming a non-literal inclusion, a framework, an envelope around these verses. In verse one, the word *son* is line initial.

In verse five, it is at the end. Verses two to three correspond in content and form, both mentioning the words *righteous* and *wicked* and both beginning with a negation, *no* or *not*. And an imperfect.

They display chiasmus on different levels and also word order chiasmus. Verses four to five correspond in content since the *lazy* and *diligent* hand in verse four is explained as the *diligent* and the *lazy* in verse five. The *diligent* and *lazy* son in verse five.

Verse five specifies verse one as the *wise* son is characterized as *diligent* and the *foolish* son as *lazy*. Verses two to four are connected through the correspondence of *without profit* and *make needy* on the one side and *delivers from death* and *enriches*

on the other, thus putting verse three at the center of a chiasmic arrangement. Now, on the basis of Longman's criteria for positing a clear relationship between 10.4 and 10.5, we may conjecture that similar relationships exist between all five verses.

This brings me to my fifth argument. The hypothesis that 10.5 provides a specific example of the generalization in 10.1 can be refined with the insight gained above in the discussion of parallelism in 10.5. There, I argue that the imprecise nature of the correspondence between a competent son and a disgraceful son increases the amount of information contained in the poetic line because the imprecise contrasts imply their respective antonyms in the opposite line. We can now go one step further.

If we combine this with the contextual implication that verse five is a specific example of verse one because the wise son is thus specified as being diligent and the foolish son as lazy, then it becomes clear that the competent son of verse five is indeed an honorable son in that he is the wise son who delights the father. That is, he brings his father honor or makes him proud through his achievements. Conversely, the disgraceful son is indeed an incompetent son.

He is a foolish son who causes his mother's sorrow because she worries about him, verse one, because of his inability to make a living by honest means, verses three to four. In conclusion, it is not that a redactor saw a connection between what is now ten-four and ten-five. Rather, the editor saw the potential of the variant in six-eight for reuse as introductory material to link proverbs one to nine and proverbs ten-one to twenty-two as well as functioning to educate the son in its original setting.

He then created a connection not only between ten-five and ten-four but also and more importantly between ten-five and ten-one and the other verses in between. Verse 10:5 has been adapted to the context in which it now appears. In this sense, ten-one-to-five is like an application in the real world of human beings of Proverbs six, one to eleven.

This brings me to my sixth and final point in response to Longman's critique of the interpretive significance of deliberate groupings. The considerations under the previous point suggest that reading the proverb in context does change and enrich our understanding of the proverbs or the proverbs in this grouping. Combining the observations that I made earlier about parallelism and context, we can now see that six-eight, which in the opinion of many belongs to one of the latest parts of the book, did in fact serve as a source for 10:5, also a late part of the book.

There are two additional reasons for the conclusion that ten-five is a variant repetition. First, other variants are located nearby. Second, while ten-five is just about recognizable as a variant of six-eight, the number of differences it exhibits and

the way these differences interact with the context in verses ten-one-to-five suggest that it is derived from six-eight.

So, I know this has been a larger, detailed, very kind of structured, long-winding argument, but I hope it has been worthwhile for a number of reasons. Throughout these lectures, I have been arguing that we need to read biblical poetry with imagination, and I have tried to argue also that reading with imagination is not a fanciful enterprise, but that it demands diligent, careful, systematic analysis that, however, does not get stuck in the detail, but moves from the detail to the larger picture with an imaginative interpretation of all the various aspects and fine details of every single verse. And what I hope I have been able to show in this opening section of chapters ten to thirty-one is that this editorial grouping through variant repetition and adaptation to the context of these opening verses has created for us a model, a proverbial cluster that rewards a careful reading in such a way that it really enhances, enriches, and creates a fascinating, meaningful interaction between various proverbs in the sequences as clusters in which they now appear.

So, I rest my case, but in the following lectures, I will continue to draw attention to groupings, context, and imaginative interpretations and also applications of the proverbs in chapters 10 to 29.