

## ***Four Edifying Discourses (1843): A Dimensional Analysis***<sup>1</sup>

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In the year 1843, while he was producing the more familiar and celebrated aesthetic works, Kierkegaard published three quite different volumes. The first contains two edifying discourses, the second three, and the third four. This study focusses on these last four to convey a picture of his religious thought in October and November 1843. In particular it provides an account of the thematic dimensions of the volume, of the relationship among the discourses, two of which carry identical titles<sup>2</sup>, and considers whether their titles do justice to their actual contents. Further, the publication of the four as a volume suggests that in Kierkegaard's mind they were not thematically disparate essays, that one coheres with the other, and that there is a continuity in the ordering of their appearance in the volume. These suggestions imply that within the continuity and change is a presumed focus. In aiming to establish the real or total focus of the volume, to identify its main themes and ideas, this study provides an account<sup>3</sup> of the four from a perspective that considers rate of

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<sup>2</sup> The titles of the four as rendered in Søren Kierkegaard, *Edifying Discourses*, translated by David F. Swenson and Lillian Marvin Swenson in two volumes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1962) are the first (T1) "The Lord Gave, And The Lord Had Taken Away," the second and third (T2 and T3) "Every Good And Perfect Gift Is From Above," and the fourth (T4) "To Acquire One's Soul In Patience."

<sup>3</sup> Very little appears in recent literature on the four discourses and for that matter on the eighteen edifying discourses published in 1843 and 1844.

vocabulary use.

### Guide Questions

Three questions guide our account. 1) What are the top sixty distinguishing words in the volume? Such words are the aberrant frequent ones, or for short abfreq words<sup>4</sup>, in the Danish text. An abfreq word is one that an author uses in some context with a frequency so great that it exceeds his normal rate of use and, thus, might be presumed to stand for some feature of the context or object that the author wishes or feels compelled to stress. Its rate of use is expressed as a z-score or a formulation of standard deviation. 2) What are the three primary textual dimensions of the volume? Considered as discourse, the volume has its own space or boundary or limits defined by its internal structure and relations among its constituent elements. These elements are in this case largely the aberrant frequent words. They provide clues to or convey a sense of ideas or themes from which a discourse is built up through the grafting of one set of ideas or themes on another. The various grafts constitute different dimensions of the discourse. And 3), What is the core or total focus of the volume as text? The core is the contextual information of each graft — an account of what the aberrant frequent words disclose about each

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Malantschuk treats them in a rather general way, making hardly any mention of the four undertaken in this study. See: Gregor Malantschuk, *Kierkegaard's Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 31-314. A similar general treatment is accorded to them, with no mention of the four, in George Pattison, "'Who' is the Discourse? A study in Kierkegaard's Pseudonymous Literature," *Kierkegaardiana*, 16 (1993), pp. 28-45.

<sup>4</sup> The idea of abfreq word is explained by Alastair McKinnon, "Aberrant Frequent Words: Their Identification and Uses," *Glottometrika*, 2 (1980), Bochum, 108-124.

dimension. Thus, while the first question requires identifying statistically prominent words and features that they suggest in the volume, the second calls for analyzing dimensions, and the third involves providing a summary of the volume.

Altogether, the three questions constitute a new point of departure in approaching the volume treated as a single text. They play a role in the way one apprehends its discourse, in determining the precise discourse, and in discerning how it operates or is thematically structured with respect to correspondences and oppositions. The questions are decidedly advantageous in bringing a reader to engage more closely the text under consideration, or in overcoming the initial distance between text and reader by directing attention to significant structural facts: lexical distributions, literary artifacts, and linguistic patterns. Thus, this study establishes the otherness of the text (the four edifying discourses) on the basis of its structural facts, rather than merely on memory of one's reading experience. It is this otherness on which attention is focussed when, as part of the critical and modern act of interpretation, one is forced to explain what it is that one understands or what the precise discourse is. The difference here between text and discourse is largely a functional one. Text refers to the assemblage of words in a book organized to convey a high concentration of contextual information. Discourse, however, is the contextual information available through a study of the structural facts described above. To identify those facts, this study employs a strategy which also allows for a new economy in the interpretation of the four edifying discourses without privileging an existing interpretation.

### *Method*

Succinctly described, the strategy employed in this study has

three steps and requires starting with a machine-readable version of Kierkegaard's *Samlede Værker*<sup>5</sup> and using computational analysis techniques discussed and tried elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> The first step is to construct an aberrant frequency list for the volume and to retrieve the top sixty terms. The raw occurrences and z-scores or standard deviations are listed for each of the sixty<sup>7</sup> and shown as Wordlist A. The second step is to construct a 4 x 60 matrix (Table 1), using the sixty abfreq words as row heads and the four edifying discourses (T1, T2, T3, T4) as column heads. The matrix is then used as the input information (the frequencies of the sixty terms in each of the four discourses) to a correspondence analysis program called SimCA.<sup>8</sup> The output from this program is a numerical analysis, Table 2, that has three sections: a) Inertias and Percentages of Inertias. This is a graphic display in the form of a histogram that shows the percentage inertia for each axis or dimension of the discourse. From this

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<sup>5</sup> For the corresponding English translation of the four essays from *Atten opbyggelige Taler* in Kierkegaard's *Samlede Værker*, 3rd edition (Gyldendal, 1962), vol. 4, pp. 97-160, see Soren Kierkegaard, *Edifying Discourses*, translated by David S. Swenson and Lillian Marvin Swenson, 2 volumes, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1962), Vol. 1, pp. 130-210. Page references to both will be given, a slash separating the Danish from the English pagination.

<sup>6</sup> See: Alastair McKinnon, "Mapping the Dimensions of a Literary Corpus," *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 4, 2, (1989) pp. 73-84, and "Kierkegaard Inwardness and the Computer," *Soren Kierkegaard Newsletter*, October 1988, pp. 8-15.

<sup>7</sup> Deleted are three words: *Din, han, and I'ar*. Their deletion allowed for the inclusion of three more content words to Wordlist A. They are the last three in the list which shows words with four or more occurrences, and z-scores of 2.5 or greater. These two criteria are used in constructing four other abfreq word lists, one for each discourse.

<sup>8</sup> SimCA stands for Simple Correspondence Analysis, a computer program written by Michael J. Greenacre for the version of correspondence analysis developed by J.-P. Benzécri.

information one can then assess the extent to which the dimensions capture the discourse or the data fit a three dimensional model. b) Row Contributions. These give the percentage of inertia for each of the 60 aberrant frequent words, represented as row headers in the matrix. And c) Column Contributions. These show the percentage of inertia for each edifying discourse represented as column headers in the matrix.

From the output data, Table 2, it is possible to name the axes, describe its poles, and to identify aberrant frequent words best suited to be explained on each axis. The naming is done in light of those points contributing large percentages of inertia (CTR values) to the opposing poles of an axis ( $k=1, 2, \text{ or } 3$ ) in question. The nature of a pole is defined by its highest contributors, and the naming of an axis or dimension is presumed to reflect as much as possible both the similarities and differences between its poles.

Each aberrant frequent term, represented as a point in the numerical analysis data, correlates with all three dimensions or axis. However, some points have stronger correlation on a particular axis, and on the strength of their correlation are better suited to unfold the themes that are prominent on the axis. Or, points showing large percentages of correlation (COR values) are the ones helping to mark off more fully the contrasts or polarities suggested by the name of the dimension. In that respect, they help the researcher with a knowledge of the text to reconstruct its core or at least the main points of its arguments.

Finally, aberrant frequent word lists are constructed for each discourse, showing the top sixty words. Compared, these lists show words in common between two discourses. The common words represent a feature in the discourse. From a study of such words and the change in their rate of use, it is possible to determine the peculiarity of each discourse, and thereby to gain some understanding of the thrust of the volume.

Plan and method briefly presented, we turn now to describe the volume, beginning with Wordlist A, then to the numerical output data for a dimensional analysis, and finally to the abfreq lists for each of its four discourses.

### Wordlist

At the very top of the list (Wordlist A) is the word *Job*. It has the highest z-score, 53.54, occurs 70 times, and shows a variant form *Jobs*. All but one of their occurrences shown by the matrix (Table 1) are in the first discourse (T1). Evidently, this discourse conveys a thought that requires an excessive use of *Job(s)*, the name of the historical biblical figure. Indeed, we find on examining the text that the discourse is drawing attention to Job's expression: "The Lord Gave and the Lord Took. Blessed Be the Name of the Lord." The next three words at the top of the list also have variant forms. *Gave* and its five variants occur primarily in discourses two and three (T2 and T3). Not surprisingly, these discourses have the same title which indicates that they are about *Gave/gift* that comes from above. The next word, *erhverve*, also has five variants and occur almost totally in the fourth discourse (T4). The word *Sjel* has one variant and occurs in all the discourses. In fact, the fourth discourse has a title that incorporates both *erhverve/to acquire* and *Sjel/soul* to express the biblical admonition to acquire one's soul in patience. Besides those mentioned certain other words in the list include some of their variant forms. The number of variants shown in brackets, the words are *eie/own* (4), *Taalmodighed/patience* (2), *fuldkommen perfect*, *god/good* (1), *Herren/Lord* (1), *Kundskaben/knowledge* (1), *modtage/receive*, *ovenfra/from above* (1), *Tvivlen/doubt*, and *Velgjører/benefactor*. In fact, the words for doubt and knowledge occur only in the second discourse, and that for patience in the fourth. The last word in the

list *Velgjerningen/benefaction* shows a z-score well above the 2.58 cut off point for words having four or more occurrences. Though the list alerts us to words that distinguish, that are statistically significant in the volume, it does not provide information regarding the proximities of the words to each other or show those tending to form a cluster. For this information we turn to the numerical analysis data (Table 2).

### *Dimensional Analysis*

The histogram (Table 2) shows inertial percentages for three dimensions or axes. The first two dimensions are almost of equal importance. They make large contributions or explain 42.53% and 37.63% respectively of the total inertia, while the third explains 19.85%. The comparatively low percentage of the latter suggests that it represents a contrast among relatively fewer points (sections and words). To study more closely each dimension we provide below a simple summary of the data. It identifies the dimension, the pole (+/-), the discourses and words making relatively large percentage inertial contributions followed by their percentage contributions or CLR values in brackets. Then follows a description of the poles based on words that show high correlations (COR values) with them, and finally a name is assigned to the dimension whose poles are described.

#### Dimension 1:

+ T3 (17.9), T2 (17.8)

Gave/gift (6.2), god/good (2.8), give/give (2.6),  
Gaven/the gift (2.3), Tvivlen/doubt (2.2), gode/good  
(2.1), fuldkommen/perfect (2.0), Gaver/gifts (1.8)

- T4 (62.2)

Taalmodighed/patience. (9.3), erhverve/to acquire (9.2),  
Taalmodigheden/patience (6.1), eier/own (42),  
erhverves/acquired (3.9), erhverver/acquire (3.5),  
Erhvervelsen/the acquirement (3.5), eies/owned (3.5),  
Sjelen/soul (2.7)

Three discourses make major contributions to this dimension. At its positive pole the second and third discourses make virtually identical contributions, 17.9% and 17.8% respectively. The words from them describing or serving to name the pole in English include *gift* and *good* in particular. These two are high contributors (6.2% and 2.8 % respectively), that include variants and cognates making similar levels of contributions. Aspect of the GIFT theme that this positive pole makes prominent unfolds through words that are distinguished by their high COR values and whose use in English are as follows: *perfect*, *good*, *down from above*, *receive*, *from above*, *(the)gift*, *give*, *gifts*, and *the giver*. Their occurrences in the text indicate largely that every good and perfect gift comes down from above (125/161), that although a person may know how to give gifts he may still not know whether he does give a good gift (122/157), that even when the giver is human it is God who is the real giver of gifts that are good and perfect (139/181), that such a gift is unlike earthly gifts which reminds one of a difference between being able to give and having to receive, that when the poor man thanks the giver for the gift and God for the giver, then he truly thanks God for the gift, and that the rich thanks for the gift and its receiver (the poor) by thanking God for the opportunity to give it away honourably (144/188).

At the negative pole, the fourth discourse makes a comparatively large inertial contribution (62.2%) and include among its Danish word contributors the following in English: *patience* (9.3%), *acquire* (9.2%), and *soul* (2.7%). This pole



emphasizes the soul, that one acquires it through patience. Thus, a logical choice of a likely descriptor or name for it is SOUL. Aspects of the SOUL theme prominent on this axis unfolds through words with high COR values and used in English as follows: *the thing conditioned, own(ed), acquire(d), patience, worldly life, debtor, soul*. Their employment in the text is to engender reflection on the apostolic expression "to acquire one's soul in patience," and to draw attention to the admonition to patience implied in the meaning of the word "acquire" (154/203). Their employment brings into focus the soul in contradiction, expressing itself as self-contradiction, and therefore having to be owned or acquired. As a contradiction the soul, lost in worldly life (*Verdenslivet*), belongs to the world as an unlawful possession but to God as his true possession, until owned (151/199) by the human subject that has come naked (*nøgen*) into the world and who must therefore acquire the conditions for his own life (146/191). Ownership (trusteeship) of it is gained through his acquirement of those conditions and vice versa (149/195), or by the soul coming to terms only through patience with the worldly life, with the person struggling to acquire it, with God from whom he receives it (155/205f). Further, some words have unmistakable conceptual connections: This is the case with "patience" and "the thing conditioned." Accordingly, the expression "it grows in patience" indicates for Kierkegaard a doubleness and unity in that it makes once again inseparable the condition and the thing conditioned, both having become separate (153/202). That is, the condition for the acquirement of one's soul is to stand in relation to the thing conditioned. While the condition is the ownership of the soul, the thing being conditioned is understood as the acquisition of the soul (152f/200). In this acquisition, one does not become a debtor either to luck or to friends or to the world, but only to God (152/200).

The name GIFT FROM ABOVE is the one assigned to the principal dimension on the basis of the description of its poles: GIFT vs. SOUL. Only that which comes from above is good and perfect. The soul is from above and its owner must receive it from God who is its giver.

Dimension 2:

+ T1 (79.7)

Job/Job (31.9), Herren/Lord (19.2), Herrens/of the Lord (7.2), Jobs/ of Job (5.2), Tabet/loss (4.2), mindedes/remembered (3.8)

- T2 (9.5), T3 (8.4)

Gave/gift (3.2) give/give (1.5), Tvivlen/doubt (1.2), god/good (1.3), Gaven/the gift (1.0), Gaver/gifts (1.0), modtage/receive (1.0), ovenfra/from above (1.0)

The major contributors to this axis are the first, second, and third discourses. At the positive pole is the first discourse. High word contributors include *Job*, *Lord*, *loss*, and *remembered*. On the basis of these, the pole is assigned the descriptor JOB, and this theme unfolds through the following words that highly correlate with the axis: *loss*, *consideration*, *remembered*, *Job*, *of Job*, *Lord*, *of the Lord*, and *wisest*. Accordingly in the text they indicate that Job remembered his abundant prosperity, that in his loss of everything he remains thankful to the Lord for all the blessings, that his expression of gratitude was "The Lord gave, and the Lord took. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (109f/138f), that Job's significance is in the fact that he acted in accordance with the confession (103/130), and that only the person who was tried and tested the word by being tested learns from Job what there is to learn (106/134), and that Job as teacher

of mankind is equally near to everyone in a way that no human consideration nor speech could make more intelligible that which already a child could understand just as well as the wisest could (106/135).

At the negative pole, the second and third discourses dominate. The descriptor assigned, by virtue of high word contributors, is again GIFT, and the words correlating with the pole include *bortgive/ give away*, *fuldkommen/perfect*, *Fuldkomne/perfect*, *Gave/gift*, *give/give*, *god/good*, *herovenfra/down from above*, *modtage/receive*, *ovenfra/from above*. Though their correlations with this dimension are not as strong as that on the previous dimension, they unfold similar aspects of the theme. We expand the description already given of their contextual use to incorporate *bortgive/give away*. Its context of occurrence includes: "When the rich thanks God for the gift, and for the fact that there was vouchsafed to him an opportunity to give it away, then truly he thanks God for the gift and for the poor man" (144/188).

The name THANKFULNESS is the one assigned to this dimension on the basis of the description of its poles: JOB vs. GIFT. Job, in his loss or trials, remains thankful to God. Even the rich can be thankful to God for the opportunity provided to give away good and perfect gifts without becoming indebted to another.

### Dimension 3:

+ T2 (54.0)

Tvivlen/doubt (14.5), gode/good (7.5), Tvivlens/of doubt (5.6), Gaver/gifts (5.6) Kundskabens/of knowledge (5.0), Kundskaben/knowledge (4.5), Førstegrøde/firstfruits (2.8)

- T3 (45.8)

takke/thank (8.0), Ligheden/equality (6.3), Gaven/the gift (5.1), Velgjører/benefactor (4.5), ringere/poorer (45)

The second and third edifying discourses continue to make strong contributions but in opposite directions on this dimension. At the positive pole, the second discourse contributes 54% and has for its word descriptors: *doubt* and *knowledge* based on the contributions of the Danish words listed in the summary above. Words strongly correlating with the pole include *weapons*, *figurative*, *(of) knowledge*, *(of) doubt*, *firstfruits*, *perfection*, *good*, *gifts*, and *word*. Their connections in the text suggest in the main that by eating the forbidden fruit of knowledge mankind erred, that it brought tribulation and doubt (118/152f), that doubt is checked by dying away from rather than fighting it with its own weapons (126/162), that God gives the condition by which doubt is checked and the doubter becomes the firstfruits of creation (127/164), that whoever is occupied with the sorrows of this life or shaken in a fearful upheaval might be comforted by the figurative discourse (parable) "if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good gifts..." through meditating upon the apostolic word regarding every good and perfect gift is from above (120/154).

At the negative pole the third discourse contributes 48.5% inertia. The descriptors are *gratitude* and *equality* suggested by the words listed in the summary above. The theme that they represent unfolds through words highly correlated with this pole: *poorer*, *give away*, *equality*, *thank*, *the needy*, *have*, *benefaction*, and *benefactor*. The context in which they are used in the text indicate that equality with respect to spiritual well being opens the soul to the perfect and makes the sensual eye blind to external and temporal distinctions (131/170), that it becomes a divine law

for the individual who struggles with, for, and in himself rather than presumes to assist in helping the world to achieve an external equality (132/171). Further, the apostolic word is a gospel for the poor in that it brings about equality before God in its teaching that every good and perfect gift is from above and that we are to be essentially thankful to God whether one receives or gives (140/182). It also watches over the giver to see that he does not become disposed to demand from the needy whom he has helped something in return (134/174). Still further, if the one receiving the benefaction does not go out in gratitude to look for the benefactor he never finds God (140/182). When the rich thanks God for the gift and the opportunity to give it away honourably then he truly thanks God (144/188). When both giver and receiver confess that they are poorer than the gift then equality is present (143/187). The "only good and perfect gift a man can give is love," which folk wisdom understands as coming from above, and which occasions an equality that does not permit one person to become a debtor to another (144/188f).

The name EQUALITY is the one we assign to this dimension whose poles are DOUBT AND KNOWLEDGE vs. GRATITUDE AND EQUALITY. The ideas that it represents might be summarized thus: Doubt that knowledge occasions has to be checked for the soul to become open to the divine law of equality and hence for giver and receiver to become equals through expression of gratitude to God.

In sum, discourses two and three are central to this volume. Both are strong forces on each axis and make virtually identical contributions on the first and second. Joining forces, they stand in contrast on the principal axis to discourse four and on the second axis to discourse one. On the third axis, they continue to be strong forces but moving towards opposite poles to form a contrast with each other. The opposition which they represent and presented diagrammatically (Figure 1) are as follows: On axis

three, knowledge and doubt in contrast with gratitude and equality; on axis two, Job and the Lord in contrast with receiving good and perfect gift from above, and on axis one good and perfect gift in contrast with gaining the soul in patience. These polar contrasts, however, are related through affinities that the discourses have for each other.

Their affinities are suggested by the following abfreq words common to all: *Eller/or*, *give/give*, *haver/have*, *Ordet/word*, and *Sjel(en)/(the) soul*. The first of these underscore the deliberative nature of the discourses which draw on the apostolic word, especially on scriptural passages that underscore the idea of having to give so as to acquire or to have one's soul. Occurrences illustrating the deliberative feature include "Or does only that man see God's hand who sees that He gives; does not the one also see God who sees that He takes" (113/145). "Or had the Lord really changed" (114/146). "Or, did you not yourself discover that what the word said, but which you did not wish to understand... to awaken the pain which makes the soul more receptive to what it has to add" (123/159). "Or will you deny, my hearer, that no doubt can refute this, precisely because it is beyond all doubt, and abides in God" (125/161). "Or was the description itself something which the world and time could not accept without accepting patience..." (159/210). The remaining common words are ones encountered earlier and the primary ideas that their connections support already presented. Thus we proceed to describe the volume with respect to peculiarities in consecutive pairs of discourses suggested by words showing a change in their rate of use.

### *Peculiarities*

To expand on the peculiarities, aberrant frequent word lists are

constructed for each of the four discourses. Two consecutive lists are then compared with one another for words in common, and those with a change in z-scores are noted. These lists (Word List T1, T2, T3, and T4) show the top sixty abfreq words accompanied by z-scores and raw frequencies. A word common to both lists but showing a larger z-score in one is presumed to mean that its use in the discourse corresponding to the larger z-score is intended to stress a feature of the discourse or object in mind. Alternatively, a smaller z-score would mean a decrease in emphasis. Of course, words present in one list and not in the others are equally revealing of peculiarities, but for this study we concentrate on those common to lists for two consecutive discourses.

Word List T1 and T2 have in common four words: *Da/Then*, *ham/him*, *Ordet word*, and *skulde/would*. All but the last word have slightly higher<sup>9</sup> z-scores in T1 and thus occur more frequently in discourse one. This may well be that the discourse constantly alludes to Job as teacher of mankind regarding thankfulness to God. The use of *Da*, in very many cases, emphasizes the temporal order or sequence of events in Job's experience, and *ham* points to Job as object of an action or as having something done to him. *Ordet* used as *word* refers to the saying of Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord took Away..." The following passages exemplify the context of use for these three words: "Then<sup>10</sup> he sat one day alone by his fireside....Then he

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<sup>9</sup> Z-scores for words common to both lists T1/T2 are *Da* 9.47/6.63, *ham* 8.84/6.39, *Ordet* 16.42/15.98, and *skulde* 5.67/9.16 respectively.

<sup>10</sup> Swenson translates the Danish word *Da* in the text as "there" in the passages cited. I have rendered it as "then" as done also by the new English translation of the text *Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 114. The word could also mean "when" as in a single occasion, or could be used as a causal conjunction. Of course, we cite here the contexts in which it is used as

offered burnt offering ....Then Job stood up and rent his mantle....Then follows the confession from the man whom not sorrow alone ..." (107f/136f). "Then his happiness became pernicious to him;... it tempted him more on the day of sorrow when everything was lost, then he [Job] first thanked God.... He confessed that the blessing of the Lord had been merciful to him" (110f/141f). "The expression [Ordet] itself is not the guidance, and Job's significance does not lie in the fact that he said it but in the fact that he acted in accordance with it" (103/130).

A comparison of abfreq word lists for T2 and T3 shows 12 words in common. Four of them have in T2 relatively higher<sup>11</sup> rate of use: *Gaver/gifts*, *ham/him*, *herovenfra/down from above*, and *Ordet/word*. Their uses include drawing attention to the apostolic word over which the discourse deliberates: Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above, and that God gives good gifts to them who asks him (120/154). In short, they direct attention to gifts that come down from above. Such gifts are good and perfect, in contrast to temporal ones which are imperfect.

In T3, eight words have a higher<sup>12</sup> rate of use than in T2: *al/every*, *fuldkommen/perfect*, *god/good*, *Gave/gift*, *Gaven/the gift*, *give/give*, *modtage/receive*, *ovenfra/from above*. In fact, each of the last four show an excessively higher rate of use. The contexts in which all eight occur, however, have already been presented. From their higher rate of use, we can say that the third discourse emphasizes the ideas of giving and of receiving that which comes from above: the good and perfect. The focus on

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"then".

<sup>11</sup> The z-scores in T2/T3 are *Gaver* 33.76/6.36, *ham* 6.39/5.57, *herovenfra* 26.44/19.99, and *Ordet* 15.94/8.32 respectively.

<sup>12</sup> Z-scores for the eight in T2/T3 are *al* 7.33/9.83, *fuldkommen* 13.28/14.56, *Gave* 44.02/45.03, *Gaven* 11.76/63.89, *give* 9.24/16.37, *modtage* 6.46/33.00, *ovenfra* 16.39/51.87, and *god* 14.28/15.12 respectively.



those ideas are achieved through exploring the biblical passage “every [al] good and every [al] perfect gift is from above,” The following fragments of text illustrate some of the occurrences: “To be able to give or to have to receive —this difference embraces a great multitude of men.... The fact of being able to give or of being forced to receive, divides men into two great classes.... The apostolic word requires, then, that he who can give humble himself and his gift under the word.... If you are willing to give, then the word tests you to see if your willingness indicates that you are a cheerful giver, who is well pleasing unto God” (134/173f). Since the two discourses (T2 and T3) have identical titles, their abfreq word lists, not surprisingly, have in common more words than the lists for the remaining pair of discourses.

A comparison of the abfreq word lists for T3 and T4 shows only five words in common. Three of them, however, increase<sup>13</sup> considerable their z-scores in T4: *Eiendom/possession*, *Ordet/word*, and *Sjel/soul*. Their excessive use is not surprising, bearing in mind that the discourse seeks to understand the gospel word: to gain possession of one's soul through patience. The use of *Sjel/soul* occurs frequently with a possessive pronoun and thus underscores deliberation over the soul as a personal possession, rather than an object for investigation. The following passages illustrate this peculiarity of the discourse quite well: “It [the soul] belongs to God as his true possession, that is as the possession which he must acquire. Consequently, he then acquires, if he actually does acquire it, his soul from the world, of God, through himself” (151/199). “This, the word itself enjoins in a two-fold manner... by containing a double repetition. It admonishes a man to acquire his soul ‘in patience’.... It does not say: seize upon

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<sup>13</sup> Z-scores for the five in T1/T2 are *behovede* 7.74/6.13, *den* 7.29/7.24, *Eiendom* 7.72/27.07, *Ordet* 8.32/15.78, and *Sjel* 12.4/49.06 respectively.

your soul as if it was an affair of the moment .... It does not say: save your soul.... It is indeed certain that he who acquires his soul saves it" (154/203). Note, however, that this context of deliberating over the soul as having to be acquired from God does not compel to the same extent a rate of use of *behøvede/needed* and *den/the* as does reflection over the good and perfect gift in the third discourse, T3.

Altogether, the discourses are distinguished by their affinity for each other. That is, they explore the biblical word or passages, or a simple expression characteristic of everyday life, to present possibilities for deliberation and to move a reader to act or to reshape his own personal life in accordance with his deliberation of the possibilities. They are also distinguished from one another by each emphasizing a different human disposition or tendency which is presented as a possibility for strengthening or remaking one's personal life. The first directs attention to learning from Job to be thankful even in the midst of tribulations and sorrows. The second and third emphasize the importance of both giving and receiving the good and perfect gift by which both receiver and giver achieve equality before God. And, the fourth admonishes that only in patience can one gain possession of his own soul. Other words that play a role in confirming these emphases are provided in the abfreq word list for each discourse.

### *Conclusion*

We conclude with summary answers to questions raised at the outset regarding the focus of the volume, the relations among the discourses, and the appropriateness of their titles. The answers convey aspects of Kierkegaard's religious thinking in late 1843, and thus lend themselves to gaining a better grasp of the title *Atten opbyggelige Taler (Eighteen Edifying Discourses)*, a companion volume to the aesthetic or pseudonymous writings

following *Either/Or*.

The presumed focus of the volume is the idea of becoming thankful to God even in the midst of loss or life's struggles and trials. The first discourse directs attention to Job as the paradigm. He remains thankful to God, recognizing that what God took for him is what in the first place God had given to him. The second and third discourses continue with the idea of gratitude, this time however, treating it through the notion of giving and receiving. That is, thankfulness to God is overcoming doubt and becoming humble in giving and receiving the good and perfect gift, since such a gift comes only from above, from the hand of God. The fourth discourse carries forward the idea of gratitude to God, by admonishing that it is only through patience one receives or takes possession from God that which truly belongs to Him in the first place, namely, one's soul. The deliberations over the notions of suffering loss, doubt, equality, good or perfect gift, and learning patience acquire significance in the volume with respect to becoming thankful to God. The treatment of these notions are in consonant with the thrust of the discourses in general, namely, upbuilding the moral-spiritual person through exercising and strengthening of certain natural human capacities.

Holding together the four discourses, and hence another aspect of the focus of the volume, is a tension sustained by each discourse. The tension is between a spiritual loss and gain in this life. Job's experience of loss is in one sense with respect to temporal goods, but in another sense is with respect to himself (his inner or moral-spiritual self) which he regains when he comes to recognize that what the Lord took from him, or what amounted to his worldly loss, is what had been given to him and never was his own in the first place. His loss of earthly goods is an occasion for him to regain himself, the self that withstands the trials of this life and continue to praise God. In the case of giving good gifts, a person would suffer loss by cheating himself out of

learning to give and receive a good or perfect gift. Removal of doubt, or alternatively gratitude to God for the opportunity to give and to receive love as the only good and perfect gift that is from above, is the means whereby one gains equality before God. While the first discourse (on Job) seems to make the idea of loss evident, and the second and third make neither loss nor gain obvious at first glance, the fourth discourse puts into greater relief the idea of a spiritual gain. That is an individual would lose his soul by failing to gain it properly. One's soul has to be gained or received from God through patience. Where impatience abounds, ownership of the soul is virtual and never gained.

Finally, the titles of these four discourses clearly reflect their actual contents. Though the first discourse alludes to a historical biblical figure, its focus is less on Job's loss and more on his recognition that God took what he gave to him in the first, that all temporal goods are really a loan given by God, and that personal entitlement is not to ownership of temporal goods loaned to him, but to expressing gratitude to God for having the loan. Titles of the next two discourses properly reflect their contents: that the good and perfect gift comes only from above and that when a benefactor learns to give to the needy humbly before God and the needy learns to receive the benefaction humbly before God the two have become equals through the gift being a good and perfect one. While their titles are identical, there is reason based on the peculiarity of each to consider the second discourse as emphasizing that a gift is good and perfect only when it comes from above, and that no temporal gift could be considered good and perfect in that sense. The third discourse emphasizes the giving and receiving of the good and perfect gift. Given its emphasis, there is room to make the title reflect more precisely aspects of the theme discussed. The title of the final discourse is brief and to the point, reflecting precisely the content which our dimensional analysis and its abfreq word list play a role

in disclosing.

Word List A

60 Abfreq Words in T1, T2, T3; an T4

Word/(Usage)	Z-score	Freq.
Job (Job)	53.54	70
Gave (gift)	44.21	86
erhverve (acquire)	43.79	58
Sjel (soul)	42.60	113
Taalmodighed (patience)	41.99	58
Gaven (the gift)	39.79	35
eies (owned)	38.86	21
Erhvervelsen (the acquirement)	37.23	21
ovenfra (from above)	35.32	25
Herren (Lord)	30.98	48
Taalmodigheden (the patience)	29.57	36
Ordet (word)	28.04	67
erhverver (acquire)	25.66	21
erhverves (acquired)	25.63	23
Eien (possession)	25.13	8
Erhverven (acquirement)	24.97	12
eier (own)	24.18	43
herovenfra (down from above)	22.85	11
Verdenslivet (worldly life)	21.76	6
mindedes (remembered)	21.33	8
Jobs (of Job)	20.58	11
Kundskabens (of knowledge)	20.48	9
Fuldkomne (perfect)	19.79	16
modtage (receive)	19.78	25
Trængende (the needy)	19.66	11
taalmodigen (patient)	19.56	8
Sjelen (the soul)	19.14	27

Gaver (gifts)	18.89	22
Kundskaben (the knowledge)	18.82	8
eie (own)	17.77	17
Lighedens (equality)	17.61	18
Skyldner (debtor)	17.44	10
Eiendom (possession)	17.35	17
ringere (poorer)	16.69	13
Herrens (of the Lord)	16.60	20
Velgjører (benefactor)	16.30	13
Tvivlen (doubt)	16.05	26
Førstegrøde (firstfruits)	15.59	5
Erhvervelse (acquirement)	15.30	7
rettelig (rightly)	15.30	7
Eller (or)	14.85	42
billedlige (figurative)	14.66	5
Viseste (wisest)	14.37	7
takke (thank)	14.16	25
nøgen (naked)	13.96	7
god (good)	13.93	40
fuldkommen (perfect)	13.89	29
gode (good)	13.42	33
Betingede (the thing conditioned)	13.31	4
voxer (grows)	13.26	15
give (give)	12.99	57
haver (have)	12.97	20
Tabet (loss)	12.84	12
Tvivlens (of doubt)	12.83	10
Giveren (the giver)	12.63	6
Redskaber (weapons)	12.60	5
modtog (received)	12.22	10
bortgive (give away)	12.08	5
Overveelsen (consideration)	11.67	10
Velgjerningen (benefaction)	11.66	4

**Table 1**

**Matrix**

Word	T1	T2	T3	T4	
Bet	0	0	0	4	Betingede
bil	0	5	0	0	billedlige
bor	0	0	3	2	bortgive
eie	0	0	3	14	eie
Eie	0	0	0	8	Eien
Eim	0	0	4	13	Eiendom
eir	0	5	1	37	eier
eis	0	0	0	21	eies
Ell	17	7	12	6	Eller
erh	0	0	1	57	erhverve
Erh	0	0	0	7	Erhvervelse
Ern	0	0	0	21	Erhvervelsen
Ere	0	0	0	12	Erhverven
err	0	0	0	21	erhverver
ers	0	0	0	23	erhverves
ful	1	13	15	0	fuldkommen
Ful	0	11	3	2	Fuldkomne
Før	0	5	0	0	Førstegrøde
Gav	1	40	45	0	Gave
Gan	1	5	29	0	Gaven
Gar	0	18	4	0	Gaver
giv	2	18	33	4	give
Giv	0	1	5	0	Giveren
god	1	18	21	0	god
goe	2	25	5	1	gode
hav	3	2	12	3	haver
her	0	6	5	0	herovenfra



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Her	45	1	2	0	Herren
Hes	18	2	0	0	Herrens
Job	69	1	0	0	Job
Jos	11	0	0	0	Jobs
Kun	0	8	0	0	Kundskaben
Kus	0	9	0	0	Kundskabens
Lig	0	0	18	0	Ligheden
min	8	0	0	0	mindedes
mod	0	4	21	0	modtage
mog	3	1	6	0	modtog
nøg	2	0	2	3	nøgen
Ord	19	18	11	19	Ordet
ove	0	6	19	0	ovenfra
Ove	6	1	2	1	Overveielsen
Red	0	4	0	1	Redskaber
ret	1	0	4	2	rettelig
rin	0	0	13	0	ringere
Sje	25	6	18	64	Sjel
Sjn	1	2	3	21	Sjelen
Sky	0	0	3	7	Skyldner
taa	0	0	0	8	taalmodigen
Taa	1	0	0	57	Taalmodighed
Tan	0	0	0	36	Taalmodigheden
Tab	11	0	0	1	Tabet
tak	1	0	24	0	takke
Træ	0	0	11	0	Trængende
Tvi	0	26	0	0	Tvivlen
Tvs	0	10	0	0	Tvivlens
Vel	0	0	4	0	Velgjerningen
Ver	0	0	13	0	Velgjører
Vet	0	0	0	6	Verdenslivet
Vis	6	0	1	0	Viseste
vox	0	0	1	14	voxer

Table 2

## Numerical Analysis Data

## INERTIAS AND PERCENTAGES OF INERTIA

1	0.745883	42.53%
2	0.659995	37.63%
3	0.348095	19.85%

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1.753974

## ROW CONTRIBUTIONS

I	Name	QLT	MAS	INR	k=1	COR	CTR	k=2	COR	CTR	k=3	COR	CTR
1	Bet	1000	3	3	-1328	961	7	-261	37	0	55	2	0
2	bil	1000	4	8	949	222	4	-651	104	2	1653	674	28
3	bor	1000	4	2	-41	2	0	-461	267	1	-763	731	6
4	eie	1000	12	7	-950	868	15	-320	99	2	-186	33	1
5	Eie	1000	6	6	-1328	961	13	-261	37	1	55	2	0
6	Eim	1000	12	6	-823	785	11	-340	134	2	-266	82	2
7	eir	1000	31	20	-1013	878	42	-314	85	5	209	37	4
8	eis	1000	15	16	-1328	961	35	-261	37	2	55	2	0
9	Ell	1000	30	7	340	284	5	533	700	13	-80	16	1
10	erh	1000	41	41	-1291	958	92	-267	41	4	31	1	0
11	Erh	1000	5	5	-1328	961	12	-261	37	1	55	2	0
12	Ern	1000	15	16	-1328	961	35	-261	37	2	55	2	0
13	Ere	1000	9	9	-1328	961	20	-261	37	1	55	2	0
14	err	1000	15	16	-1328	961	35	-261	37	2	55	2	0
15	ers	1000	16	17	-1328	961	39	-261	37	2	55	2	0
16	ful	1000	21	12	859	724	20	-527	272	9	66	4	0
17	Ful	1000	11	10	640	261	6	-591	223	6	898	515	26
18	Før	1000	4	8	949	222	4	-651	104	2	1653	674	28
19	Gav	1000	61	39	873	682	62	-589	311	32	85	6	1
20	Gan	1000	25	24	822	405	23	-526	166	10	-847	430	51
21	Gar	1000	16	22	925	341	18	-640	163	10	1115	495	56
22	giv	1000	41	18	691	616	26	-494	315	15	-230	68	6
23	Giv	1000	4	4	838	406	4	-604	211	2	-814	383	8
24	god	1000	28	17	864	708	28	-553	289	13	58	3	0
25	goe	1000	23	27	823	337	21	-464	107	8	1057	556	75
26	hav	1000	14	5	437	328	4	-147	37	0	-607	635	15
27	her	1000	8	6	889	619	8	-625	306	5	307	74	2
28	Her	1000	34	75	374	36	6	1927	964	192	3	0	0

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29	Hes	1000	14	29	402	46	3	1822	944	72	187	10	1
30	Job	1000	50	124	350	28	8	2058	971	319	48	1	0
31	Jos	1000	8	20	341	26	1	2097	974	52	24	0	0
32	Kun	1000	6	13	949	222	7	-651	104	4	1653	674	45
33	Kus	1000	6	15	949	222	8	-651	104	4	1653	674	50
34	Lig	1000	13	20	816	244	11	-595	130	7	-1308	626	63
35	min	1000	6	15	341	26	1	2097	974	38	24	0	0
36	mod	1000	18	18	837	398	17	-604	207	10	-834	395	36
37	mog	1000	7	4	687	531	5	207	48	0	-612	421	8
38	nøg	1000	5	1	-238	207	0	317	366	1	-343	428	2
39	Ord	1000	48	4	109	87	1	248	449	4	252	463	9
40	ove	1000	18	15	848	498	17	-608	256	10	-597	247	18
41	Ove	1000	7	5	330	90	1	1048	905	12	-76	5	0
42	Red	1000	4	5	494	104	1	-573	140	2	1334	757	18
43	ret	1000	5	2	136	33	0	-115	24	0	-728	944	8
44	rin	1000	9	14	816	244	8	-595	130	5	-1308	626	45
45	Sje	1000	80	13	-496	855	27	187	121	4	-84	25	2
46	Sjn	1000	19	9	-859	927	19	-240	72	2	21	1	0
47	Sky	1000	7	3	-685	647	4	-361	180	1	-354	173	3
48	taa	1000	6	6	-1328	961	13	-261	37	1	55	2	0
49	Taa	1000	41	41	-1299	970	93	-221	28	3	54	2	0
50	Tan	1000	26	27	-1328	961	61	-261	37	3	55	2	0
51	Tab	1000	9	18	202	11	0	1900	989	47	27	0	0
52	tak	1000	18	25	797	260	15	-487	97	6	-1254	643	80
53	Træ	1000	8	12	816	244	7	-595	130	4	-1308	626	38
54	Tvi	1000	18	43	949	222	22	-651	104	12	1653	674	145
55	Tvs	1000	7	16	949	222	9	-651	104	5	1653	674	56
56	Vel	1000	3	4	816	244	3	-595	130	2	-1308	626	14
57	Ver	1000	9	14	816	244	8	-595	130	5	-1308	626	45
58	Vet	1000	4	4	-1328	961	10	-261	37	0	55	2	0
59	Vis	1000	5	9	409	54	1	1712	938	22	-166	9	0
60	vox	1000	11	9	-1185	945	20	-284	54	1	-36	1	0

### COLUMN CONTRIBUTIONS

J	Name	QLT	MAS	INR	k=1	COR	CTR	k=2	COR	CTR	k=3	COR	CTR
1	T1	1000	181	309	295	29	21	1703	971	797	14	0	0
2	T2	1000	198	215	820	353	178	-529	147	84	975	500	540
3	T3	1000	268	203	705	375	179	-483	176	95	-771	449	458
4	T4	1000	353	274	-1147	966	622	-212	33	24	32	1	1



## Wordlist T1

## 60 Abfreq Words in T1

Wordlist	Z-score	Freq.
Job	109.63	69
Herren	61.37	45
mindedes	44.10	8
Jobs	42.80	11
Herrens	32.01	18
Viseste	25.73	6
Tabet	25.22	11
tog	20.08	18
Sjel	19.14	25
Ordet	16.42	19
Taknemlighed	15.35	6
lovet	15.33	8
Overveielser	14.88	6
fordum	14.72	4
havde	14.44	59
Menneskeheden	14.12	4
gav	13.63	12
forstod	13.57	13
Eller	13.08	17
var	12.39	102
hans	11.61	58
Sorgens	11.37	6
prøvet	11.27	4
Navn	10.92	14
Nød	10.41	6
fromme	10.11	4
han	9.56	158
Da	9.47	14

Glæden	9.44	7
forsøgt	9.33	5
Velsignelse	9.33	6
eiede	9.33	4
overvundet	9.06	4
ham	8.84	73
Glæde	8.58	14
forstaaer	8.46	17
vende	7.97	7
taget	7.75	7
blev	7.51	28
Øre	7.46	4
Ord	7.26	23
levende	7.04	6
væsentligt	6.96	4
skjönt	6.93	6
glade	6.88	4
Elendighed	6.80	5
Striden	6.50	4
ønske	6.34	8
inden	6.28	5
Sorgen	6.20	5
Lærer	5.87	5
Forklaring	5.73	6
skulde	5.67	25
Uro	5.51	4
lære	5.37	9
snarere	5.32	6
Forestillingen	5.20	4
sit	4.99	20
Tanke	4.98	11
Alt	4.82	28

## Wordlist T2

## 60 Abfreq Words in T2

Word	Z-score	Freq.
Gave	44.02	40
Kundskabens	43.61	9
Kundskaben	40.11	8
Tvivlen	36.03	26
Gaver	33.76	18
Førstegrøde	33.18	5
billedlige	31.26	5
Fuldkomne	29.26	11
Tvivlens	28.07	10
herovenfra	26.44	6
gode	23.66	25
langsom	22.67	7
Redskaber	21.59	4
snar	20.73	4
Lysenes	19.85	5
Jordlivet	19.40	5
Sandheds	19.40	5
ovenfra	17.78	6
Frugt	16.39	8
Ordet	15.98	18
glædede	15.47	4
Faders	15.13	4
behov	14.82	4
god	14.28	18
fuldkommen	13.90	13
fuldkomne	13.28	6
Fuldkommenhed	13.16	9
Fader	12.95	14

Vrede	12.73	8
Gode	12.70	25
Apostelen	12.62	10
giver	12.27	20
Mennesket	12.23	20
Gaven	11.76	5
hurtig	11.27	5
skue	11.15	4
hvorfra	10.58	5
hjalp	10.50	6
ond	10.43	5
himmelske	9.67	5
Eders	9.53	6
Skygge	9.49	5
onde	9.33	4
give	9.24	18
skulde	9.16	34
høre	8.04	12
snart	7.54	11
al	7.33	22
Betingelse	7.05	4
vide	6.97	14
Tvivl	6.86	6
Bedrag	6.84	6
Raad	6.82	4
hvad	6.73	55
Da	6.63	10
Adam	6.60	4
Indre	6.60	4
modtage	6.46	4
ham	6.39	58
Guds	6.35	13



## Wordlist T3

## 60 Abfreq Words in T3

Word	Z-score	Freq.
Gaven	63.82	29
ovenfra	51.87	19
Gave	45.03	45
Trængende	38.26	11
Ligheden	34.94	18
modtage	33.00	21
ringere	32.88	13
Velgjører	32.16	13
takke	28.02	24
Din	25.13	60
Velgjerningen	22.72	4
Giveren	20.58	5
herovenfra	19.99	5
Du	19.18	134
apostoliske	18.55	9
Lighed	18.46	18
Tak	18.20	10
rettelig	16.94	4
kjøbte	16.42	4
Formaning	16.41	7
give	16.37	33
Skatte	15.94	4
Mægtige	15.81	8
haver	15.71	12
god	15.12	21
fuldkommen	14.56	15
modtog	14.46	6
skyldte	14.17	5

Gods	12.96	6
Sjel	12.40	18
modtager	11.92	6
villig	11.69	9
Jordens	10.78	4
du	10.18	5
Dig	10.07	55
Forskjelligheden	9.89	6
al	9.83	31
usynlig	9.55	5
Ringe	9.01	5
Dit	8.53	16
Al	8.44	5
Ordet	8.32	11
Eller	8.15	12
behøvede	7.74	5
Forskjellighed	7.72	7
Eiendom	7.72	4
O	7.35	13
den	7.29	227
opdagede	7.16	4
tungt	7.03	5
Beundring	7.02	6
Overveielse	6.71	5
Deeltagelse	6.68	5
Gud	6.63	44
Næste	6.60	4
Gaver	6.36	4
takker	6.00	4
gav	5.88	6
ham	5.77	63
jordisk	5.66	5

## Wordlist T4

## 60 Abfreq Words in T4

Word	Z-score	Freq.
erhverve	86.63	57
Taalmodighed	83.23	57
eies	77.35	21
Erhvervelsen	74.17	21
Taalmodigheden	59.98	36
erhverves	51.76	23
erhverver	51.72	21
Eien	49.98	8
Erhverven	49.90	12
Sjel	49.06	64
Verdenslivet	43.28	6
eier	42.98	37
taalmodigen	39.13	8
Erhvervelse	30.80	7
Sjelen	30.68	21
ie	29.86	14
Eiendom	27.07	13
Betingede	26.65	4
voxer	25.77	14
Skyldner	24.54	7
Utaalmodighed	23.09	13
utaalmodigen	22.24	4
Eier	19.46	4
Kjøbmanden	18.74	4
utaalmodig	17.33	9
Selvmodsigelse	17.11	9
Betingelsen	16.99	12
Ordet	15.78	19

Verden	15.14	52
Udvortes	14.82	16
sin	13.01	78
Korthed	12.02	4
Erkjendelsen	11.42	5
eiede	11.31	5
svagere	10.91	5
tabes	10.71	4
erkjender	10.44	4
erhvervet	10.32	4
Timelige	9.78	7
Byrden	9.53	4
Erkjenden	9.34	5
han	8.85	160
Indvortes	8.81	5
venter	8.50	6
Sjelens	8.41	4
da	8.27	83
tilsyneladende	7.98	5
vorder	7.82	4
vandt	7.33	5
Den	7.30	43
vundet	7.26	5
den	7.24	215
vinder	7.19	6
Maalet	7.00	5
Sikkerhed	6.97	5
Hvo	6.82	5
Betingelse	6.57	4
behøvede	6.31	4
bedrager	5.91	4
tilhører	5.87	6

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