

## Suspense and Authority amid Biblical Hebrew Front Dislocation

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## 1.0. DELINEATING FRONT DISLOCATION

The one piece of information that the injured King Ahaziah of Israel urgently wants to learn is whether or not he will recover from a fall through the lattice of his upper chamber in Samaria (2 Kgs 1:2). Alas, in finally receiving his answer, Ahaziah is not presented with this one piece of information. Instead, Elijah the Tishbite, mimicking the words from the angelically mediated oracle of Yahweh (2 Kgs 1:4), couches this singular bit of crucial data (כי מות תמות) within a prefatory flourish that both delays and augments its full impact:

לְכוּן הַמֶּטֶה אֲשֶׁר-עָלִיתָ שָׁם לֵאמֹר מִמֶּנָּה

Therefore, *the bed which you have climbed onto*—you shall not descend from *it* (2 Kgs 1:6, 16).

Both Elijah and the angel of Yahweh deliberately speak here in a suspenseful and authoritative manner. Both of them, accordingly, resort to the linguistic device of *Front Dislocation* (FD).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The construction under consideration has amassed a diverse nomenclature. Semitists have preferred *casus pendens* (Driver 1998 [1892]:264–74; Gesenius 1910:457–58 §143; Muraoka 1985:93–99; Joüon and Muraoka 2006:551–54 §156). A less frequent alternative is *nominative absolute* (Waltke and O'Connor 1990:76–77; Williams 2007:12). Both of these titles are technically anachronistic, given that Biblical Hebrew does not preserve a functioning case system. Other notable designations have included *Pendenskonstruktion* (Gross 1987), and *extraposition* (Khan 1988), although the former has also been applied to fronted constituents that are not syntactically detached, whereas the latter can refer to constituents that are relocated to the back of a syntagm. Linguists (following Ross 1967:421–28) have grown partial to the term *left dislocation* or, occasionally, *left detachment* (e.g., Lambrecht 1994:181–84). But these descriptions apply literally only to languages that are *written* from left to right; in all other instances the terms are formally incongruent and descriptively confusing. *Front Dislocation* (e.g., Leech 2000) entails the important dual benefits of remaining formally and functionally accurate for this construction in whatever lan-

The formal parameters of FD in Biblical Hebrew are fairly straightforward, conforming with broad cross-linguistic evidence.<sup>2</sup> Front Dislocation consists of an initial substantival (i.e., nominal, pronominal, or participial) phrase, the whole of which co-refers with a resumptive constituent occurring inside the juxtaposed subsequent clause.<sup>3</sup> Syntactically, the fronted substantival phrase remains unattached to—hence, dislocated from—its adjoining clause.<sup>4</sup> This is the case regardless of the resumptive’s grammatical function, whether nominative:

וְהַעֲמֹר עֶשְׂרִית הָאֵיפָה הוּא:

Concerning *the omer*—a tenth of the ephah is *it* (Exod 16:36).

Or, genitive (possessive):

הָאֵל תָּמִים דְּרָכּוֹ

As for *God*—perfect is *his* way (Ps 18:31).

Or, accusative (direct object):

אֵת<sup>5</sup> כָּל־הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם אֹתוֹ תִשְׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת

Concerning *every matter which I am commanding you*—*it* you shall take care to do (Deut 13:1).

Or, prepositional (indirect object):

וְהִלְדִּים הָאֵלֹהִים אֶרְבַּעַתָּם נָתַן לָהֶם הָאֱלֹהִים מִדַּע וְהִשְׁכִּיל בְּכָל־סֵפֶר  
וְחֻקָּה

As for *these four young men*—God gave *to them* knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom (Dan 1:17).

Despite its overall morphosyntactic consistency, the semantic and pragmatic parameters of FD in Biblical Hebrew remain less sharply defined. The classic grammars tended to focus upon the formal

guage that it occurs, graphically as well as orally.

<sup>2</sup> See Lambrecht 2001; also Givón 2001:265–67; Miller 2011:29–31, 68–74.

<sup>3</sup> Front Dislocation differs from *topicalization*, which involves fronting of a constituent that does not include a coreferential component in the subsequent predication (see Gregory and Michaelis 2001:1666). In terms of generative grammar models (Ross 1967:421–42; Riemsdijk 1997:1–2), topicalization arises from “chopping” rules, whereas FD is generated by “copying” rules.

<sup>4</sup> “The detached noun phrase is nonsyntactic, at least in the sense that it does not participate in the predicate-argument structure of the clause” (Gregory and Michaelis 2001:1667). On the purported relationship between FD and the copula in Biblical Hebrew, see Holmstedt and Jones 2014:75–76.

<sup>5</sup> For the accusative particle preceding FD, see Driver 1998 [1892]: 266; Joüon and Muraoka 2006:417 §125j4, 552–53 §156c.

boundaries of the construction, which inevitably impacted their functional explanations. Driver (1998 [1892]:265, 268) viewed the *casus pendens* as an “artifice . . . for the purpose of avoiding an unwieldy sentence . . . [to] give the subject (or object) a prominent place at the beginning, and ease the body of the sentence by permitting a light pronominal suffix to take its place . . . at once less cumbersome and less abrupt.” Gesenius (1910:458 §143c) argued that “prominence is given to the principal subject<sup>6</sup> (by its mere separation from the context by means of a greater disjunctive, as a *casus pendens*) in a manner which would be quite impossible in a simple noun or verbal-clause.” Brockelmann (1956:121–23 §123) characterized the construction as conveying “*die dominierende Vorstellung*” of a sentence. Joüon and Muraoka (2006:551–52 §156a) observed that *casus pendens* “is sometimes occasioned by the importance of the [front dislocated] noun, i.e., it is the element of the clause which first springs to the speaker’s mind, and sometimes by a desire for clarity or smoothness of expression.”

Subsequent studies continued to proceed mostly from within the framework of the construction’s syntactic boundaries. The detailed work by Gross (1987) was largely descriptive and taxonomic, venturing only occasionally into the territory of broader functional claims.<sup>7</sup> Muraoka (1985:93) suggested that FD “may be motivated by many factors, one of which is possible emphasis.” More specifically (ibid.:94), he claimed that “in most examples of *casus pendens*, the extraposed part announces the topic of a whole statement to be made.” A subsidiary function can involve signaling some sort of contrast with a foregoing situation (ibid.:98–99). Similarly, Waltke and O’Connor (1990:76) argued that “the nominative absolute construction serves to highlight or focus one element of the main clause, [and] it may serve in context to contrast this element to a comparable item in another clause.” Khan (1988:78–97) was among the first to apply a discourse analysis framework to FD (which he termed “extraposition”), concluding that it can alternately signal onset/closure boundaries for discourse topic spans, contrastive assertion, or anticipatory agreement.

In the wake of an influential cognitive linguistics study by Lambrecht (1994), numerous scholars have examined FD from the perspective of *information-structure theory*, which explores how speak-

<sup>6</sup> Or, to “other members of the sentence” (ibid.).

<sup>7</sup> Gross subscribed to inclusive formal criteria for the *Pendens-konstruktion* which did not mandate the overt presence of a resumptive coreferential element (*Aufnahme*). This yielded him more than one thousand examples which he categorized according to seventy sentence models. Yet given the morphosyntactic and pragmatic ambiguities that can arise between a dislocated phrase with a “null element” coreferential versus a topicalized constituent lacking any coreferential (see Lambrecht 2001:1056–57), my study will, out of due caution, consider an *overt* resumptive coreferential element to be a necessary formal diagnostic criterion for the FD construction in Biblical Hebrew.

ers build and package their language to integrate newer data with older data in a contextually effective manner.<sup>8</sup> Lambrecht (1994:183) argues that FD constructions are invoked by languages “pragmatically as a grammatical device used to promote a referent . . . from accessible to active status” within discourse. The syntagm, in other words, functions as “a topic-promoting device” (Gregory and Michaelis 2001:1665; cf. Lambrecht 2001:1072–74). Additional meanings—such as contrast, emphasis, anticipation—can co-occur with FD, but information-structure theorists tend to view these as pragmatically derivative from the superordinate function of topic-promotion.<sup>9</sup> Front Dislocation in Biblical Hebrew has consequently come to be understood as either establishing or reactivating a referent and raising it to the status of current discourse topic<sup>10</sup> (e.g., Heimerdinger 1999:151; Van der Merwe *et al.* 1999:346; Van der Merwe and Talstra 2002–2003:86; Floor 2004:85–88; Lunn 2006:33; Westbury 2010:104).<sup>11</sup>

Notwithstanding certain descriptive and functional insights, much of the foregoing scholarship on FD remains hampered by its limited explanatory efficacy with respect to the Biblical Hebrew data.<sup>12</sup> Resorting to FD in order to avoid unwieldy sentences, to

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<sup>8</sup> Lambrecht (1994:5) formally defines *information-structure* as “That component of sentence grammar in which propositions as conceptual representations of states of affairs are paired with lexicogrammatical structures in accordance with the mental states of interlocutors who use and interpret these structures as units of information within given discourse contexts.”

<sup>9</sup> So argue Gregory and Michaelis (2001:1695), *contra* Prince (1997; 1998), who contends that FD can encompass multiple language-specific functions. Lambrecht (1994:183) understands FD as “often used to mark a shift in attention from one to another of two or more already active topic referents,” thereby yielding a contrastive function (cf. Givón 2001:229; Geluykens 1992:153–60). Westbury (2010:120) views contrastiveness amid Biblical Hebrew FD as an “additional optional pragmatic overlay” to topic (re)activation.

<sup>10</sup> Notions of *topic* in cognitive linguistics are as broad as they are vague. Information-structure models define topic, more or less, as “the matter of current interest which a statement is about and with respect to which a proposition is to be interpreted as relevant” (Lambrecht 1994:119).

<sup>11</sup> Khan (1988:230)—whose study predates Lambrecht’s—perceptively observed that extraposition in Semitic languages “coincides either with a point where a certain topic referent is made cognitively dominant (= topic shift) or with a point where the cognitive dominance of a topic referent is renewed and confirmed (= shift on some other axis of the discourse).”

<sup>12</sup> In her syntactic and pragmatic analysis of Biblical Hebrew preposing, Moshavi (2010:81–83) devotes cursory attention to FD as a “marked word-order construction . . . [that] bears a close resemblance to preposing but has an entirely different syntactic structure,” given that the clause subsequent to FD remains syntactically complete, unlike with a preposed construction. She provisionally concludes (*ibid.*:169) that FD entails a

increase sentence clarity, and/or to foster smoothness of expression is vaguely plausible concerning extended constructions,<sup>13</sup> such as:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲשֶׁר לָקַחְנִי מִבֵּית אָבִי וּמֵאֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתִּי וְאֲשֶׁר  
דִּבְרָה־לִּי וְאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע־לִי לֵאמֹר לְזָרְעֶךָ אֶתֶּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת הוּא  
יִשְׁלַח מַלְאָכּוֹ לְפָנֶיךָ וְלָקַחְתָּ אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי מִשָּׁם:

*Yahweh, the God of Heaven, who took me from the house of my father and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me, and who pledged to me, saying: "To your progeny I will give this land"—he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there (Gen 24:7).*

Yet such conjectures do not account for the numerous succinct examples of FD, including:

הַצּוֹר תָּמִים פְּעֻלוֹ

*The Rock*—perfect is *his* work (Deut 32:4).<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, notions such as “prominence,” “emphasis,” “importance,” “highlight,” and “saliency”<sup>15</sup> remain largely intuitive, amorphous, and *ad hoc*. Even the more linguistically refined concept of “topic promotion” turns out to be explanatorily constrained, since it typically does not proceed much deeper than the surface structures which sculpt the discourse topography. Information-structure dynamics might plausibly capture certain of the formats and procedures by which FD organizes its data into coherent discourse; yet these dynamics do not substantially address the underlying contents and intents of the information itself, as it is so organized. What, in other words, are such topics altogether *doing* with their promotions?<sup>16</sup> Without deeper descriptive and explanatory mechanisms,

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functional overlap with preposing (i.e., focusing and topicalization), yet she concedes that an in-depth study into FD pragmatics still awaits.

<sup>13</sup> The substance of Driver’s suggestion (above) has been echoed and developed by some linguists. Prince (1997:138; cf. Westbury 2010:104) argues that one function of FD is “to simplify discourse processing by removing a discourse-new entity from a position in the clause which favors discourse-old entities, replacing it with a discourse-old entity (i.e., a pronoun).”

<sup>14</sup> See Khan 1988:xxxii.

<sup>15</sup> The Sixth International Workshop on Multidisciplinary Approaches to Discourse in 2005 achieved merely this anodyne description: “Saliency defines the degree of relative prominence of a unit of information, at a specific point in time, in comparison to the other units of information” (Chiaros *et al.* 2011:2).

<sup>16</sup> Nebulous notions of “aboutness” risk circular reasoning: viz., if a referent has high discourse saliency it will be promoted to an active topic, and if a topic is active it must be due to its high discourse saliency. For rigorous linguistic and philosophical attempts to define “aboutness” (and

our conceptions of Biblical Hebrew FD themselves remain rather topical. In here pursuing such mechanisms, it is first necessary to address the underlying semiotic structures and cognitive dynamics that are involved.

## 2.0. A COGNITIVE-SEMIOTIC APPROACH

In terms of the classic structuralist models, every sign constituting language (or any other semiotic system) bifurcates into a perceptible component and an intelligible component, termed *signifier* and *signified*,<sup>17</sup> or *code* and *message*.<sup>18</sup> At an abstract semiotic level, language would operate most coherently wherever there existed a one-to-one correspondence between each signifier and each signified composing a sign.<sup>19</sup> Actual languages are never so perfectly aligned, of course; nor would their users wish them to be. For it is precisely the incongruity between signifier and signified—the *semiotic slippage*—that enables the construction of figurative language and the creation of rhetorical tropes, such as metaphor and metonymy. Front Dislocation is also structured upon semiotic incongruity, in that portions of its code end up preceding elements of its message. In being separated from its ensuing predication, and thereby distanced from its surrounding context, an FD substantival phrase will tend to default toward its denotative semantic core.<sup>20</sup> Only once the juxtaposed predication is expressed does the FD become fully situ-

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the persistent ambiguities involved), consult Salmon 2007; Endriss and Hinterwimmer 2007.

<sup>17</sup> Originally characterized by Saussure (1959 [1916]:11–12) as “sound-image” (*signifiant*) and “concept” (*signifié*). Latinized alternatives include *signans* and *signatum*.

<sup>18</sup> Most notably by Jakobson (1987 [1960]; 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Andrason (2011) rightly reminds Hebraists of the critical role that evolutionary processes (amid diachrony) exercise upon the systemic manifestations of language (amid synchrony)—a circumstance to which Jakobson (1985:11–24; 28–36) repeatedly drew attention. Yet Andrason (*idem*:29) overstates his case in claiming that linguistic “description in terms of binary oppositions is inadequate.” Intersecting stages and pathways of development are variously (in)operative for any given gram, as Andrason recognizes, and they “can never be simplified to a single opposition between two domains” (*ibid.*). But this in no way prohibits crafting productive descriptive analyses of language in terms of binarisms predicated upon *multiple* oppositions across *multiple* domains, both synchronic and diachronic. Indeed, binarism likely even entails powerful explanatory capacities for language origins and usage, given the adaptive bilateral (a)symmetric morphology of *Homo sapiens* (see Corballis 2012) that evolved in response to selective pressures within *Hominin* (*sic*) environments (see Hodgson 2011).

<sup>20</sup> The extent of this semiotic drift toward lexical–semantic base forms will depend upon whether the FD contains a discourse-old referent or a discourse-new referent. If the former, then a greater degree of contextualized meanings will be rendered accessible; if the latter, then a lesser degree of such meanings will be available.

ated semiotically, attaining its connotative pragmatic overlay. Yet until the moment that this happens—amid the communicative interim—the FD construction remains *over*-encoded and *under*-informative. Even once the full *signatum* has been resolved, portions of the *signans* linger superfluously in the way of the FD phrase and its resumptive element. When evaluated purely against language’s referential<sup>21</sup> function, FD constructions end up speaking more but saying less. What are the reasons for this structured redundancy? Why is a linguistic fissure deliberately fashioned between code and message?

Front Dislocation is evidently capable of conveying more than merely the referential contents of its signs. At an information-structure level, cross-linguistic evidence does indeed suggest that FD can function as a discourse topic-promoting device. But from a cognitive-semiotic perspective, FD entails additional features which can be put to effective rhetorical use. By rendering a breach between a morphosyntactic unit’s signifiers and signifieds, FD actively delays the cognitive resolution between code and message. This suspension, effected by the language-sender, establishes a tension between the unit’s denotative and connotative meanings, producing within the language-receiver an awareness of uncertainty between what is expressed and what is meant.<sup>22</sup> Such contrived ambiguity provokes *suspense*<sup>23</sup> for the receiver even while it pro-

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<sup>21</sup> Jakobson (1987 [1960]:66) astutely realized that “even though a set (*Einstellung*) toward the referent, an orientation toward the context—briefly, the so-called referential . . . ‘cognitive’ function—is the leading task of numerous messages, the accessory participation of the other functions in such messages must be taken into account by the observant linguist.” In distinguishing the poetic from the mimetic dimensions of language, Sternberg (1990:84) spoke of the “rich and subtle art of temporal deformation” which yields “a system of gaps” (Sternberg 1985:186) that must be actively bridged by the reader on behalf of narrative cohesion.

<sup>22</sup> In his classic philosophical treatise on conversational implicatures, Grice (1975:49) recognized that “a participant in a talk exchange may fail to fulfill a [cooperative] maxim in various ways . . . he may *flout* a maxim; that is, he may *blatantly* fail to fulfill it.” Within a Gricean framework, FD can be characterized as flouting some or all of the following maxims under the category of Manner (i.e., *how* what is said is to be said): “1. Avoid obscurity of expression; 2. Avoid ambiguity; 3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity); 4. Be orderly” (ibid.:46).

<sup>23</sup> Sternberg (1985:264) provides the foundational definition:

[S]uspense derives from incomplete knowledge about a conflict (or some other contingency) looming in the future. Located at some point in the present, we know enough to expect a struggle but not to predict its course, and above all its outcome, with certitude. Hence a discontinuity that extends from the moment of prospection on the unknown to the moment of enactment and release. Hence also the state of mind that characterizes the intermediate phase: expectant restlessness, awareness of gaps, gap-filling inference along alternative lines, with the attention thrown forward to the point in time that will resolve it all and establish closure by supplying the desired information.

motes *authority*<sup>24</sup> for the sender. In using an FD construction rhetorically, the sender deliberately places the receiver into a momentarily extended state of cognitive–semiotic vulnerability,<sup>25</sup> thereby exercising enhanced dominance over the communication event. It turns out that Biblical Hebrew employs this rhetorical trope frequently and to great effect, rendering FD largely synonymous with authoritative speaking: language that is variously categorical, prescriptive, didactic, declaratory.

### 3.0. STRUCTURE BUILDING FRAMEWORK

The rhetorical features of Biblical Hebrew FD proposed herein are not merely intuitive; they are grounded within dynamics of human cognition, and they receive empirical support via psychophysiological processes that have been captured experimentally. These scientific data, furthermore, are not only descriptive; they also provide explanatory insights into the semiotic means and mental mechanisms by which FD enhances suspense for the language-receiver and bolsters authority for the language-sender. These insights are achieved through a model of cognition developed by M. A. Gernsbacher and her colleagues called the *Structure Building Framework* (SBF). The SBF approaches language as an integral component of a person’s overall cognitive capabilities (Gernsbacher 1990:1; 1991:217).<sup>26</sup> The guiding goal for any mode of com-

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<sup>24</sup> The dialogic definition of authority posited by Lincoln (1994:10–11) will serve as a sufficient heuristic, in which language-sender and language-receiver dynamics “combine in such a way as to produce attitudes of trust, respect, docility, acceptance, even reverence, in the audience” toward the individual(s) exercising claims upon such influence.

<sup>25</sup> This semiotic breach has a psychological impact because “the cognitive system attempts to integrate information elements of the locally constructed text base into the mental model as quickly as possible . . . any delay in these operations leads to an imbalance of the system and thereby forms the basis for the development of suspense experience” (Ohler and Nieding 1996:143). On the one hand, a cognitive-semiotic approach is not incongruent with the literary-critical model of Sternberg (e.g., 2003a:327–28), which grounds itself upon three “universals of narrative” (and their attendant mental dynamics): *suspense* (prospection), *curiosity* (retrospection), and *surprise* (recognition). On the other hand, the generation of suspense is neither solely nor even chiefly dependent upon reader-response, which constitutes merely one among many modes of semiotic receivership. That a *reader* might not always experience the same suspense which is intrinsic to the *participants and episodes* of a given text does not mean that such suspense fails to register as a genuine psychological phenomenon (*contra* Sternberg 2003b:518).

<sup>26</sup> Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) tests have confirmed that common regions of the human brain get activated regardless of whether a discourse comprehension task involves written, spoken, or graphic media (Gernsbacher and Robertson 2005:164–65). Concerning the ongoing scientific research and debate regarding cognitive modularity, see Barrett and Kurzban 2006.

prehension is to build a coherent mental representation (i.e., structure) of the information being presented. Several component processes are involved: “First, comprehenders *lay foundations* for their mental structures. Next, comprehenders develop their mental structures by *mapping* on information when that incoming information coheres with the previous information . . . if the incoming information is less coherent, comprehenders engage in another cognitive process: they *shift* to initiate a new substructure” (Gernsbacher 1990:1–2; italics added). For SBF, these interactive processes of laying, mapping, and shifting one’s mental representations represent how comprehension gets constructed within the mind.

Cognitive psychologists have found that initial words in phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs are read more slowly by test subjects than are post-initial words, and that even the exact same words take longer to read when positioned at the onset of a linguistic unit rather than farther back (Gernsbacher 1990:5–8; Gernsbacher and Hargreaves 1992). These comparatively slower reading times are taken to indicate that greater cognitive capacity is being devoted toward comprehending the initial signs of semiotic units,<sup>27</sup> and data garnered via electroencephalography (EEG) experiments confirm this hypothesis.<sup>28</sup> According to SBF, this increased cognitive effort happens because comprehenders are using initial words to lay the foundations for their communicatory mental structures; first words function as the cognitive cornerstones for their linguistic units. This results in what SBF terms the “Advantage of First Mention” (Gernsbacher 1990:10–12; Gernsbacher and Hargreaves 1992:88–96), whereby the initial participant of a sentence retains greater cognitive accessibility than subsequent participants.<sup>29</sup> This also has been verified empirically via faster

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<sup>27</sup> Experimental results remain consistent for nonverbal (pictorial) signs, too. The first image within a picture story is viewed for a longer time by test-subjects than subsequent pictures (Gernsbacher 1990:8).

<sup>28</sup> “A larger than average N400 brain wave is elicited by the first content word of a sentence (as opposed to words that occur later in the sentence). N400 brain waves are the (N) negative component of event-related brain waves that occur about 400 milliseconds after the stimulus. N400 brain waves are associated with difficulty in processing . . . less familiar words and words that are unexpected (from the context) also elicit large N400s” (Gernsbacher 1990:9). More sophisticated fMRI tests complement these data by showing that the English definite article, as a discourse coherence marker, elicits more limited brain activation patterns (and thus, less cognitive effort) during comprehension than an indefinite article, which marks discourse nonspecificity (Gernsbacher and Robertson 2005:158–62).

<sup>29</sup> This does not contradict another attested phenomenon in verbal comprehension which Gernsbacher (1991:223) terms the *Advantage of Clause Recency*: “words from the most recently read or heard clause are often more accessible than words from an earlier clause.” Experiments (Gernsbacher *et al.* 1989; Gernsbacher 1991:223–27; Gernsbacher and Hargreaves 1992:96–107) confirm that a second-mentioned participant is

recall times by test subjects for the first-mentioned participant of a sentence.<sup>30</sup> Initial words are read more slowly and first participants are recalled more quickly “because they form the foundation of their sentence-level representations, and because it is through them that subsequent information is mapped onto the developing representation” (Gernsbacher 1990:25; cf. Gernsbacher and Hargreaves 1992:89).<sup>31</sup>

According to SBF, the foundations of mental structures are established via the activation of *memory nodes* (Gernsbacher 1991:218).<sup>32</sup> If subsequent information is sufficiently coherent<sup>33</sup> with these foundations, then it will activate similar memory nodes, thereby mapping (i.e., attaching) onto the same mental structure. But if incoming data are insufficiently coherent with previous information, then different memory nodes will get activated, thereby shifting (i.e., detaching) away from the current structure and toward development of a new mental substructure. Because laying a new foundation consumes more cognitive effort than maintaining an existing foundation, more time is required to comprehend shifting structures than mapping structures, as verified by numerous reading experiments (see Gernsbacher 1990:64).

Gernsbacher has further demonstrated that the three structure building processes of foundation-laying, mapping, and shifting are regulated by two cognitive mechanisms: *suppression* and *enhancement*. These two mechanisms work to modulate levels of activation for

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more cognitively accessible than a first-mentioned participant for a very brief moment after its introduction (within 150 milliseconds), after which it becomes increasingly less accessible relative to the first-mentioned participant.

<sup>30</sup> Advantage of First Mention persists regardless of whether the initial participant functions as a semantic agent versus patient, or a syntactic subject versus object (Gernsbacher 1990:12–25).

<sup>31</sup> Psychologists have long known about the *Primacy Effect*, whereby information that occurs earlier within a discourse unit retains greater cognitive salience. Narrative critics have not remained unaware of the rhetorical possibilities: “That a literary text cannot yield its information all at once is not just an unfortunate consequence of the linear character of language. Literary texts may effectively utilize the fact that their material is grasped successively; this is at times a central factor in determining their meanings” (Perry 1979:36).

<sup>32</sup> Originally termed “memory cells” in Gernsbacher 1990.

<sup>33</sup> Gernsbacher (1990:52–63) operationalizes coherence in terms of its referential (*who/what*), temporal (*when*), locational (*where*), and causal (*why*) dimensions, citing numerous empirical studies that record faster reading and comprehension of sentences in which information is perceived as being related/sequential as opposed to nonrelated/nonsequential. Coherence thus entails information “connectedness” within cognitive representations (Sanders and Gernsbacher 2004:80). Giora (1996:423–24) argues for the added necessity of a “discourse-topic proposition” in order to maintain coherence at a superordinate (rather than merely sentence-to-sentence) level.

memory nodes by transmitting processing signals via the brain's neural activity: "Suppression decreases or dampens the activation of memory [nodes] when the information they represent is no longer as necessary for the structure being built.<sup>34</sup> Enhancement increases or boosts the activation of memory [nodes] when the information they represent is relevant to the structure being built" (Gernsbacher 1990:87).<sup>35</sup> Suppression and enhancement are themselves triggered by the particular configurations of the linguistic signs composing a speech event. Two especially effective triggers are *anaphora* and *cataphora*. Anaphora stimulates memory nodes in relation to a foregoing referent, thereby enhancing the mental activation of that referent while also suppressing surrounding nonreferents.<sup>36</sup> Cataphora stimulates memory nodes in relation to a subse-

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<sup>34</sup> Comprehension experiments involving homonyms (Gernsbacher and Faust 1991; 1995; Gernsbacher and Jescheniak 1995:48–52; Gernsbacher 1997:88–90; Gernsbacher and St. John 2002:48–65) show that *all* of a lexeme's possible meanings get activated initially (within one hundred milliseconds) in accord with their respective usage frequencies (*bug* = *insect*; *virus*; *defect*; *listening device*; *to pester*). But very soon thereafter (within two hundred milliseconds), the lexeme's contextually inappropriate meanings get *actively suppressed*—they neither decay, nor are they inhibited—by the neural activity associated with the developing sentence-level structure (*The bug flew away* = *insect*, ≠ *virus*, *defect*, *listening device*, *to pester*). The same process is attested with homophones (*patience* vs. *patients*). Suppression even operates (Gernsbacher and Robertson 1999; Gernsbacher *et al.* 2001) with morphosyntactic parsing (*Time flies like an arrow* vs. *Fruit flies like a banana*), as well as with figurative language such as metaphor (*Lawyers are sharks* = *aggressive*, ≠ *aquatic*). Suppression is thus "a directed reduction in activation" (Gernsbacher and St. John 2002:48), and in all cases it functions to attenuate interference to comprehension posed by "extraneous, unnecessary, or inappropriate" (Gernsbacher and Robertson 1999:1619) units of information.

<sup>35</sup> Enhancement effects have been empirically demonstrated with respect to metaphor comprehension (Gernsbacher *et al.* 2001), wherein a metaphorical sentence (*That lawyer is a shark*) produces faster verification response times in relation to a superordinate target property statement (*Sharks are tenacious*) than does either a simple baseline sentence (*That fish is a shark*) or a nonsensical sentence (*My house is a shark*). Enhancement is also operative amid homonym comprehension, as measured by faster response times to target sentences that follow same-meaning prime sentences, versus either neutral-meaning or different-meaning prime sentences (Gernsbacher *et al.* 2002).

<sup>36</sup> Because anaphora functions as a memory retrieval cue, the degree of an anaphor's explicitness about its referent is directly scalar with the amount and rapidity of enhancement and suppression involved. Experimental results (Gernsbacher 1989; 1990:110–27; 1991:240–44) confirm that suppression and enhancement are triggered more quickly and strongly by a repeated proper name anaphor (*Spot chased the ball, and Spot got tired*), than by a pronominal anaphor (*Spot chased the ball, and he got tired*), than by a zero anaphor (*Spot chased the ball, and Q got tired*).

quent referent, enhancing that referent's representational status and suppressing accessibility to foregoing and following nonreferents.<sup>37</sup>

Structure Building Framework delineates an empirically verifiable cognitive matrix for human comprehension that entails rich explanatory capacities for the rhetorical uses of FD in Biblical Hebrew. This is because the aforementioned three processes (*foundation-laying, mapping, shifting*), two mechanisms (*suppression, enhancement*), and two triggers (*anaphora, cataphora*) belonging to SBF all turn out to be operative within Biblical Hebrew FD constructions. By being positioned at the beginning of its associated discourse unit, a front dislocated substantival phrase functions as the cognitive foundation upon which ensuing components of the discourse unit get constructed. Because foundation-laying for a new mental structure demands more cognitive effort than continuing on with an established mental structure, comprehenders take longer to process unit-initial information than subsequent information. Given that these cognitive dynamics have been proven to operate consistently across spoken, written, and pictorial discourse modalities (Gernsbacher and Robertson 2005:164–65), it is reasonable to expect that they obtain also for Biblical Hebrew. Thus, a reader/listener will need to invest more time in comprehending an FD construction's initial substantival phrase than its subsequent juxtaposed clause (and any ensuing associated information). So, for example, upon encountering

עמי נגשיו מעולל ונשים משלו בו

*My people—his oppressor is a suckling, and women rule over him (Isa 3:12),*

a reader/listener will slow down, spending measurably (even if imperceptibly) more time and mental energy processing the initial constituent (עמי), and thereby establishing it as the base for comprehending what follows. This up-front mental investment yields cognitive dividends via the Advantage of First Mention, whereby the front dislocated substantival phrase becomes—and remains, notwithstanding the Advantage of Clause Recency—the most cognitively accessible (i.e., rapidly and accurately retrievable) portion of information within its discourse unit.

The SBF process of shifting is also frequently attested with Biblical Hebrew FD, precisely because shifting entails new foundation-laying which gives rise to “branching substructures” (Gerns-

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<sup>37</sup> Cataphora clears a cognitive pathway for heightened mental activation of its associated subsequent concept. This too has been verified empirically (Gernsbacher 1990:142–61; 1991:244–46; Gernsbacher and Jescheniak 1995) via experiments involving the unstressed indefinite article *this* (*There was this dog :: There was a dog*), as well as spoken stress (*There was a DOG :: There was a dog*). Referents marked with these cataphoric devices get recognized more rapidly and accurately by test subjects (enhancement) than nonmarked nonreferents (suppression).

bacher 1990:2).<sup>38</sup> As a result, “words and sentences that change the topic, point of view, location, or temporal setting [thereby diminishing discourse coherence and connectedness] take substantially longer to comprehend” (Gernsbacher 1990:223), since these shifts initiate the buildings of new (and cognitively costly) foundations. So, for example, upon encountering

וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשׂוּבַר בְּתוֹךְ הַבָּאִים כִּי־הָיָה הָרָעֵב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן:  
וַיּוֹסֶף הוּא הַשְּׂלִיט עַל־הָאֶרֶץ הוּא הַמְּשַׁבֵּיר לְכָל־עַם הָאֶרֶץ

The sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who arrived, since there was the famine in the land of Canaan. *As for Joseph—*he was the governor over the land; he was the grain-seller to all the people of the land (Gen 42:5–6),

a reader/listener is, via the FD, presented with a break in discourse coherence regarding topic (sons of Israel → Joseph), viewpoint (sojourners/buyers → governor/seller), location (Canaan → Egypt), and temporality (punctual event → durative situation).<sup>39</sup> Consequently, the comprehender must shift away from actively developing the cognitive substructure containing the prior clause, and toward developing a new substructure encompassing the FD construction.<sup>40</sup>

Inside the morphosyntactic parameters of the FD construction the process of mapping is prominent. This happens because the same (or similar) memory nodes that get activated by the data within the dislocated substantival phrase remain activated by the data contained in the adjoining clause. Since there is cognitive coherence, the comprehender can continue to develop one and the same mental (sub)structure, augmenting existing information with incoming information. So, for example, upon encountering:

וְחֶלֶק הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הָלְכוּ אִתִּי עִנְרָ אֲשַׁכַּל וּמִמְרָא הֵם יִקְחוּ חֶלֶקם:

Concerning *the share of the men who went with me—Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre—*let them take *their share* (Gen 14:24),

<sup>38</sup> Foundation-laying does not necessarily presuppose shifting, however, since the inaugural foundations of a discourse unit (*Once upon a time, there lived a king*) constitute the unit's bedrock structures for comprehension.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. the FDs which introduce Deborah (Judg 4:4) and Abishai (2 Sam 23:18; 1 Chr 11:20) into their respective narratives.

<sup>40</sup> Gernsbacher (1990:70–83) cites numerous empirical studies showing that, after the onset of a new clause boundary, comprehenders become measurably less capable of accurately and rapidly recalling and recognizing words that occurred in the immediately preceding clause. The same findings hold for episode boundaries within narrative stories. This occurs, according to SBF, because the mind packages coherence-disjunctive information into distinct branching mental substructures.

a reader/listener is presented with two embedded FDs (*the share of the men* as well as *Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre*) which exhibit strong discourse coherence with constituents located in the subsequent main clause (*their share* and *them*, respectively), thereby permitting the latter to be mapped onto the former as cognitively integral and cumulative.

The SBF posits that enhancement and suppression are the mechanisms by which foundation-laying, mapping, and shifting get activated (via boosting) and deactivated (via dampening). These mechanisms get triggered for the language-receiver by various configurations of morphological, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and discourse structures employed by the language-sender. Anaphora and cataphora are two such triggers, and both of them are operative within Biblical Hebrew FD. For example, when encountering:

וְהָאִישׁ מִיָּכָה לֹא בֵּית אֱלֹהִים

As for *the man Micab*—to *him* there was a shrine (Judg 17:5),

a reader/listener comes upon a third person masculine singular pronoun (י) within the main clause, the referent<sup>41</sup> of which is located within the antecedent front dislocated phrase (וְהָאִישׁ מִיָּכָה). This renders the pronoun *anaphoric* (lit. “back-carrying”), thereby improving cognitive access to the previously mentioned referent. Conversely, the front dislocated phrase—because it is syntactically detached and semantically deferred from its full referential context—directs a comprehender’s cognitive energies in a *cataphoric* (lit. “down [forward]-carrying”) direction, toward the coreferential constituent in the juxtaposed clause. Experimental results confirm that concepts marked with cataphoric devices are more highly activated (i.e., recalled more quickly and accurately by test-subjects) than are concepts which lack such devices (Gernsbacher 1990:146–49). Because the FD construction entails *both* cataphora and anaphora (in this mutually reinforcing sequence), it substantially amplifies the cognitive mechanisms of referent enhancement and nonreferent suppression. Front Dislocation is not only an attention-*getting* device, but also an attention-*creating* and attention-*directing* device.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> A pronoun’s specific deictic value gets determined by initial activation of *all* its contextually present and potential referents, followed by suppression (via grammatical well-formedness constraints) of less (or, non)relevant referents, as well as enhancement (via activation of similar memory nodes) of the most relevant referent (see Gernsbacher 1990:110–37). Experimental results show that “information from other sources (such as semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic context) also triggers suppression, but it does so more slowly and less powerfully” (ibid.:142).

<sup>42</sup> Cross-linguistic evidence indicates that the pertinent semiotic mechanisms also include a *prosodic* dimension. A spoken FD in French manifests a perceptible rise in pitch and gain in length to its ultimate or penultimate stressed syllable (De Cat 2004:71–79). These features constitute an “obligatory prosodic boundary” (Mertens 2006:86–87) that segregates the

#### 4.0. THE BIBLICAL DATA

The semiotic structures and cognitive dynamics composing FD are, time and again, put to powerful rhetorical usage within the texts of the Hebrew Bible. The language-sender's manipulation of a communication event by combining cataphora with the Advantage of First Mention serves to amplify anticipation on the part of the language-receiver.<sup>43</sup> Such anticipation is, of course, rapidly defused: simply upon full syntagmatic integration of the anaphoric constituent into its clause adjacent to the dislocated phrase.<sup>44</sup> Yet the con-

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FD from its subsequent main clause into a distinct "intonation group," thereby forming a "prosodic island" (De Cat 2006:63–66). Such intonational breaks occur consistently with FDs in other Romance languages, including Italian (Cecchetto 1999:40), Spanish (Casielles-Suárez 2003:331–32), and Catalan (Feldhausen 2010:165–71). A similar prosodic profile is operative within several Indo-European languages, including the Germanic subgroup's English (Geluykens 1992:97–114), and German (Grohmann 2003:143–44), as well as the Slavic subgroup's Russian (Pereltsvaig 2008:64–65), Czech (Sturgeon 2008:39–41), and Bulgarian (Krapova and Cinque 2008:259). This broad consistency for FD is not surprising, given that "stronger syntactic boundaries are more likely to be associated with the tonal and break index properties of an intonational phrase boundary" (Warren 1999:166). This association occurs because linguistic practice in real time is constrained by speakers' and hearers' capacities of cognitive processing . . . [and] this constraint guides the packaging of information in prosodic and syntactic units . . . [therefore] establishing a referent is often a full-blown action by itself. It is performed by clausal and phrasal constructions which separate it from the following predication and serve as a starting point for it . . . Moreover, referential act and predicative act *each occupy an intonational unit of their own* (Deppermann 2011:431–32; italics added).

These prosodic dynamics of FD structurally distinguish it from topicalization, where referent and predication both occur within one and the same intonational unit (Frey 2004:207; cf. Lambrecht 2001:1052, 1071). Front Dislocation, unlike topicalization, leverages discourse features at both morphosyntactic and prosodic levels to activate cataphora and anaphora, thereby heightening attention and amplifying anticipation amid the language-receiver's comprehension process. The more prominently these discourse features are invoked, the greater their cognitive-rhetorical impacts. The spoken cross-linguistic data strongly suggest, furthermore, that Biblical Hebrew FDs preserve discernible residues and recoverable patterns of intonation within their graphic medium (*contra*, e.g., Westbury 2010:6).

<sup>43</sup> Cataphoric devices "are not used primarily for the representation or the exposition of the narrative course of events, but rather for the *manipulation* of the anticipated course . . . [cataphora operates] in an 'open' textual field of reference where further developments have not yet become manifest and where they can only be forecast with more or less probability from the respective place of reading . . . cataphora are *constructions of attention*" (Wulff 1996:2–3, italics added).

<sup>44</sup> Whether the coreferential (anaphoric) constituent is situated at the beginning, middle, or end of its clause appears to result from a combination of syntactic constraints and stylistic preferences. Verbal clauses, for

cern here is not with literary or cinematic genres of sustained narrative suspense, but rather with the semiotic structures, cognitive dynamics, and rhetorical impacts composing punctuated uses of a particular suspense-building device.<sup>45</sup> It is this device—Front Dislocation—that can be applied authoritatively to produce heightened yet deferred comprehension. A survey of the biblical corpus reveals that FD constructions are often so utilized within contexts which can be broadly categorized as *narrative*, *juridical*, *oracular*, *lyrical*, and *Yahwistic*. Examples from each category will be examined in turn.

#### 4.1. NARRATIVE CONTEXTS

Biblical *narrative* texts contain numerous instances of rhetorical FD. Following the joyous birth of her own son Isaac (Gen 21:9–11), Sarah’s jealousy toward her slave-woman’s and husband’s son Ishmael abruptly triggers not only domestic tension among the characters but also cognitive tension within the audience. A conflict has erupted, but the narrative has not yet clarified whether and how it can be defused. The initial resolution arrives quickly via God’s instructions to Abraham—yet not as quickly as it otherwise might have, since the text incorporates two FDs:

כל אשר תאמר אליך שרה שמע בקלה כי ביצחק יקרא לך זרע:  
וגם את־בְּנֵי־הָאֲמָהָה לְגוֹי אֲשִׁימֶנּוּ כִּי זֶרַעֲךָ הוּא:

*All which Sarah says to you—heed her voice; for by Isaac your progeny will be called. As for even the son of the slave-woman—into a nation I will establish him, because your progeny is he (Gen 21:12–13).*

Two acute uncertainties produced by this episode involve whether Abraham will yield to his wife’s demands and what fate will befall his firstborn son. Via the FDs, both of these uncertainties get resolved in a manner that is semiotically, and thereby cognitively, protracted. In terms of the SBF rubric, the language-receiver is confronted with information from the language-sender which entails the Advantage of First Mention, yet which also lacks suffi-

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example, tend to shunt the anaphor farther down the syntactic chain than non-verbal clauses (see note 70), though not always (e.g., Deut 1:36, 38, 39). Regardless of the sequence employed, both the anaphor and its associated clausal constituents must be comprehended before the front dislocated phrase can get fully integrated into the accumulating cognitive structures of the communication event.

<sup>45</sup> “At a formal level we generate suspense when[ever] the distance—that is, the duration experienced together with other moments of consciousness—between two elements is greater than normal, which means greater than expected” (Stutterheim 1981:177). Similarly, “suspense has also been treated as the result of any retardation in closing the structure, in a wide sense, of a narrative text” (Tan and Diteweg 1996:150). Consult Sternberg (1985:278) for a discussion of “retardatory suspense” in biblical narrative.

cient contextual cues for signaling whether this information should be mapped onto the receiver's preceding cognitive structure, or whether it requires shifting to build a new structure. The unit-initial position of the FD, coupled with its immediate contextual ambiguity, demand additional cognitive effort for decipherment. Comprehension is momentarily retarded until the front dislocated constituents can be coherently integrated into their associated syntagms. Amid the interim, moments of *micro-suspense*<sup>46</sup> get generated for the language-receiver, as the language-sender manipulates the semiotic constituents of the communication event by structuring a rift between code and message, thereby exercising enhanced dominance over the information exchange.

Earlier in the Abr[ah]am story (Gen 15:2–3), the would-be patriarch laments his lack of progeny and the impending necessity of having to bequeath his household to a steward. Yahweh soon puts an end to such talk—although not quite as soon as he otherwise could have, had he used a simple declarative sentence instead of this FD:

לֹא יִרְשֶׁךָ זֶה כִּי־אִם אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמְעִידָה הוּא יִרְשֶׁךָ:

This one will not succeed you; only *one who comes forth from your loins—be* shall succeed you (Gen 15:4).

Abraham—and by narrative extension, all Israel—is here confronted with a looming existential crisis. This threat is duly defused, but the *answer* to the problem (“one who comes forth from your loins”) is syntactically detached from the *solution* (“he shall succeed you”) by means of FD. The language-sender demands greater cognitive processing efforts from the language-receiver, rhetorically prolonging the latter's suspense and amplifying the former's authority.<sup>47</sup>

At the cusp of the Israelites' entry into Canaan, Moses recites divine judgments making it painfully clear that possession of the land remains contingent upon loyalty to Yahweh. Neither a single person from the faithless generation (Deut 1:34–35), nor even Moses himself (Deut 1:37), will be permitted entry into the promised land. The narrative here intentionally cultivates apprehension and anxiety on the part of its audience: Of what ultimate good are the triumphant exodus from Egypt and the mighty travails in the wilderness if all Israel is condemned to perish beyond the Jordan?

<sup>46</sup> Proceeding from pragmatic insights by literary and cinematic critics, cognitive psychologists acknowledge that suspense can be a componential phenomenon consisting of multiple elements (“mini suspense and resolution episodes” [Brewer 1996:116], “episodic suspense” [Zillman 1996:207]) that contribute cumulatively to a larger narrative structure (cf. Sternberg 1990:84).

<sup>47</sup> This same technique with FD is employed when Yahweh variously pledges the land to Abraham and his descendants (Gen 13:15; 35:12; Josh 1:3; 13:6; 23:9).

It turns out that there are some key exceptions interspersed with Yahweh's restrictions, all of which are conveyed via FDs:

זולתי כלב בן־יפנה הוא יראנה

However, *Caleb the son of Yephunneh*—he shall see it [the land] (Deut 1:36).

יהושע בן נון העמד לפניך הוא יבא שמה

*Joshua the son of Nun, the one standing before you*—he shall enter there (Deut 1:38).

וטפכם אשר אמרתם לבז יהיה ובניכם אשר לא ידעו היום טוב ורע

המה יבאו שמה

*Your younglings whom you said would become prey, and your sons who still do not know good and evil*—they shall enter there (Deut 1:39).

Each of these constructions generates moments of micro-suspense within the unfolding narrative, directing the audience to focus attention upon linguistic structures and cognitive values that are acutely ambivalent. Caleb is explicitly exempted from the fate of his generation—but is this for better, or perhaps for even worse? The FD in v. 36 momentarily postpones Yahweh's decree by channeling the audience's cognitive energy into a specific referent situated amid an ambiguous context. If the incomparable Moses can be excluded from the promised land, then what is to become of his loyal deputy Joshua? The slightly longer FD in v. 38 defers clarification until the syntactic arrival at, and cognitive processing of, the associated main clause. Given that the entire generation of rebellious adults is doomed to extinction, what fate can possibly be in store for their offspring? The extended FD of v. 39 suspends the language-sender's answer for an even greater space and longer time, thereby requiring increased cognitive effort from the language-receiver to ensure integration of its data into the accruing mental structures of comprehension.

Biblical Hebrew FD elsewhere gets employed by Israel's patriarchs on behalf of rhetorically augmenting their authority. Joseph's dream interpretations are practically formulaic in this regard, each beginning with a front dislocated phrase that simultaneously highlights and yet postpones the very information most sought after by Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker, respectively:

זה פתרונו שלשת השרגים שלשת ימים הם:

This is its interpretation: *The three branches*—three days are *they* (Gen 40:12).

זה פתרונו שלשת הסלים שלשת ימים הם:

This is its interpretation: *The three baskets*—three days are *they* (Gen 40:18).

FDs become even more frequent and prominent when Joseph first addresses Pharaoh, rhetorically accentuating Joseph's divinely sanctioned authority by means of the syntactic structures and cognitive dynamics that his language invokes:

חֲלוֹם פָּרְעָה אֶחָד הוּא אֵת אֲשֶׁר הָאֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה הַגִּיד לְפָרְעָה: שֶׁבַע  
פָּרַת הַטֹּבֹת שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה וְשֶׁבַע הַשְּׁבָלִים הַטֹּבֹת שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה  
חֲלוֹם אֶחָד הוּא: וְשֶׁבַע הַפְּרוֹת הַרְקוֹת וְהָרַעַת הָעֵלֶת אֲחֲרֵיהֶן שֶׁבַע  
שָׁנִים הֵנָּה וְשֶׁבַע הַשְּׁבָלִים הַרְקוֹת שְׂדֵפוֹת הַקָּדִים יִהְיוּ שֶׁבַע שָׁנֵי רָעָב:

*The dreaming of Pharaoh*—identical is *it*.<sup>48</sup> That which God is about to do he has announced to Pharaoh. *The Seven good cattle*—seven years are *they*; and *the seven good ears*—seven years are *they*. *The dreaming*—identical is *it*. As for *the seven gaunt and bad cattle which arose after them*—seven years are *they*, as are the seven empty wind-scorched ears. They will be seven years of famine (Gen 41:25–27).<sup>49</sup>

Joseph's father Jacob is also no stranger to FD, using it to decree the patrilineal and covenantal fate of Joseph's sons—and by extension, Israel's dominant tribes—Ephraim and Manasseh:

וְעַתָּה שְׁנֵי־בְנֵיךָ הַנּוֹלָדִים לְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַד־בָּאִי אֵלַיךְ מִצְרַיִם לִי־  
הֵם

So now, *the two of your sons who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you at Egypt*—mine are *they* (Gen 48:5);

and also to assure the site of his own final resting place (as recounted by Joseph to Pharaoh's household, in efforts to bolster the authority of his father's request):

אָבִי הַשְּׁבִיעֵנִי לֵאמֹר הֵנָּה אָנֹכִי מֵת בְּקִבְרֵי אֲשֶׁר כָּרַתִּי לִי בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן  
שָׁמָּה תִּקְבְּרֵנִי

My father made me pledge, saying: “Behold, I am dying; *in my grave which I carved for myself in the land of Canaan*—there you must bury me” (Gen 50:5).

As an episode of micro-suspense, Jacob's demise is skillfully crafted. Jacob uses his dying words (Gen 49:29–32) to make it unmistakably clear that he wants to be buried with his wife and forebearers inside the cave at Machpelah. But Joseph soon after (Gen 50:2–3) initiates formal Egyptian embalming and lamentation

<sup>48</sup> Cf. the reliability of Daniel's vision (Dan 8:26), which is also reinforced via FD.

<sup>49</sup> Also note the FD in Gen 47:21 which relates Joseph's authoritative and suspenseful decision regarding the fate of the famished Egyptian people; and cf. Solomon's similarly structured ruling (1 Kgs 9:20–21) concerning the human remnants of the Israelite conquests.

rituals for his father, raising the question whether Jacob's last request will be honored. As the audience encounters the front dislocated constituents of Gen 50:5, it remains uncertain whether Egyptian funerary pomp and circumstance will trump patriarchal fidelity: Did Jacob carve out his tomb in the land of Canaan for nothing? Will the powerful son pay heed to his father's dying words? This suspense is relieved precisely at the moment when the FD gets integrated syntactically and cognitively into its adjoining clause ("bury me *there?*"), making it clear that Joseph has indeed remembered Jacob's wish, and that he does intend to fulfill it (as Gen 50:5–14 duly illustrates).<sup>50</sup>

The motif of divine plague is amenable to FD's rhetorical dynamics of suspense and authority, as with Yahweh's decree of hail against Egypt:<sup>51</sup>

כֹּל־הָאָדָם וְהַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר־יִמְצָא בַשָּׂדֶה וְלֹא יֵאָסֵף הַבַּיִתָּה וְיָרֵד עֲלֵהֶם  
הַבָּרָד וּמָתוּ:

*Every man or beast who is found in the field and who is not gathered indoors—the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die (Exod 9:19).*<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The importance of the cave at Machpelah is also evidenced by the account of its sale in Gen 23. Amid their business transaction Ephron the Hittite twice incorporates FDs into his responses, leveraging his language to render Abraham (and the audience) momentarily off-kilter, thereby enhancing his influence over the communication event (and the deal). Abraham expressly wants to purchase the *cave* within Ephron's field (Gen 23:9), yet this is precisely the object over which the Hittite delays resolution:

לֹא־אֲדִינִי שְׂמַעֲנִי הַשָּׂדֶה נְתַתִּי לָךְ וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ לָךְ נְתַתִּיהָ

No, my lord, hear me: The field I give to you; as for *the cave which is in it*—to you I grant *it* (Gen 23:11).

Even as the transaction reaches its monetary stage, Ephron remains cagy, *naming* a price within the FD phrase, yet not explicitly *acceding* to that price until the juxtaposed clause:

אֲדִינִי שְׂמַעֲנִי אֶרֶץ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שְׁקֶל־כֶּסֶף בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ מֵה־הוּא

My lord, hear me: *A land, four hundred shekels of silver*—between me and between you, what is *that?* (Gen 23:15).

Note elsewhere the bargaining undertaken by the Reubenites and Gadites with Moses to secure Transjordanian cattle country (Num 32:3–4), as well as Jephthah's theological-territorial parley amid tense negotiations with the Amorite king Sihon (Judg 11:24; cf. 1 Kgs 18:24). A different kind of currency (human life) gets arbitrated between King David and the Gibeonites (2 Sam 21:5–6), as the latter finally present their terms via an FD.

<sup>51</sup> References to divine retribution and reward are similarly structured in Deut 4:3–4 concerning fidelity to Baal-Peor versus Yahweh.

<sup>52</sup> Although the syntagmatic ambiguity triggered by the FD phrase here gets resolved at the object pronoun of the subsequent clause (עֲלֵהֶם), the micro-suspense is not fully defused until the language-receiver

The Israelite memory—and dread—of Yahweh’s plagues against Egypt are also invoked amid the Deuteronomic blessings promised for covenant loyalty:

וְהִסִּיר יְהוָה מִמֶּךָ כָּל-חֲלֵי וְכָל-מַדּוּי מִצְרַיִם הָרָעִים אֲשֶׁר יִדְעַתָּ לֹא  
יִשְׁמַם בְּךָ וּנְתַנֶּם בְּכָל-שָׂנְאֶיךָ:

Yahweh will deflect from you every sickness; regarding *all the pestilences of Egypt, the evil ones about which you know*—he will not set *them* against you, but he will inflict them upon all your enemies (Deut 7:15).<sup>53</sup>

Deuteronomy later inverts this promised blessing into a threatened curse for covenant infidelity, employing another FD that ups the ante rhetorically in terms of language-receiver suspense and language-sender authority:

וְהָשִׁיב בְּךָ אֶת כָּל-מַדּוּי מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר יִגְרַת מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְדָבְקוּ בְּךָ: גַּם כָּל-  
חֲלֵי וְכָל-מַכָּה אֲשֶׁר לֹא כָתוּב בְּסֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת יַעֲלֶם יְהוָה עֲלֶיךָ  
עַד הַשְׁמָדָךְ:

He will bring back upon you every pestilence of Egypt which you have dreaded, and they will cling to you. Furthermore, *every sickness and every affliction which is not written in this Book of Instruction*—Yahweh will raise *them* against you, until your destruction (Deut 28:60–61).<sup>54</sup>

Leaders attempting to incentivize their forces toward martial action sometimes resort to FDs. In a tradition preserved identically by two texts, Caleb employs this rhetorical tactic when encouraging his soldiers to press their campaign against the Canaanites:

אֲשֶׁר-יִכָּה אֶת-קִרְיַת-סֶפֶר וְלָכְדָהּ וְנָתַתִּי לּוֹ אֶת-עַכְסָהּ בְּתִי לְאִשָּׁה:

*The one who attacks Kiryath-Sepber and captures it*—I will grant to *him* Achsah my daughter for a wife (Josh 15:16; Judg 1:12).

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encounters the additional coreferential element via the ensuing verbal subject (וְיָמִיתוּ). Cf., e.g., Gen 42:5–6, where Joseph is not only Egypt’s governor but also the manager of its grain resources. Thus, one suspense-episode dissipates (*Will Joseph and his brothers have occasion to meet in Egypt?*), even as another coagulates (*What will be the outcome of such an encounter?*).

<sup>53</sup> The Philistines are acutely apprehensive about this fearsome reputation of Israel’s deity, as the FD in 1 Sam 4:8 makes clear.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. the FDs in vv. 54, 56, where even the most genteel men and women of Israelite society will eventually succumb to barbarity for defiance of Yahweh’s covenant. Encounters with divine proximity and/or agency elsewhere avail themselves of FD, such as with Moses’ inaugural encounter of Yahweh upon the mountain (Exod 3:5), and with his receiving the divinely inscribed law (Exod 32:16, below).

Whereas Caleb invokes his military and paternal authority to dangle a reward before his men for success, Jehu summons his royal authority to proffer punishment for failure:

הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִמְלֹט מִן־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר אָנִי מְבִיא עֲלֵיְדֵיכֶם נִפְשׁוֹ תַחַת  
נִפְשׁוֹ:

*The man who lets escape any of the men whom I have brought into your hands—his life in place of his life (2 Kgs 10:24).*

Similar attention-grabbing, incentivizing language by King Saul even gets reported as hearsay by the men of Israel while they tremble pitifully before the Philistine warrior Goliath:

וְהִיא הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִכְנֹנֵי יַעֲשֶׂרְנֹנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ עֲשֶׂר גְּדוֹל וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ יִתְּנוּ לוֹ וְאֵת  
בֵּית אָבִיו יַעֲשֶׂה חֲפָשִׁי בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

So be it:<sup>55</sup> *the man who smites him—the king will reward him with great riches, and his daughter he will grant to him, and the house of his father he will render exempt in Israel*” (1 Sam 17:25).<sup>56</sup>

Although the Deuteronomistic movement was surely familiar with the Yahwistic temple in Jerusalem, the book of Deuteronomy in its redacted form rhetorically leverages the narrative conceit that Jerusalem has not yet been acquired and that the temple has not yet been built. The attendant FDs turn out to be not merely formulaic but also theologically authoritative and literarily suspenseful:

הַשְׁמֹר לָךְ פְּוֹת־תַּעֲלָה עַל־תֵּיךְ בְּכָל־מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה: כִּי אִם־בַּמְּקוֹם  
אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה בְּאַחַד שְׁבָטֶיךָ שָׁם תַּעֲלָה עַל־תֵּיךְ וְשָׁם תַּעֲשֶׂה כָל  
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ:

Control yourselves, lest you offer up your burnt sacrifices at any place that you see. Only *at the place which Yahweh chooses amid one of your tribes—there* shall you offer up your burnt sacrifices, and there shall you do all which I command you (Deut 12:13–14; see also Deut 12:5, 11; 16:6).

When construction of the temple finally does happen, Solomon twice quotes from Yahweh’s decrees to his father David: once to his Phoenician ally Hiram, and once to the entire Assembly of

<sup>55</sup> Where *וְהִיא* prefaces an FD (e.g., Gen 24:14, 43; Deut 12:11; Josh 2:19; 1 Kgs 18:24), it functions pragmatically as a declaratory construction to frame the (future) temporal context of the front dislocated substantive phrase. See the discussion of clausal adverbs by Moshavi (2010:68–75, 83).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. 1 Sam 21:10 where the fugitive David, desperate for any weapon with which to defend himself, gets directed—slowly and suspensefully—by the priest Abimelek’s FD to the powerful sword of Goliath which is stashed behind the ephod at Nob.

Israel. On both occasions, Solomon invokes FDs which augment the attentions of his audience and which reinforce his ascendancy over kingdom and cult:

והִנְנִי אֹמֵר לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־דָּוִד אָבִי  
לֵאמֹר בְּנֵה אֶשֶׁר אֶתֶן תְּחִתֶּיךָ עַל־כִּסְאֶךָ הוּא־יִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת לְשֵׁמִי:

I indeed propose to build a house for the name of Yahweh my god, just as Yahweh decreed to David my father, saying: “*Your son whom I shall set in your place upon your throne—he will build the house for my name*” (1 Kgs 5:19).

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־דָּוִד אָבִי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִם־לִבְּךָ לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁמִי  
הִטִּיבְתָּ כִּי הָיָה עִם־לִבְּךָ: רַק אַתָּה לֹא תִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת כִּי אִם־בְּנֵה הַיֵּצֵא  
מִחֻלְצֶיךָ הוּא־יִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת לְשֵׁמִי:

Yahweh said to David my father: “Because it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was in your heart. Nevertheless, you yourself will not build the house. Instead, *your son, the one who comes forth from your loins—he shall build the house for my name*” (1 Kgs 8:18–19; cf. 2 Chr 6:8–9).<sup>57</sup>

Given that this section of 1 Kgs is attributed by many scholars to (largely) pro-Solomonic factions, the use of FD in these syntagms is not surprising. Solomon is structuring his own words in manners that amplify the attentions and protract the expectations of his listeners (who themselves possess considerable authority as the King of Tyre and the Assembly of Israel). In so doing, Solomon enhances his own dominance over the semiotic structures and the cognitive-rhetorical dynamics of these momentous communications.<sup>58</sup>

Israel’s kings are not the only monarchs who put FD to powerful use. Having besieged Ahab’s royal city of Samaria, Ben-Hadad

<sup>57</sup> Solomon’s architectural prowess extends beyond Jerusalem and into the cities ceded to him by the Tyrian king Hiram (2 Chr 8:2; *contra* 1 Kgs 9:12–13). At an information-structure level, this FD does introduce a (novel) topic shift in the discourse. But it also functions rhetorically to reinforce Solomon’s growing royal and territorial dominion. Compare this with the FDs in 1 Kgs 12:17 and 2 Chr 10:17 that suspensefully (*will any tribes remain?*) demarcate Rehoboam’s shrinking kingdom and diminished authority—a monarchy that nevertheless encompasses the *legitimate* Jerusalemite cult, as the FD at 2 Chr 13:10 underscores. Also note the FD employed in 2 Kgs 23:15 to describe Josiah’s climactic destruction of Jeroboam’s apostate altar at Bethel.

<sup>58</sup> It is further noteworthy that the original oracle to which Solomon is referring (insofar as it is preserved by 2 Sam 7:12–13) does *not* employ FD constructions on the royal son’s behalf (*contra* 1 Chr 28:6), since the focus of 2 Sam 7 remains politically, theologically, and rhetorically fixed upon David.

of Aram structures his terms of surrender in a manner that cognitively destabilizes the conquered and rhetorically solidifies the victor:

כספך וזהבך ליהוא ונשיך ובניך הטובים ליהם:

*Your silver and your gold—to me it [belongs]. As for your lovely wives and sons—to me they [belong]*” (1 Kgs 20:3).<sup>59</sup>

The tables are soon turned on the Arameans, which the Biblical Hebrew artfully conveys via another FD, contrasting prospective Israelite mercy with past Aramean severity:

הנהנא שמענו כי מלכי בית ישראל בי־מלכי חסד הם

Please now, we have heard that *the kings of the House of Israel—* kings of magnanimity are *they* (1 Kgs 20:31).

Front Dislocation in Biblical Hebrew narrative often gets employed in syntagms that function, broadly speaking, to *categorize* the status of the referent(s) with respect to the discourse context. In some cases the construction takes on a contractual tone, delineating the involved parties and their expected roles. Gen 17 contains a prime instance of this, wherein four FDs are voiced by God to declare the respective positions of the covenant participants: of God himself (אני הנה בריתי אתך) “As for *me*—indeed, *my* covenant is with you”; v. 4); of Abram (ואתה את־בריתי תשמר) “As for *you*—my covenant *you* shall keep”; v. 9); of Abram’s male descendants (וערל זכר אשר) לא־ימול את־בשר ערלתו ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מעמיה) “As for *any uncircumcised male whose foreskin-flesh is not circumcised*—cut off shall *that life* be from its people”; v. 14); and of Sarai (את־שרי אשרך לא־תקרא) שמה שרי) “As for *Sarai your wife*—you shall not call *her* name Sarai”; v. 15).<sup>60</sup> Elsewhere FD categorization concerns definitive measurements of noteworthy objects, especially involving Yahweh’s tem-

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Nebuchadnezzar’s dealings—all conveyed via FD—with Judah’s military elite (2 Kgs 24:16), with the conquered people who remained in Judah (2 Kgs 25:22), and with the sacred temple objects (2 Chr 36:18). A more beneficent yet no less anticipation-laden exercise of royal authority is preserved in Cyrus of Persia’s edict at Ezra 1:3–4 which also employs FD (cf. 2 Chr 36:23). Note, too, Solomon’s subjugation of the Israelites’ residual adversaries to forced labor (2 Chr 8:7–8), a decision that gets revealed only amid the FD’s juxtaposed clause, up to which point (within the FD itself) the prospects for even worse fates remain. Asa’s removal of Maakah as גְּבִירָה for her ostensible idolatry is also conveyed by FD (1 Kgs 15:13; 2 Chr 15:16), thereby undermining her (and Asherah’s) influence while bolstering his (and Yahweh’s) authority.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Exod 14:16–17 where Yahweh decrees both Moses’ and his own roles in effecting the Israelites’ escape from Pharaoh through the sea. Also note Gedeliah’s address (Jer 40:10) to the unexiled poor of the land, stipulating his authority from the Babylonians along with the people’s right to glean and settle.

ple.<sup>61</sup> In some instances FD demarcates subgroups contained within larger categories.<sup>62</sup> But the most frequent and formulaic categorizing function of FD occurs with the *royal acts* motif, by which the numerous unnarrated actions and events of a king's reign get generically dangled before the audience—only to be promptly deferred via an explicit rhetorical question:

וְיִתֵּר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְחִכְמָתוֹ הַלְּזֵאתָם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר  
דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה:

Regarding *the rest of the acts of Solomon, and everything that he accomplished, and his wisdom*—are not *they* written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon? (1 Kgs 11:41).<sup>63</sup>

The story *could* indeed continue, as the narrator teasingly informs the audience within the front dislocated phrase. But the story will *not* continue biblically, as the juxtaposed clause with its resumptive element finally reveals.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>61</sup> These include the temple's dimensions (1 Kgs 6:2, 3, 6); the value of the ritual objects and size of the bronze pillars (Jer 52:20–21); the length of the cherubim wings within the holy of holies (2 Chr 3:11); and even the building's raw materials (1 Chr 29:16).

<sup>62</sup> See Yahweh's instructions to Gideon concerning which men to take into battle and which ones to leave behind (Judg 7:5); also Ezra's proclamation shunning those among the returned exiles who do not assemble in a timely manner at Jerusalem (Ezra 10:8).

<sup>63</sup> The royal acts FDs occur at 1 Kgs 14:19, 29; 15:7; 23, 31; 16:5, 14, 20, 27; 22:39, 46; 2 Kgs 1:18; 10:34; 12:20; 13:8, 12; 14:15, 18, 28; 15:6, 11, 15, 21, 26, 31, 36; 16:19; 20:20; 21:25; 23:28; 24:5; 1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29; 12:15; 16:11; 20:34; 24:27; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 33:18, 19; 35:26–27; 36:8; Esth 10:2.

<sup>64</sup> The frequent occurrence of the royal acts formula does not automatically deprive it of rhetorical effect. Perry (1979:357) contends that “a second reading of a text is a sort of conscious reconstruction of the naive reading.” The resiliency of narrative suspense has been empirically verified, even though its precise cognitive-affective mechanisms remain debated (e.g., Brewer 1996; Uidhir 2011). One influential theory holds that suspense endures repetition because human cognition has adaptively evolved to “incorporate an *expectation of uniqueness*: because life is made up of unique experiences—we undergo repeated types, but not repeated tokens—readers [and listeners] do not ordinarily have reason to search memory for *literal* repetitions of events” (Gerrig 1996:102–3; cf. 1989). Note in this regard the front dislocated refrain throughout the Balaam cycle (Num 22–24), wherein the nefarious designs of the Moabite king Balak repeatedly get frustrated by the superior authority of Israel's patron deity:

הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר יְשִׁים אֱלֹהִים בְּפִי אֲתוֹ אֲדַבֵּר:

*The word which God places in my mouth—it* I shall proclaim (Num 22:38; see also 22:20, 35; 23:12, 26; 24:13).

#### 4.2. JURIDICAL CONTEXTS

It is precisely because a front dislocated phrase requires increased cognitive effort from the language-receiver for proper decoding and alignment with the surrounding discourse structures that the language-sender can exercise enhanced dominance over the communication event, imbuing its contents with added authority. One might thus expect language within *juridical* contexts to take advantage of FD, and this is indeed the case for Biblical Hebrew. Front Dislocation constructions are especially prominent amid sections of the legal codes preserved in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.<sup>65</sup> A frequent topic involves categorical dietary restrictions, including several within Lev 11:

כל מפרסת פרסה ושסעת שסע פרסת מעלת גרה בבהמה אתה  
תאכלו:

*Anything with a divided hoof and cloven hoofs that takes up cud among the animals—it you may eat (Lev 11:3).*

כל אשר-לו סנפיר וקשקשת במים בימים ובנחלים אתם תאכלו: וכל  
אשר איזלו סנפיר וקשקשת בימים ובנחלים מכל שרץ המים ומכל  
נפש החיה אשר במים שקץ הם לכם:

*Everything on which there are fins and scales in the waters, in the seas and in the rivers—they you may eat. But everything on which there are not fins and scales in the seas and in the rivers, of every water-swearer and of every such living creature which is in the waters—an abomination are they for you (Lev 11:9–10).*<sup>66</sup>

Proper and improper behaviors with respect to religious offerings and rituals can also be declared via FD:<sup>67</sup>

וכל-מעשר הארץ מזרע הארץ מפרי העץ ליהוה הוא קדש ליהוה:

*As for every tithe of the land, from seed of the ground, from fruit of the tree—to Yahweh is it; holy to Yahweh (Lev 27:30).*

<sup>65</sup> Instances of FD which refer to the collective Deuteronomic legal code occur in Deut 13:1 and 30:11. For examples of FD in Qumranic and Mishnaic law, see Khan 1988:100–4.

<sup>66</sup> See also Lev 11:12, 20, 23, 27, 42. Other FDs involving dietary prescriptions and/or restrictions occur in Exod 12:16, 19; Deut 14:6, 19 (cf. Deut 20:20).

<sup>67</sup> See also Exod 30:33; Lev 17:3–4, 8–9; 20:6; 22:3, 28; Num 5:10; 9:13; 18:12.

עֹרֹת או שְׁבוֹר או־חָרוּץ או־יִבֵּלֶת או גָּרֵב או יִלְפֶת לֹא־תִקְרִיבו אֵלָה  
 לַיהוָה וְאִשָּׁה לֹא־תִתְּנוּ מֵהֶם עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה: וְשׂוֹר וְשֵׂה שְׂרוּעַ  
 וְקָלוֹט נִדְבָה תַעֲשֶׂה אֹתוֹ וּלְגֵדֶר לֹא יִרְצָה:

[Animals] *blind, or broken, or maimed, or discharging, or scabby, or crusty*—you shall not offer *these* to Yahweh; and a fire-sacrifice you shall not offer with them upon the altar to Yahweh. But *a bull or a sheep extended or stunted*—as a freewill offering you may make *it*; but for a votive offering it will not be accepted (Lev 22:22–23).

Categorical FDs involving ritual purity often encompass both sacrificial and dietary dimensions:<sup>68</sup>

וְהִנְפֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר־תֹאכַל בְּשָׂר מִזֶּבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר לַיהוָה וְטִמְאַתּוּ עָלָיו  
 וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַמּוּיָהּ: וְנִפְשׁ כִּי־תִגַּע בְּכֹל־טִמָּא בְּטִמְאַת אָדָם  
 או בְּבִהֵמָה טִמְאַה או בְּכֹל־שִׂקָן טִמָּא וְאָכַל מִבְּשַׂר־זֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים  
 אֲשֶׁר לַיהוָה וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַמּוּיָהּ:

*As for the mortal who consumes flesh from a sacrifice of well-being which is for Yahweh while his impurity is upon him—that mortal shall be severed from its people. As for a mortal that touches anything impure (whether human impurity, or an impure animal, or any impure creature), and who consumes from flesh of the sacrifice of well-being which is for Yahweh—that mortal shall be severed from its people (Lev 7:20–21).*

Authoritative sexual mores also can be stipulated by FD, and nowhere more categorically so than within the juridical collection of Lev 20:<sup>69</sup>

וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִנְאַף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִנְאַף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ רְעוּהוּ מוֹת־יּוּמָת  
 הַנָּאֵף וְהַנָּאֶפֶת: . . . וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־כַּלְתּוֹ מוֹת יּוּמָתוֹ שְׁנֵי־הֶם  
 . . . וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־זֶכֶר מִשְׁכַּבֵי אִשָּׁה תוֹעֵבָה עָשׂוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם . . .  
 וְאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרַב אֶל־כָּל־בִּהֵמָה לְרַבְעָה אֹתָהּ וְהִרְגִת אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה  
 וְאֶת־הַבִּהֵמָה . . . וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־אִשָּׁה דָּוָה וְגִלָּה אֶת־עֲרוֹתָהּ  
 אֶת־מִקְרָהּ הָעֵרָה וְהִיא גִלְתָּהּ אֶת־מִקְוֹר דָּמֶיהָ וְנִכְרְתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם מִקְרָב  
 עַמָּם:

<sup>68</sup> See also Lev 7:9, 25; 27; 17:10, 11, 14; Deut 12:23 (cf. Gen 9:6). For FDs associated with somatic purity issues, see Lev 13:15, 29, 38, 40; 15:16, 18; Num 19:20 (cf. Num 19:15).

<sup>69</sup> Quranic Arabic employs FD similarly for juridical pronouncements: *'azzāniyatu wazzānī fajlidū kulla wāhidin minhumā mi'ata jaldatin* “*The adulteress and the adulterer—scourge each one of them with a hundred lashes*” (Q 24:2); cf. Q 4:16; 5:38; also see Khan 1988:47–49.

Regarding *a man who commits adultery with the wife of a man, who commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor*—the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death . . . Concerning *a man who lies with his daughter-in-law*—they both shall be put to death . . . Regarding *a man who lies with a man like the lying of a woman*—they both have committed an abomination . . . Regarding *a woman who approaches any beast to copulate with it*—you shall kill the woman and the beast . . . Concerning *a man who lies with a menstruating woman, and has revealed her nakedness, and has exposed her flow, and she has revealed the flow of her blood*—they both shall be cut off from the midst of their people (Lev 20:10, 12, 13, 16, 18).<sup>70</sup>

The foregoing examples demonstrate that FD phrases employed in juridical contexts function similarly to conditional protases for juxtaposed clausal apodoses (see Gesenius 1910:494 §159i; Waltke and O'Connor 1990:529, 535–36).<sup>71</sup> Unlike the syntactically subordinate protasis of a formal conditional sentence, however, the FD remains syntagmatically indeterminate with respect to its ensuing clause, becoming momentarily suspended within the comprehender's cognitive architecture. In terms of modality, furthermore, FD constructions in juridical contexts present their contents in a prescriptive and declarative (*realis*) manner, whereas conditional sentences are structured as conjectural and contingent (*irrealis*). Rhetorically, this categorical clarity of the FD gets leveraged against its cognitive-semiotic ambiguity, simultaneously demanding attention and postponing clarification. In this regard such FDs function not unlike titles or captions, which declare their own semiotic content even as they defer their full semiotic context.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> English translations that literally convey Hebrew word order are frequently awkward, given the divergent morphosyntactic profiles of each language (subject—verb—object and verb—subject—object, respectively). The clausal predication of Lev 20:10, for instance, is structured as *die* (infinitive) + *shall be made dead* (3ms prefix verb) + *adulterer* (participle) + *adulteress* (participle), whereas Lev 20:12 unfolds syntactically as *die* (infinitive) + *shall be made dead* (3mp prefix verb) + *two-them* (pronominal). Discerning the precise cognitive impacts of differing word orders upon native versus non-native language users would be a fruitful enterprise for cognitive psychology and evolutionary linguistics. Although such data are not directly accessible for an ancient unspoken language such as Biblical Hebrew, comparative and cross-linguistic studies into how the human brain processes morphosyntax would likely shed some light on our homologous ancestors (N.B. Heine and Kuteva 2007; Givón 2009).

<sup>71</sup> Akkadian omen, medical, and legal texts (see Khan 1988:158–59) commonly go so far as to integrate an FD into the protasis of a formal conditional (*šumma*) syntagm: e.g., *šum-ma a-wi-lum hu-bu-ul-lum e-li-šu i-ba-aš-ši-ma*, “If a man—a debt upon him has happened . . .”

<sup>72</sup> Baicchi (2004:19) observes that “The cataphoric quality of titles derives from their being indexical *signantia*, whose *signata* have to be retrieved from the text base. Although titles are external to the text, they are related to it in terms of contiguity . . . co-interpretability is delayed,

### 4.3. ORACULAR CONTEXTS

Front Dislocation is also put to rhetorical use within certain *oracular* utterances by Israel's prophets. This includes the extension of Yahweh's covenant to previously marginalized categories of people:

לְסָרִיסִים<sup>73</sup> אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־שַׁבָּתוֹתַי וּבָחֲרוּ בְּאֲשֶׁר חָפְצָתִי וּמְחֻזְקִים  
בְּבְרִיתִי: וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם בְּבֵיתִי וּבְחֻמּוֹתַי יָד וְשֵׁם טוֹב מִבְּנִים וּמִבָּנוֹת . . .  
וּבְנֵי הַנֶּכֶר הַנְּלוּיִם עַל־יְהוָה לְשָׂרְתוֹ וּלְאַהֲבָה אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ  
לְעַבְדִּים כָּל־שֹׁמֵר שַׁבָּת מִחֻלּוֹ וּמְחֻזְקִים בְּבְרִיתִי: וְהִבִּיאֹתִים אֶל־הַר  
קְדְשִׁי וְשִׂמְחָתִים בְּבֵית תַּפְלְתִּי

Concerning *the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, and choose that which has pleased me, and remain strong in my covenant*—I shall grant to *them*, within my house and within my walls, a monument and a name better than sons or daughters . . . Regarding *offspring of the foreigner who join themselves to Yahweh for his ministry, in order to love the name of Yahweh, to be servants to him; all who keep from profaning the sabbath, and who remain strong in my covenant*—I shall bring *them* to my holy mountain, and I shall gladden them in my house of prayer (Isa 56:4–5, 6–7).

The eunuchs and foreigners are counseled in Isa 56:3 not to despair, but it is only within these subsequent verses—and only gradually, via suspense-inducing FDs—that Yahweh categorically reveals their new social standings. A similar rhetorical ploy is invoked within the response to the panicked inquiry (Isa 33:14) by the sinful ones regarding their prospects for surviving Yahweh's fiery wrath:

הַלֹּדֵד צְדָקוֹת וְדִבַּר מִישְׁרִים מֵאֵס בְּבָצַע מַעֲשֵׂקוֹת נֶעַר כְּפָיו מִתְמַדֵּד  
בְּשֹׁחַד אֵטֶם אָזְנוֹ מִשְׁמַע דְּמִים וְעֵצִים עֵינָיו מִרְאוֹת בְּרָע: הוּא מְרוֹמֵם  
יִשְׁכֵּן מִצְדוֹת סְלֵעִים מִשְׁגָּבוֹ לְחֻמוֹ נִתָּן מִיָּמָיו נְאֻמָּנִים:

*The one who walks righteously and who speaks uprightly, who rejects gain from oppressions, who shakes his hands from grasping a bribe, who stops up his ears from hearing bloodshed, and who shuts his eyes from seeing evil—he atop the heights shall dwell, a rock fortress his stronghold, his bread granted, his water assured (Isa 33:15–16).*

Yahweh elsewhere proclaims that transgressors of his covenant will suffer a fate akin to that of the ritually-severed calf used to seal the original pledge (Jer 34:18). Yet precisely what this will entail does not get revealed until the following verses, in a manner both suspenseful and authoritative:

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sometimes even to the end of the reading process.”

<sup>73</sup> For FD introduced by לְ, see Gesenius 1910:458 §143e.

שְׂרֵי יְהוּדָה וְשָׂרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם הַסְּרָסִים וְהַכְּהֻנִים וְכָל עַם הָאָרֶץ הָעֹבְרִים  
בֵּין בְּתָרֵי הָעֵגֶל: וְנָתַתִּי אוֹתָם בְּיַד אִיבֵיהֶם וּבְיַד מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשָׁם

*The princes of Judah and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs and the priests, and all the people of the land, those who passed between the halves of the calf—I will give them into the hand of their enemies, into the power of those who seek their lives (Jer 34:19–20).*<sup>74</sup>

#### 4.4. LYRICAL CONTEXTS

*Lyrical* uses of Biblical Hebrew within liturgical and sapiential genres also take rhetorical advantage of FD's cognitive-semiotics. One common application occurs among the *parallelismus membrorum* that correlate with the poetic<sup>75</sup> function of language. Some examples are extant from within the first half of a distych:<sup>76</sup>

צָפוֹן וְיָמִין אֵתָהּ בְּרָאתָם תְּבוֹר וְחֶרְמוֹן בְּשִׂמְךָ יִרְנְנוּ:

*North and South—you yourself created them; Tabor and Hermon in your name rejoice (Ps 89:13).*

בְּרַכַּת יְהוָה הִיא תַעֲשִׂיר וְלֹא־יוֹסֵף עֲצָב עִמָּה: . . . מְגוֹרַת רָשָׁע הִיא  
תְּבוֹאֵנָה וְתֵאֵוֹת צְדִיקִים יִתֵּן:

*The blessing of Yahweh—it makes rich; And toil does not increase with it . . . The dread of the wicked one—it comes upon him; But the desire of the righteous ones he grants (Prov 10:22, 24).*

הַחֲכָם עֵינָיו בְּרֹאשׁוֹ וְהַכְּסִיל בַּחֹשֶׁךְ הוֹלֵךְ

*The wise man—his eyes are in his head; But the fool in darkness walks (Qoh 2:14).*<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Also see FDs involving divine wrath and judgment in Jer 22:12, 27; 23:34; 27:11; Ezek 16:58; 18:4, 20; 44:15; Hos 7:8; 9:11; 11:5; Zech 1:5; Lam 1:4; 2:22. Note, too, how FD is employed to convey the Yahwistic agency and authority imbuing the oracles of Balaam (see note 64), Micaiah (1 Kgs 22:14), and Jahaziel (2 Chr 20:14). Ignoring or fabricating this divine agency/authority entails dire consequences, as stipulated by the juridical FDs in Deut 18:19–20.

<sup>75</sup> See Berlin 2008 [1985]; Jakobson 1987 [1960].

<sup>76</sup> See also Ps 125:2; Prov 12:16; Job 28:28. For instances in nonliturgical and nonsapiential contexts, see Exod 1:22; Ezek 32:7–8.

<sup>77</sup> Qohelet elsewhere takes full rhetorical advantage of FD's suspenseful and authoritative dynamics in describing the tragedy of fortunes earned and yet not enjoyed:

אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִתְּלוּ הָאֱלֹהִים עֶשֶׂר וּנְכָסִים וְכְבוֹד וְאֵינָנו חָסֵר לְנַפְשׁוֹ מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר־  
יִתְּאָוֶה וְלֹא־יִשְׁלִיטֵנוּ הָאֱלֹהִים לְאָכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי אִישׁ נִכְרִי יֵאָכְלֵנוּ זֶה הַבֶּל וְחָלִי רָע  
הוּא:

*A man to whom God has given riches, possessions, and honor, so that nothing is lacking in his life from anything which he desires, and yet God does not empower him to use them, but a foreign man uses them—this is futility, and a grievous ill is it (Qoh*

Instances of FD within the second half of a distych are even more frequent:<sup>78</sup>

לְךָ שָׁמַיִם אֶרֶץ תָּבַל וּמְלֶאכֶה אֶתְּךָ יִסְדָּתָם:

To you the heavens, also to you the earth; *The world and its fullness*—you have established *them* (Ps 89:12).

אֵיזָה הַדֶּרֶךְ יִשְׁכֶּן־אֹר וְחֹשֶׁךְ אֵיזָה מְקוֹמוֹ: . . . מִבֶּטֶן מִי יֵצֵא הַקָּרַח  
וּכְפָר שָׁמַיִם מִי יִלְדוּ: . . . הַתְּצִיא מִזְרוֹת בְּעֵתוֹ וְעֵישׁ עַל־בְּנֵיהָ תִנְחַם:

Where is the path to the dwelling of light? As for *darkness*—where is *its* abode? . . . From whose belly does the ice come forth? As for *the frost of heaven*—who birthed *it*? . . . Can you lead out Mazzaroth in its season? As for *the Bear and her cubs*—can you guide *them*? (Job 38:19, 29, 32).<sup>79</sup>

כִּרְה־שַׁחַת בָּהּ יִפֹּל וְגִלְל אָבֹן אֱלִיו תָּשׁוּב:

One who digs a pit into it shall fall; As for *one who rolls a stone*—to *him* shall it return (Prov 26:27).

Another portion of Proverbs interweaves FDs into an elegant pattern of alternating B/A/B/A distychs:

נֶפֶשׁ־בְּרָכָה תִדְשֵׁן וּמְרוֹה גַם־הוּא יוֹרֵא: מִנֵּעַ בָּר יִקְבְּהוּ לְאוֹם וּבְרָכָה  
לְרֵאשׁ מִשְׁבִּיר: שַׁחַר טוֹב יִבְקֹשׁ רְצוֹן וְדָרֵשׁ רָעָה תִבּוֹאֲנֵנוּ: בּוֹטַח  
בְּעֵשָׂרוֹ הוּא יִפֹּל וְכַעֲלָה צְדִיקִים יִפְרָחוּ:

A generous soul will be enriched; As for *one who waters*—also *he* will be watered. *One who boards grain*—the people will curse *him*; But a blessing is on the head of one who sells. One who craves good seeks contentment; As for *one who pursues evil*—it will come upon *him*. *One who trusts in his riches*—*he* shall fall; But like foliage righteous ones will blossom (Prov 11:25–28).<sup>80</sup>

There is even one extant example which incorporates FD into both portions of its distych:

בּוֹטַח בְּלִבּוֹ הוּא כְּסִיל וְהוֹלֵךְ בְּחֻכְמָה הוּא יִמְלֹט:

*One who trusts in his instinct*—*he* is a fool; But *one who proceeds by wisdom*—*he* shall escape (Prov 28:26).

6:2).

<sup>78</sup> See also Ps 18:41; 20:4; 23:4; 37:9; 90:17; 125:4–5; 140:12; Prov 10:18; 13:3, 13; 18:14; 19:21; 21:29; 29:18; Job 17:15; 29:16 (cf. 1 Sam 25:29; Jer 6:19). In Exod 15:15 the FD occurs within the second portion of a poetic tristych.

<sup>79</sup> An FD encompassed by a rhetorical question also occurs in Prov 18:14 (and see note 63).

<sup>80</sup> Also see Ps 89:12–13.

Front Dislocation in the foregoing liturgical<sup>81</sup> and sapiential<sup>82</sup> genres is evidently leveraging its semiotic structures and cognitive dynamics to heighten the rhetorical and aesthetic qualities of the associated poetic parallelism, which typically functions in such lyrical contexts as the dominant formal device.<sup>83</sup> By employing an FD to introduce the first portion of a parallel distych, the language-sender often announces a topic shift between the onset of the distych and the immediately foregoing discourse unit: a shift that calls enhanced attention to itself via the added cognitive processing time and effort required from the language-receiver. When using an FD to commence the second portion of a parallel distych, the language-sender introduces increased cognitive load demands at a syntagmatic point that heightens a topic shift<sup>84</sup> between the first and the second portions of the distych itself. FD within poetic parallelism thereby gives rise to bifurcated suspense peaks for the language-receiver, wherein comprehension slows and attention grows as ambiguity amid active and potential mental structures momentarily spikes, before getting resolved. This unexpected *cognitive* rhythm is thereby brought into a productive and playful tension with the anticipated *metrical* rhythm that is constitutive of Biblical Hebrew parallelism (cf. Tsur 2003:150–53).

#### 4.5. YAHWISTIC CONTEXTS

Biblical Hebrew also incorporates FD into explicitly *Yahwistic* settings, where the construction's properties are centered upon the supremely authoritative God of Israel. The motif of Yahweh as warrior god who fights for his people when they invade the covenantal land is prevalent within Deuteronomistic texts:<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Several instances of liturgical FD do initiate a topic shift within their discourse contexts, as information-structure theory predicts (see Lambrecht 1994:183–84). Rhetorically, however, *all* of the extant examples also speak about their referents in overtly authoritative manners, such as by praising God (Ps 18:31; 145:6; cf. 103:15), or by contrasting the righteous psalmist with the despicable actions of others (Ps 35:13; 41:13; 46:5; 57:5; 59:17; 69:14; 73:28; 101:5).

<sup>82</sup> Examples of FD where parallelism is either less prominent or absent include Prov 17:15; 18:9; 20:10, 12, 20; 21:13; 23:8; 24:12, 24; 28:9, 10; 29:12, 14; 30:17; 31:30; Job 3:4, 6; 21:4; 28:5; 36:7; Qoh 1:16.

<sup>83</sup> Khan (1988:89) suggests that in such instances “the major function of extraposition (*sic*) is to place in clause-initial position an element which is required to be in this position by the parallelistic or chiasmic matrix of the construction.”

<sup>84</sup> A topic shift does not necessitate changing to an entirely different discourse topic *per se*. It may also, or instead, involve switching amid multiple referents which are encompassed, information-structurally, by a superordinate discourse topic (see Lambrecht 1994:183–84).

<sup>85</sup> See also Deut 3:22; 31:3, 6, 8; Josh 23:3, 5, 10 (cf. 24:17); 1 Sam 17:37; elsewhere, cf. Isa 47:4.

וַיִּדְעַתָּ הַיּוֹם כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא־הָעֹבֵר לְפָנֶיךָ אֵשׁ אֹכְלָה הוּא יִשְׁמַדִּים  
וְהוּא יִכְנִיעֵם לְפָנֶיךָ

You shall realize today that, *Yahweh your God—be* is the one crossing before you, a devouring fire is he; he will destroy them, and he himself will subdue them before you (Deut 9:3).

These examples tend to be situated narratively amid moments of acute apprehensiveness as the Israelites contemplate attacking formidable, even militarily superior, enemies. By conventional strategic standards the anticipated outcomes are in no way encouraging.<sup>86</sup> Aware of this situation, these texts funnel the resultant anxiety into the cognitive choke-point of an FD construction, thereby rhetorically crescendoing suspense and maximizing attention, before dissolving suspense and redirecting attention into an authoritative assertion. Elsewhere, Yahweh's radical exclusivity with respect to Israelite worship is conveyed via FD, implying dire consequences for divided allegiance:<sup>87</sup>

הִשְׁמְרוּ לָכֶם פְּנֵי־תִשְׁכַּחוּ אֶת־בְּרִית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת עִמָּכֶם  
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת כָּל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
אֵשׁ אֹכְלָה הוּא אֵל קַנָּא:

Watch yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of Yahweh your God which he cut with you, and you make for yourselves any sculpted image about which Yahweh your God commanded you. Because *Yahweh your God—a* devouring fire is *be*, a jealous god (Deut 4:23–24).<sup>88</sup>

FDs are further employed<sup>89</sup> to depict Yahweh as not simply a jealous deity, but as the one and only valid God:

<sup>86</sup> This is masterfully conveyed by the ominous descriptions provided in Deut 9:1–2 (which preface the FD in 9:3): “Hear, O Israel! You are today crossing the Jordan to enter and dispossess nations greater and more mighty than you; great cities fortified sky-high; a people big and tall, the Anakites, of whom you know, and of whom you have heard [said], ‘Who can withstand the sons of Anak?’.”

<sup>87</sup> See also Exod 34:14; 2 Kgs 17:36; Isa 8:13.

<sup>88</sup> The dominant function of this FD (and numerous others: Deut 3:22; 4:35, 39; 7:9; 10:17; 31:6; Josh 23:3, 5, 10; 2 Sam 22:31; 1 Kgs 8:60; 18:39; Ps 50:6; 100:3; 2 Chr 16:9; 33:13) is neither to shift nor to (re)activate a topic within the discourse information-structure, but rather to momentarily dissociate an *already* highly activated topic (here, *Yahweh your God* [Deut 4:2, 3, 4, 10, 19, 21]) from its larger syntagmatic framework. This has the effect of acutely decontextualizing the referent for a language-receiver, requiring increased cognitive effort for its (re)integration into the ongoing communicative event. Such instances of heightened attention are optimal times, both cognitively and rhetorically, for a language-sender to speak in authoritative manners.

<sup>89</sup> See also Deut 7:9; 10:17; Josh 2:11; 1 Kgs 8:60; 18:39; Ps 100:3; 2

אתה הראת לדעת כי יהוה הוא האלהים אין עוד מלבדו: . . . וידעת  
היום והשבת אל־לבבך כי יהוה הוא האלהים בשמים ממעל ועל־  
הארץ מתחת אין עוד:

You have been shown in order to understand that *Yahweh*—*he* is God; there is not another beside him . . . So you know now and you ruminate that *Yahweh*—*he* is God in heaven above and on earth below; there is no other (Deut 4:35, 39).<sup>90</sup>

All three doxologies in the book of Amos also employ FDs, suspensefully and authoritatively depicting Yahweh as the supreme creator and sole master of the universe:<sup>91</sup>

כי הנה יוצר הרים וברא רוח ומגיד לאדם מה־שחו עשה שחר עיפה  
ודרך על־במתי ארץ יהוה אלהי־צבאות שמו:

Most truly: *The one who formed the mountains and who created the wind, and who has declared to man his will; the one who makes dawn [from] darkness, and who treads upon the heights of the earth—Yahweh God of the Hosts is his name* (Amos 4:13).

עשה כימה וכסיל והפך לבקר צלמות ויום לילה החשיך הקורא למי־  
הים וישפכם על־פני הארץ יהוה שמו:

*The one who made Pleiades and Orion, and who turns into morning deep gloom, and day into night darkens; the one who commands the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth—Yahweh is his name* (Amos 5:8).

ואדני יהוה הצבאות הנוגע בארץ ותמוג ואבלו בל־יושבי בה ועלתה  
כיאר בלה ושקעה כיאר מצרים: הבונה בשמים [מעלותו] מעלותיו  
ואגדתו על־ארץ יסדה הקרא למי־הים וישפכם על־פני הארץ יהוה  
שמו:

The Lord, Yahweh of the Hosts:<sup>92</sup> *The one who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell on it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile and sinks like the Nile of Egypt; the one who built in the heavens*

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Chr 33:13; and cf. Deut 32:4; 2 Sam 22:31; Ps 50:6; Job 37:23; 2 Chr 16:9. Regarding Yahweh as the tribe of Levi's exclusive inheritance, see the FDs at Deut 10:9; 18:2; Josh 13:33.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Quranic Arabic: *allāhu lā 'ilāha 'illā huwa*, “*Allah*—there is no god but *Him*” (Q 2:255).

<sup>91</sup> These instances could just as reasonably be categorized under the lyrical examples (see section 4.4 above); a certain degree of stylistic fluidity is to be expected.

<sup>92</sup> Viewed against the morphosyntactic structures of the other two doxologies, this prefatory Yahwistic nomenclature is almost certainly a later addition, evidently intended by its redactor to clarify the topic and to dispel any ambiguity—and alas, any suspense and requisite cognitive effort!

*his upper chambers, and as for his vault—upon the earth he founded it,<sup>93</sup> the one who commands the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the face of the earth—Yahweh is his name (Amos 9:5–6).*

### 5.0. RHETORICAL INVERSIONS

The numerous foregoing examples have amply demonstrated the range of communicative contexts—narrative, juridical, oracular, lyrical, and Yahwistic—across which Biblical Hebrew frequently employs the FD construction in order to elicit increased cognitive effort from the language-receiver amid authoritative pronouncements by the language-sender. By way of concluding, it is fascinating to observe how this technique occasionally gets *inverted* within narrative contexts, being invoked by/for agencies that manifestly lack the authority ostensibly being conveyed by the statements. The rhetorical impacts of these inversions range from subtle irony to outright satire. There is, for example, this response by a panicky Adam to Yahweh’s persistent interrogations:

הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִוא נְתַנְהֵלִי מִן־הָעֵץ וְאֶכְלֵ:

*The woman whom you put beside me—she gave to me from the tree, and I ate (Gen 3:12).*

Adam here makes an audacious—yet ultimately fruitless—effort to divert blame from himself, and he does this not only in what he says, but also in how he says it: by structuring his response as an FD syntagm so characteristic of authoritative pronouncements. Yet the rhetorical chasm which the narrative here rends between Adam’s last-ditch appeal and Yahweh’s inevitable verdict could hardly be more gaping, especially when this is contrasted with the authoritatively *appropriate* use of FD by Yahweh himself earlier in the story:

וּמֵעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרַע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ

But concerning *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*—you shall not eat from *it* (Gen 2:17; cf. 3:3).

A posturing authority is also adopted by the impatient Israelites at the foot of God’s holy mountain as they instruct Aaron to craft for them new patron deities, in defiance of Moses’—and hence, Yahweh’s—authoritative legitimacy:

קוּם עֲשֵׂה־לָנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יִלְכּוּ לִפְנֵינוּ כִּי־זָה מַשֶּׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָנוּ  
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מָה־הָיָה לּוֹ:

<sup>93</sup> Notice how one FD construction (located within the second portion of a parallel distych) has been nested within the larger FD that composes the bulk of the doxology.

Get up, make for us gods who will go before us; because *this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt*—we do not know what has happened to *him* (Exod 32:1; cf. 32:23).

This brash insubordination is duly trumped by Moses' eventual return from the mountaintop, carrying objects infinitely more authoritative than gold-wrought gods, and bringing Yahweh's eternal edicts into direct contention with the people's ephemeral idols:

וְהִלַּחַת מַעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹהִים הַמָּה וְהַמְּכַתֵּב מִכְתָּב אֱלֹהִים הוּא הָרוֹת עַל-  
הַלַּחַת:

Regarding *the tablets*—the work of God were *they*; as for *the writing*—the writing of God was *it*, inscribed upon the tablets (Exod 32:16).

During Israel's wilderness wanderings, the comrades who have spied out the land of Canaan with Caleb attempt to refute the latter's martial aggressiveness by masking their own cowardice behind the authority-enhancing structure of FD:

הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר עָבַרְנוּ בָּהּ לְתוֹר אֶתְּהָ אֶרֶץ אֲכָלֶת יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ הוּא וְכָל-הָעָם  
אֲשֶׁר-רָאִינוּ בְּתוֹכָהּ אַנְשֵׁי מַדּוּת:

*The land which we crossed into to survey therein*—a land<sup>94</sup> devouring its settlers is *it*, and all the people who we saw in the midst of it are huge men (Num 13:32).

But the narrative soon makes clear that it is Caleb's view which should, and ultimately does, prevail—a view validated by Yahweh's *genuinely* authoritative FD pronouncements upon the cowardly:

וְטַפְכֶם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתֶּם לְבוֹ יְהִי וְהִבִּיאֲתִי אֲתֶם וַיִּדְעוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר  
מֵאִסְתֶּם בָּהּ: וּפְגָרֵיכֶם אֲתֶם יִפְּלוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה:

*Your little ones whom you said would become spoil*—I shall make *them* enter, and they shall know the land which you have rejected. As for *you*<sup>95</sup>—*your* corpses will drop in this wilderness (Num 14:31–32).

<sup>94</sup> The same lexeme (אֶרֶץ) is here employed in both the FD and the juxtaposed clause, though it appears as definite in the former and indefinite in the latter. This combination of cataphora and anaphora undoubtedly enhances the cognitive accessibility of the lexeme as a referent (see Gernsbacher and Robertson 2005). Yet it is not until the language-receiver encounters the resumptive pronoun (הוא) at the end of the predication that “*the* land” and “*a* land” can be verified as one and the same referent.

<sup>95</sup> Although text critical witnesses are lacking, the syntagmatic typology of FD constructions argues for here transposing the independent pronoun and the nominal subject, thereby juxtaposing the latter with its governing verb and slotting the former into the front dislocated portion of the syntagm: יִפְּלוּ וְאֲתֶם פְּגָרֵיכֶם יִפְּלוּ (cf. Gen 17:4, 9; Exod 9:30; 14:16–17;

Another example of rhetorical inversion with FD occurs during the Israelite military campaigns into the land of the Canaanites, as even the mightiest of the latter's city-states proves no match for the former's divinely sanctioned *Blitzkrieg*:

וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּעֵת הַהִיא וַיִּלְכֹּד אֶת־חֲצוֹר וְאֶת־מֶלֶכָהּ הִכָּה בְּחַרְבֵּי כִי־  
חֲצוֹר לְפָנָיִם הִיא רֹאשׁ כָּל־הַמְּמַלְכוֹת הָאֵלֶּה:

Joshua swung around at that time and captured Hazor, and its king he smote by the sword; after all, *Hazor*—beforehand *it* was the head of all these kingdoms (Josh 11:10).

But no longer, of course. Indeed, to drive home this point, Joshua exercises his authority in order to render the formerly supreme city-state forever supine:

רַק כָּל־הָעָרִים הַעֲמֻדוֹת עַל־תְּלָם לֹא שָׂרְפָם יִשְׂרָאֵל זֹלָתִי אֶת־חֲצוֹר  
לְבַדָּה שָׂרַף יְהוֹשֻׁעַ:

Yet, *all the cities standing upon their mounds*—Israel did not burn *them*, except for *Hazor*—only *it* Joshua burned (Josh 11:13).<sup>96</sup>

A less triumphalist rhetorical inversion occurs later in the story, where the narrator concedes at the end of Judah's tribal allotments that Israelite power has met its match within the (future) Holy City:

וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי יוֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם לֹא־[יִוָּכְלוּ] יָכְלוּ בְנֵי־יְהוּדָה לְהוֹרִישָׁם וַיֵּשֶׁב  
הַיְבוּסִי אֶת־בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה בִּירוּשָׁלַם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

But as for *the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem*—the Judahites were not able to dispossess *them*, and so the Jebusites dwell with the Judahites in Jerusalem to this day (Josh 15:63).

Later on, the Transjordanian tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh resort to the authoritative rhetoric of juxtaposed FD syntagms in prefacing their (ultimately successful) effort to deflect blame for their suspicious construction of a Yahwistic altar on the east bank of the Jordan:

אֵל אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה אֵל אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה הוּא יָדַע וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל הוּא יָדַע

*Supremely divine Yahweh! Supremely divine Yahweh!*—*he* knows; as for *Israel*—let *it* know (Josh 22:22).

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Num 3:12; 18:8; 1 Kgs 9:4; Isa 59:21; Jer 1:18; 26:14; 40:10; Ps 69:14; 73:28; Qoh 1:16; 1 Chr 22:7). Alternatively, the extant text might intend to convey something like: “As for *your very own corpses*—*they* will drop in this wilderness” (see Gesenius 1910:438 §135f).

<sup>96</sup> Notice the categorizing dimension of these FDs, and cf. 1 Sam 15:9, where rhetorical tension is generated by King Saul's *selective* implementation of Yahweh's command for *categorical* destruction of the Amalekites (see also Lev 27:28; Josh 6:19).

An FD is even employed to turn the rhetorical tables on King David, as he unwittingly convicts himself of lacking the very type of protective mercy toward his son Absalom that he authoritatively grants for the wise woman of Tekoa:

הַמְדַבֵּר אֵלַיךָ וְהִבֵּאתוּ אֵלַי וְלֹא־יִסִּיף עוֹד לְגַעַת בְּךָ:

*Anyone who speaks [thus] to you—you shall bring him before me, and he will not again pester you (2 Sam 14:10).*

Soon after the woman's ruse is revealed so too is its chief perpetrator, via the suspenseful and authoritative dynamics of another FD, this time directed from a female subject to her sovereign:

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ הֲיָד יוֹאָב אִתְּךָ בְּכָל־זֹאת וְתַעַן הָאִשָּׁה וְתֹאמַר חַי־נַפְשִׁי  
אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ אִם־אֵשׁ לְהַמִּין וְלְהַשְׁמִיל מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר־דִּבְּרָ אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי־  
עֲבַדְתָּ יוֹאָב הוּא צְוֹנִי וְהוּא שָׁם בְּפִי שִׁפְחָתְךָ אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה:

The king said, “Is the power of Joab with you in all this?” And the woman answered, saying, “By your life, my royal lord, one is not able to turn right or to turn left from all which my lord the king has said; because *your servant Joab—he* commanded me, and he placed in the mouth of your maidservant all these words” (2 Sam 14:19).

When, centuries later, the Israelites are ruled by foreign kings, the hapless Haman laments his ostensibly high standing at court via the authoritative style of an FD, thereby ironically amplifying the actual fragility of his situation:

וְכָל־זֶה אֵינְנִי שׂוֹה לִי בְּכָל־עֵת אֲשֶׁר אָנִי רֹאֶה אֶת־מֶרְדֵּכַי הַיְּהוּדִי יוֹשֵׁב  
בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ:

Yet even *all of this—it* is like nothing to me, every time that I see Mordechai the Jew sitting in the gate of the king (Esth 5:13).

## 6.0. CONCLUSIONS

Although there does exist a topical—one might even say, a *topicalizing*—resemblance between FD and topicalization syntagms (see, e.g., Prince 1998; Gregory and Michaelis 2001; Westbury 2010:124–25), such similarity is outweighed by their respective formal and functional differences. When encountering a fronted substantival unit in a written medium such as the Hebrew Bible, a reader undertaking the process of building mental structures might well experience a moment of initial syntagmatic ambiguity, until it becomes clear whether that unit is dislocated from a juxtaposed predication (with a resumptive element) or whether that unit remains within the predication (without any resumptive). Such ambiguity typically gets quickly resolved by the visual compre-

hender<sup>97</sup> and then cognitively (re)routed into an appropriate mental structure. For FD, this is facilitated by the presence of cataphoric and anaphoric lexemes and/or morphemes linking the substantival unit and its resumptive element; for topicalization, this is facilitated by the absence of such morphosyntactic features (see notes 3 and 4). In an oral-aural medium, however, both the language-sender and the language-receiver have access to additional cognitive cues in the way of prosodic features such as *length* and *pitch* (see Cruttenden 1997:2–12, 175–77; Repp and Drenhaus 2015). By employing increased length and rising pitch amid an initial substantival unit, a language-sender can craft a cataphoric intonation group<sup>98</sup> and can thereby signal to the language-receiver the onset of a front dislocated construction. This, in conjunction with the morphosyntax, cognitively primes the language-receiver for processing a mental structure that is simultaneously imminent and yet deferred. That Biblical Hebrew availed itself of such prosodic features is quite likely, judging by modern cross-linguistic evidence (see note 42). But further suggestive evidence resides within the biblical corpus itself, given that FD is so frequently employed within syntagms involving *direct discourse* between the characters of a narrative, as well as within *proclamatory* utterances amid juridical, oracular, lyrical, and Yahwistic contexts.

At the level of a communicative event's information-structure, FD does indeed possess a cross-linguistic utility for signaling the (re)activation of a particular topic in the given discourse.<sup>99</sup> But the foregoing study has shown how Biblical Hebrew<sup>100</sup> frequently puts

<sup>97</sup> This is often resolved graphically by the use of a comma or an em-dash to separate the FD from its clause.

<sup>98</sup> A familiar contemporary example of cataphoric prosody is operative in English's *High Rising Terminal*, colloquially known as “upspeak,” whereby a rising intonation pattern is employed at or near the end of a preliminary assertion (akin to interrogative prosody) in order to introduce a referent that figures into the subsequent conversation: e.g., “So, y’know what? I have a *professor*, ‘n *he . . .*” (Gernsbacher and Jescheniak 1995:54; cf. Warren 2005).

<sup>99</sup> Biblical Hebrew is certainly no stranger to this function of FD. Some instances where topic shifting is prominent include Num 11:7 (Israelites → manna); Josh 17:3 (Manassites → Zelophehad); 1 Sam 9:20 (Saul → asses); Ps 46:5 (sea → river); 69:14 (drunkards → psalmist); 73:28 (licentious → psalmist); 103:15 (Yahweh → mortals). Although the information-structure functions and the rhetorical functions proceeding from FD are not coextensive, neither do they preclude each other.

<sup>100</sup> Whether and to what degrees other languages so utilize FD remain to be explored (cf. Arabic in notes 69, 90). Koine Greek is clearly acquainted with it:

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν ὁ ἐμβάψας μετ’ ἐμοῦ τὴν χεῖρα ἐν τῷ τρυβλίῳ οὗτός με παραδώσει.

So he answered, saying: “He who has dipped with me the hand in the bowl—this one will hand me over” (Matt 26:23).

Following his accusation in v. 21 (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν

the semiotic structures and cognitive dynamics inherent in FD to effective rhetorical use by cultivating listener vulnerability and speaker control. In so availing itself of Front Dislocation syntagms, Biblical Hebrew nimbly leverages the friction between *langue* and *parole* in order to spark mental processes that ignite suspenseful and authoritative communication.

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παραδώσει με) and the professed incredulity by his disciples in v. 22 (μήτι ἐγώ εἶμι κύριε), Jesus in v. 23 ostensibly clarifies his claim. Yet the singular piece of information that is most urgently sought after by the language-receivers (*who is the betrayer?*) remains shrouded in mystery, having been cloaked by the language-sender within an FD substantial phrase which postpones full comprehension (*Have not all of the disciples been eating, and possibly dipping, with Jesus? Is he who has dipped the hand into the bowl about to be convicted, or exonerated?*). Even once the FD gets integrated into its juxtaposed clause (“*this one will hand me over*”), its referential ambiguity persists (*who specifically?*). The language-receivers have been placed into a momentarily extended state of cognitive-semiotic vulnerability, permitting the language-sender to exercise enhanced rhetorical dominance over the communication event. Such control here entails theological ramifications, for even as Jesus is about to lose his freedom, and his very life, the Son of Man (v. 24) remains firmly in charge of his destiny. Cf. Runge (2008:13\*–14\*), who here acknowledges Matthew’s rhetorical use of FD “to create a dramatic build-up.”

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