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GREEK TEXT · TRANSLATION · INTERLINEAR · DISCOURSE STRUCTURE

The Book of Psalms, Chapter 81

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ ΠΑ΄

Each verse opens with the running Greek, an English translation, and a **discourse note** (its connective, relation, and role in the argument). Below follows the word-by-word breakdown in six tiers: gloss, case (color), parsing, *syntax*, **semantic force**, and a | lexical note.

CASE ■ Nominative ■ Genitive ■ Dative ■ Accusative ■ Vocative ■ Verb (no case) ■ Indeclinable

Discourse notes head each verse: **relation** · connective · clause-flow. Indentation marks prominence — flush-left = main line of argument; indented = supporting / subordinate material.

Theme

God stands in the council as judge and exposes the failure of those charged with justice.

Translation & textual notes

The Greek text of Psalms 81 follows the standard critical text of the Septuagint as established in the Rahlfs-Hanhart edition (Septuaginta, rev. ed. 2006), an ancient and public-domain text; the critical apparatus is not reproduced. This short Asaph psalm stages God as judge standing in the council and exposing the failure of those charged with justice. The central rebuke condemns partiality toward the wicked and commands protection for the orphan, poor, and needy, while the psalmist explains that the rulers' blindness throws the very foundations of the earth into instability. The closing movement recalls the honor once given them as sons of the Most High, announces that they will nevertheless die like ordinary

mortals, and ends with a direct appeal for God himself to rise and judge the earth because all nations belong to his inheritance. Versification follows the LXX.

Discourse structure of the chapter

A · 81:1-2	God takes his place in the divine assembly and indicts corrupt judgment Opening with God standing among the assembled powers and asking how long they will keep judging unjustly and favoring sinners.
B · 81:3-4	The rulers are commanded to defend the vulnerable The accusation turns into positive instruction: the orphan, poor, humble, and needy are to receive just verdicts and rescue from the wicked.
C · 81:5-7	Blind rulers destabilize the world and lose their exalted status Because they know nothing and walk in darkness, earth's foundations are shaken; though called gods and sons of the Most High, they will die like men.
D · 81:8	The psalm closes by asking God to judge the whole earth himself The final prayer calls on God to arise, judge the earth directly, and claim all nations as his inheritance.

1 ψαλμὸς τῷ Ασαφ ὁ θεὸς ἔστη ἐν συναγωγῇ θεῶν ἐν μέσῳ δὲ θεοὺς διακρίνει

A psalm for Asaph. God stood in the assembly of gods, and in their midst he judges the gods.

Judicial scene-setting ὁ θεὸς ἔστη

After the superscription, the psalm immediately presents God as the presiding judge who takes his stand within the council in order to render judgment.

ψαλμός

psalm

N2 NSM · ψαλμός

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ participant prominence

ψαλμός: meaning 'psalm'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.

τῷ

for the

RA DSM · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Ἀσαφ

Asaph

N DSM · Ἀσαφ

adverbial or particle element shaping the clause or phrase

→ discourse linkage or contrast

Ἀσαφ: meaning 'Asaph'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ὁ

the

RA NSM · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

ὁ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

θεός

God

N2 NSM · θεός

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ participant prominence

θεός: meaning 'God'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.

ἴστη

stood

VHI AA13S · ἴστημι

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ constative aorist

ἴστημι: meaning 'stood'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

ἐν

in

P · ἐν

preposition governing its complement phrase

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'in'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition governing its complement phrase.

συναγωγή

assembly

N1 DSF · συναγωγή

dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient

→ sphere or reference

συναγωγή: meaning 'assembly'; it serves as dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient.

θεῶν

of gods

N2 GPM · θεός

genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality

→ relational specification

θεός: meaning 'of gods'; it serves as genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality.

ἐν

in

P · ἐν

preposition governing its complement phrase

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'in'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition governing its complement phrase.

μέσῳ

midst

A1 DSM · μέσος

dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient

→ sphere or reference

μέσος: meaning 'midst'; it serves as dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient.

δὲ

and

X · δέ

adverbial or particle element shaping the clause or phrase

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

θεοὺς

gods

N2 APM · θεός

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

θεός: meaning 'gods'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

διακρίνει

judges

V1 PAI3S · κρίνω + δια

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ ongoing verbal process

κρίνω + δια: meaning 'judges'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

2 ἕως πότε κρίνετε ἀδικίαν καὶ πρόσωπα ἀμαρτωλῶν λαμβάνετε διάψαλμα

How long will you judge injustice and accept the persons of sinners? Pause.

Rebuke of partiality ἕως πότε

God's speech begins with a sharp question that exposes both corrupt verdicts and favoritism toward the wicked.

ἕως

until

C · ἕως

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἕως: meaning 'until'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πότε

when

X · πότε

adverbial or particle element shaping the clause or phrase

→ discourse linkage or contrast

πότε: meaning 'when'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

κρίνετε

you judge

V1 PAI2P · κρίνω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ ongoing verbal process

κρίνω: meaning 'you judge'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

ἀδικίαν

injustice

N1A ASF · ἀδικία

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

ἀδικία: meaning 'injustice'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

καὶ
and

C · καί

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πρόσωπα
faces

N2N APN · πρόσωπον

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

πρόσωπον: meaning 'faces'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

ἁμαρτωλῶν
of sinners

A1B GPM · ἁμαρτωλός

genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality

→ relational specification

ἁμαρτωλός: meaning 'of sinners'; it serves as genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality.

λαμβάνετε
you accept

V1 PAI2P · λαμβάνω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ ongoing verbal process

λαμβάνω: meaning 'you accept'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

διάψαλμα
pause

N3M NSN · διάψαλμα

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ participant prominence

διάψαλμα: meaning 'pause'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.

3 κρίνατε ὀρφανὸν καὶ πτωχόν ταπεινὸν καὶ πένητα δικαιώσατε

Judge for the orphan and the poor; justify the humble and the needy.

Command to defend the weak κρίνατε

The rebuke pivots into the positive obligations of rule: right judgment must be exercised on behalf of society's vulnerable members.

κρίνατε

judge

VA AAD2P · κρίνω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ verbal action or state

κρίνω: meaning 'judge'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

ὀρφανόν

orphan

A1 ASM · ὀρφανός

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

ὀρφανός: meaning 'orphan'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

καὶ

and

C · καί

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πτωχόν

poor

N2 ASM · πτωχός

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

πτωχός: meaning 'poor'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

ταπεινόν

humble

A1 ASM · ταπεινός

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

ταπεινός: meaning 'humble'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

καὶ

and

C · καί

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πένητα

needy

N3T ASM · πένης

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

πένης: meaning 'needy'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

δικαιώσατε

justify

VA AAD2P · δικαιώω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ verbal action or state

δικαιώω: meaning 'justify'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

4 ἐξέλεσθε πένητα καὶ πτωχόν ἐκ χειρὸς ἀμαρτωλοῦ ρύσασθε

Rescue the needy and poor; deliver them from the hand of the sinner.

Command to rescue ἐξέλεσθε

Justice is not merely declarative; it requires active intervention to pull the vulnerable out of the wicked person's grasp.

ἐξέλεσθε deliver VB AMD2P · αἰρέω + ἐκ <i>verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause</i> → verbal action or state αἰρέω + ἐκ: meaning 'deliver'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.	πένητα needy N3T ASM · πένης <i>accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal</i> → object specification πένης: meaning 'needy'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.	καὶ and C · καί <i>connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context</i> → discourse linkage or contrast καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.	πτωχόν poor N2 ASM · πτωχός <i>accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal</i> → object specification πτωχός: meaning 'poor'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.
ἐκ from P · ἐκ <i>preposition governing its complement phrase</i> → spatial or relational framing ἐκ: meaning 'from'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition governing its complement phrase.	χειρὸς hand N3 GSF · χεῖρ <i>genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality</i> → relational specification χεῖρ: meaning 'hand'; it serves as genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality.	ἁμαρτωλοῦ of the sinner A1B GSM · ἁμαρτωλός <i>genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality</i> → relational specification ἁμαρτωλός: meaning 'of the sinner'; it serves as genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality.	ρύσασθε rescue VA AMD2P · ῥύομαι <i>verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause</i> → verbal action or state ῥύομαι: meaning 'rescue'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

5 οὐκ ἔγνωσαν οὐδὲ συνῆκαν ἐν σκότει διαπορεύονται σαλευθήσονται πάντα τὰ θεμέλια τῆς γῆς

They did not know, nor did they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth will be shaken.

Diagnosis of blindness

οὐκ ἔγνωσαν

The psalm explains why the commands have been ignored: the rulers move in moral darkness, and their failure destabilizes the ordered world itself.

οὐκ

not

D · οὐ

adverbial or particle element shaping the clause or phrase

→ discourse linkage or contrast

οὐκ: meaning 'not'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἔγνωσαν

they knew

VZI AAI3P · γινώσκω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ constative aorist

γινώσκω: meaning 'they knew'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

οὐδέ

nor

C · οὐδέ

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

οὐδέ: meaning 'nor'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

συνῆκαν

they understood

VAI AAI3P · ἵημι + συν

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ constative aorist

ἵημι + συν: meaning 'they understood'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

ἐν

in

P · ἐν

preposition governing its complement phrase

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'in'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition governing its complement phrase.

σκότει

darkness

N3E DSN · σκότος

dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient

→ sphere or reference

σκότος: meaning 'darkness'; it serves as dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient.

διαπορεύονται

they walk about

V1 PMI3P · πορεύομαι + δια

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ ongoing verbal process

πορεύομαι + δια: meaning 'they walk about'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

σαλευθήσονται

will be shaken

VC FPI3P · σαλεύω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ future

σαλεύω: meaning 'will be shaken'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

πάντα

all

A3 NPN · πᾶς

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ participant prominence

πᾶς: meaning 'all'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.

τὰ

the

RA NPN · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τὰ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

θεμέλια

foundations

N2N NPN · θεμέλιον

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ participant prominence

θεμέλιον: meaning 'foundations'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.

τῆς

of the

RA GSF · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τῆς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

γῆς

earth

N1 GSF · γῆ

*genitive nominal element defining relation,
possession, source, or quality*

→ relational specification

γῆ: meaning 'earth'; it serves as genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality.

6 ἐγὼ εἶπα θεοὶ ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες

I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High.'

Recalled grant of dignity ἐγὼ εἶπα

God recalls the exalted status once conferred on these rulers, which makes their collapse into injustice even more severe.

ἐγὼ

I

RP NS · ἐγὼ

pronominal form marking person, reference, or participant role within the clause

→ participant reference

ἐγὼ: meaning 'I'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as pronominal form marking person, reference, or participant role within the clause.

εἶπα

said

VAI AAI1S · εἶπον

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ constative aorist

εἶπον: meaning 'said'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

θεοὶ

gods

N2 NPM · θεός

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ participant prominence

θεός: meaning 'gods'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.

ἐστε

you are

V9 PAI2P · εἰμί

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ ongoing verbal process

εἰμί: meaning 'you are'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

καὶ and C · καί <i>connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context</i> → discourse linkage or contrast καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.	υἱοὶ sons N2 NPM · υἱός <i>nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition</i> → participant prominence υἱός: meaning 'sons'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.	ὑψίστου of the Most High A1 GSM · ὑψιστος <i>genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality</i> → relational specification ὑψιστος: meaning 'of the Most High'; it serves as genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality.	πάντες all A3 NPM · πᾶς <i>nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition</i> → participant prominence πᾶς: meaning 'all'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.
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7 ὑμεῖς δὲ ὡς ἄνθρωποι ἀποθνήσκετε καὶ ὡς εἷς τῶν ἀρχόντων πίπτετε

But you die like men, and like one of the rulers you fall.

Sentence of mortality ὑμεῖς δὲ

The conjunction turns the remembered honor into a verdict: despite exalted titles, these rulers will meet the ordinary fate of fallen human authorities.

ὑμεῖς you RP NP · σύ <i>pronominal form marking person, reference, or participant role within the clause</i> → participant reference ὑμεῖς: meaning 'you'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as pronominal form marking person, reference, or participant role within the clause.	δὲ but X · δέ <i>adverbial or particle element shaping the clause or phrase</i> → discourse linkage or contrast δὲ: meaning 'but'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.	ὡς like C · ὡς <i>connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context</i> → discourse linkage or contrast ὡς: meaning 'like'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.	ἄνθρωποι men N2 NPM · ἄνθρωπος <i>nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition</i> → participant prominence ἄνθρωπος: meaning 'men'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.
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ἀποθνήσκετε

you die

V1 PAI2P · θνήσκω + ἀπο

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ ongoing verbal process

θνήσκω + ἀπο: meaning 'you die'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

καὶ

and

C · καί

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ὥς

like

C · ὥς

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ὥς: meaning 'like'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

εἷς

one

A3 NSM · εἷς

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ measure or count

εἷς: meaning 'one'; numeral expression contributing count or measure in context.

τῶν

of the

RA GPM · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἀρχόντων

rulers

N3 GPM · ἄρχων

genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality

→ relational specification

ἄρχων: meaning 'rulers'; it serves as genitive nominal element defining relation, possession, source, or quality.

πίπτετε

you fall

V1 PAI2P · πίπτω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ ongoing verbal process

πίπτω: meaning 'you fall'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

8 ἀνάστα ὁ θεός κρῖνον τὴν γῆν ὅτι σὺ κατακληρονομήσεις ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν

Rise up, O God; judge the earth, for you will inherit among all the nations.

Closing appeal ἀνάστα

The psalm answers failed human rule by calling on God to act directly as universal judge and heir of every nation.

ἀνάστα

rise up

VH AAD2S · ἵστημι + ἀνά

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ verbal action or state

ἵστημι + ἀνά: meaning 'rise up'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

ὁ

O

RA NSM · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

ὁ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

θεός

God

N2 NSM · θεός

nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition

→ participant prominence

θεός: meaning 'God'; it serves as nominative element functioning as subject, predicate, or apposition.

κρίνων

judge

VA AAD2S · κρίνω

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ verbal action or state

κρίνω: meaning 'judge'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

τὴν

the

RA ASF · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τὴν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

γῆν

earth

N1 ASF · γῆ

accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal

→ object specification

γῆ: meaning 'earth'; it serves as accusative element functioning as object, extent, or goal.

ὅτι

for

C · ὅτι

connective or conjunction linking the clause to its context

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ὅτι: meaning 'for'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

σύ

you

RP NS · σύ

pronominal form marking person, reference, or participant role within the clause

→ participant reference

σύ: meaning 'you'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as pronominal form marking person, reference, or participant role within the clause.

κατακληρονομήσεις

will inherit

VF FAI2S · κληρονομέω + κατα

verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause

→ future

κληρονομέω + κατα: meaning 'will inherit'; it carries the action, process, or state of the clause; here it functions as verbal form carrying the action, process, or state of the clause.

ἐν

among

P · ἐν

preposition governing its complement phrase

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'among'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition governing its complement phrase.

πᾶσιν

all

A3 DPN · πᾶς

dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient

→ sphere or reference

πᾶς: meaning 'all'; it serves as dative nominal element marking relation, instrument, sphere, or recipient.

τοῖς

the

RA DPN · ὁ

article marking the following noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἔθνεσιν

nations

N3E DPN · ἔθνος

*dative nominal element marking relation,
instrument, sphere, or recipient*

→ sphere or reference

ἔθνος; meaning 'nations'; it serves as dative
nominal element marking relation,
instrument, sphere, or recipient.

On the labels. Parsing gives Tense·Voice·Mood·Person·Number (+ Case·Number·Gender for participles) and lemma. The *syntactic-function* and **semantic-force** tiers follow standard intermediate-grammar categories (e.g. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*); both involve interpretive judgment, and the majority reading has been chosen where opinions differ. Lexical notes condense commonly cited data (etymology, sense range, synonym contrasts, NT frequency, OT/LXX echoes) and are no substitute for a lexicon.

On the discourse tier. Discourse structure operates above the word, so it is shown at the clause/verse level (the connective, the relation it signals, and the role of the clause) and summarized in the chapter outline. Relation labels, any proposed chiasm, and the paragraph divisions reflect a common reading of the argument; other discourse analyses segment and label some relations differently.