Parenthesis in Biblical Hebrew
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Oxford English Dictionary, online
Parenthesis—1. a. A word, clause, or sentence inserted as an explanation, aside, or afterthought into a passage with which it has not necessarily any grammatical connection, in writing usually marked off by brackets, dashes, or commas; (hence, more generally) an afterthought, an explanatory aside.

1. Introduction
(1) John, always works better while his, (*John’s) children are asleep
(2) John, studies mathematics, while his/John’s, wife studies physics.

(3) Dehé’s List of Parenthetical Expressions
(1.1) Clauses
   a. When we were on holiday—*that reminds me, I must pick up the photos*—we saw so many interesting places.

(1.2) Clauses introduced by a conjunction
   a. Her account—*and I must say I’m attracted to it*—suggests that we have to re-think the relationship between meaning and truth.

(1.3) Elliptical clause
   For those of us who remember nineteen sixty-five one or two of our listeners may Tory party leadership contests used to be as the cardinals in Rome and leaders would emerge

(1.4) Adverbial clauses
   b. I’ve just received the expected letter, *if that makes you feel any better.*

(1.5) Non-finite clauses
   a. *Having read the report,* Max was sure he had nothing to worry about.

(1.6) Non-restrictive relative clauses
   a. He shouldn’t have pushed that kid, *who is so conscientious,* out that door.

(1.7) Nominal appositions
   a. A university lecturer, *Dr Brown,* was arrested for the crime.

(1.8) Lexical phrases: AP (a), PP (b), NP (c)
   a. The secretary *well-mannered as anybody* will present an apology.

(1.9) Interrogative parentheticals
   c. Is it safe, *would you say?*

(1.10) Question tags
   c. Lucy can play the viola, *can she?* I didn’t know that.

(1.11) Statement tags (a) and imperative tags (b)
   a. John will go to Spain, *be will.*
   b. Turn out the light, *won’t you?*
(1.12) Reporting verbs
   a. The reason for the Prime Minister’s resignation she said was to enable Cabinet colleagues to enter the ballot

(1.13) Comment clauses
   a. There were no other applicants, I believe, for that job.

(1.14) Vocatives (noun phrases)
   a. Today’s topic, ladies and gentlemen, is Nuclear Magnetic Resonance.

(1.15) Sentence adverbs
   a. He is, unfortunately, ill.

(1.16) One-word expressions (other than sentence adverbs)
   a. I’ve been dreaming of winning a gold medal for what 20 years now

(1.17) Interjections and filled pauses
   b. My knowledge of this sort of thing, I admit, comes chiefly from the – um – popular press.

(1.18) Right node raising
   a. Amanda is, or at least she used to be, my best friend.

(1.19) Syntactic amalgamation
   a. John invited you’ll never guess how many people to his party.

(1.22) Backtracking
   c. But a different role uh because when we get to the time of uh Ezra as with the more classical Wellhausen uh hypothesis when we get to the time of Ezra we have the further narrowing of the office of priest

2. Previous Research

(4) Zewi’s Categories of Parenthesis (Zewi 2007)
   • External Expressions Referring to a Speaker, Appealing and Pleading, Affirming God’s Existence, Identity, and Status or Indicating External Intervention, and Oath Patterns;
   • Narrative Formulas, introduced by על־כֵּן/לָכֵן, דִּבְרֵי וְיֶתֶר, or a Proper Name, Month Name, or related information;
   • External Information Mostly Expressed by Circumstantial Clauses, introducing background information, foreshadowing, introducing explanatory information, theological remarks, historical remarks, or introducing other marginal information;
   • External Expressions Referring to a Speaker, Observer’s Identity or an Individual Standpoint, Epistemic Modal Adverbials, Appeal and Plea, and Address;
   • Narrative Time Co-Ordinates, using הַזֶּה הַיּוֹם, לָכֵן, or יָמִים מִיָּמִים.

(5) ‘and Yhwh visited Sarah, like he said, and Yhwh acted for Sarah, like he spoke’ (Gen 21:1)
‘and Yhwh said to Noah: Come, you and all your household, to the ark, because I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation’ (Gen 7:1)

‘all these joined at the Valley of Shiddim (it is the Salt Sea)’ (Gen 14:3)

3. A Working Definition and Sorting the Data

‘Only its flesh (its blood is in its flesh) you will not eat’ (Gen 9:4)

‘Only your wives and your children and your livestock (I know that much livestock belongs to you) will stay in your cities that I have given to you’ (Deut 3:19)

‘and the Levite (indeed, he has no portion and inheritance with you) and the alien and the orphan and the widow who is in your gates may come and eat and be sated’ (Deut 14:29)

‘and God saw the light, that it was good, and God divided between the light and the darkness’ (Gen 1:4)

‘and God made the two great lights, the greater light, (which) is for the rule of the day, and the smaller light, (which) is for the rule of the night, and the stars’ (Gen 1:16)

‘the Nephilim were in the land in those days (and it was) also after this when the sons of God came to the daughters of men’ (Gen 6:4)

‘and Lot lifted his eyes and he saw the whole district of the Jordan, that all of it was watered. (It was before Yhwh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah; it was like the garden of Yhwh; it was like the land of Egypt as you come to Zoar.) And Lot chose the whole district of the Jordan.’ (Gen 13:10-11)

‘and they arranged battle with them in the Valley of Siddim, … and the Valley of Siddim consisted of many pits of bitumen and the king of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell there and those who remained fled to the hill country’ (Gen 14:8b-10)
(16) 'and those who store violence and oppression in their towers—(this is) an utterance of Yhwh—do not know (how to) do right' (Amos 3:10)

(17) 'indeed, I am raising against you, O House of Israel—(this is) an utterance of Yhwh, God of Hosts—a nation and they will oppress you from Lebo-Hamath to the Nahal Arabah' (Amos 6:14)

(18) ‘Though in his lifetime he will be blessed—indeed, you are praised when you do well for yourself—he will enter the generation of his ancestors (who) will never again see the light.’ (Ps 49:19-20)

(19) '[the Proverbs of Solomon are … ] for giving to the simple cunning, (giving) to the youth knowledge and shrewdness—Let the wise also listen and add learning, and the discerning (add) skill—for understanding proverb and epigram, the words of the wise and their enigmas’ (Prov 1:4-6)

4. Conclusion

Bibliography


