

Hebrew Poetry (The Language of the Soul)

(Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon)

Wednesday, June 8th

1. Study the Context of the Passage

A. Study the Context of Hebrew Poetry

1. *The Importance of Hebrew Poetry*

- a. One-third of the Bible is Hebrew Poetry
- b. The only books in the OT that do not include some lines of Hebrew Poetry are Leviticus, Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, and Malachi.
- c. Examples of Hebrew Poetry outside of Poetic Books: Ex 15:1-18; 2 Sam 1:17-27

2. *The Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry*

- a. *Parallelism*: The balancing of one thought against another
 - 1) Synonymous: Job 38:7 (2nd part of the verse repeats the thought of the 1st)
 - 2) Antithetic: Job 36:11-12 (2nd line is contrasted with the 1st)
 - 3) Synthetic: Job 5:17 (The thought of the 1st line is developed in the 2nd)
 - 4) Emblematic: Job 8:2 (1st line is a literal statement and the 2nd is a figure of speech)
 - 5) Climatic: Job 38:36-38 (Each line develops the thought of the previous line)
- b. *Wisdom*: The words “wisdom” and “wise” occur frequently in Hebrew Poetry
 - 1) Job: How to live wisely while suffering
 - 2) Proverbs: How to live wisely with others
 - 3) Song of Solomon: How to live wisely with our mate
 - 4) Ecclesiastes: How to live wisely and enjoy life

B. Study the Context of the Book

1. The Theme of Psalms: God’s Devotional Book
2. The Theme of Proverbs: God’s Practical Manual for living
3. The Theme of Job: Why Do Christians Serve the Lord
4. The Theme of Ecclesiastes: Life is Meaningless without God
5. The Theme of Song of Solomon: God’s Theology of Marriage

How is the theme developed in the book? For example: Job

1. Prologue or Introduction: Chapters 1-2 Narrative (What God Thinks and Feels)
2. Dialogue: Chapters 3-42:6 Hebrew Poetry (What Man Thinks or Feels)
3. Epilogue or Conclusion: Chapters 42:7-17 (What God Thinks or Feels)

2. Study the Content of the Passage