

The Breakup of Stereotyped Phrases: Some New Examples

MITCHELL DAHOOD

Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome

In recent years scholars have been giving increased attention to the breakup of a composite or stereotyped phrase as a text-critical and poetic criterion.¹ Like the recognition of word pairs in parallelism,² the appreciation of the stylistic practice whereby the components of a composite expression are distributed over the balancing cola of a verse, may permit the critic to determine the sense of ambiguous expressions or to identify poetic usages hitherto overlooked. The present study seeks both to clarify some disputed passages in Ugaritic and in Hebrew and to direct attention to new instances of this practice in the Bible.

There is no need to review here the eight translations that have been proposed for *bn ym//bn 'dt* in *UT* 51.vii:15-16b, since this has recently been done by J. C. de Moor.³ The text reads:

āštm ktr bn ym

ktr bnm 'dt

I will install them, Kothar, son of the sea,

Kothar, son of the confluence.

This slightly modified version of W. F. Albright's translation⁴ appeals to the breakup of the composite phrase *bnm 'dt* in Jer. 30:20:

w^ebāyû bānāyw k^eqđēm

wa^adātô l^epānay tikkôn

And his sons will be as of old,

And his assembly established before me.

That *bnm 'dt* is related to *bānāyw//ādātô* is further sustained by the observation that the

1 To cite but three recent authors: G. Braulik, "Aufbrechen von geprägten Wortverbindungen und Zusammenfassen von stereotypen Ausdrücken in der alttestamentlichen Kunstprosa," *Semitics* 1 (1970), 7-11; D. N. Freedman, "'Mistress Forever': a Note on Isaiah 47, 7," *Biblica* 51 (1970), 538; M. Dahood, *Psalms III*, Anchor Bible 17A (New York, 1970), 413-14, where examples from the Psalter are listed.

2 See this writer's study, written with the collaboration of T. Penar, "Ugaritic-Hebrew parallel Pairs," in L. R. Fisher, ed., *Ras Shamra Parallels: The Texts from Ugarit and the Hebrew Bible*, vol. 1, *An. Or.* 49 (Rome, 1972), 71-382.

3 *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Ba'lu: According to the Version of Ilimilku, AOAT* 16 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1971), 160-61.

4 *JPOS* 14 (1934), 129.

