

Chapter 5: The Nature of Hebrew Poetry – 8 Literary Devices in Biblical Imagery

Grace Christian Fellowship of Dayton / Sunday Bible Study Prepared by Gregory A. Weis / August 18, 2019 (Carla's Birthday)

I. Review from the Past 4 Messages:

A. Chapter 1 of "A Guide to the Psalms Series": (5 Weeks Ago.) 4 Pages of Quotes.

1. Use of Psalms in the N.T. (Chapter 1 of "A Guide to the Psalms Series")

Our Lord Jesus & the N.T. Apostolic Writers Testify Frequently that the Psalms are About the Christ.

2. **The Birth of the Apostolic Hermeneutic:** (Regarding Biblical Studies - It is Always All About Jesus) (Luke 24:36-49) ⁴⁴ Then He said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ... (ESV) {See also John 5:39}

Although Eternal, this is the Incarnation (Birth) of the Apostolic Hermeneutic in Human (Christian) History.
"The Apostolic Hermeneutic is Both Correct & Christocentric." {Grace Christian Fellowship Dictum: Memorize}

3. God's Sovereign Christological Purpose in Compiling Psalms in Postexilic Period.

B. Chapter 2 of "A Guide to the Psalms Series": (3 Weeks Ago.) Intro to the Wisdom Literature (5 Books)

1. Anthropomorphic Wisdom in Scripture is Jesus – (Colossians 2:1-3) (1 Corinthians 1:30)

(Colossians 2:1-3) ³ Christ,³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.(ESV)

2. "Wisdom" in Proverbs 8 is clearly the Person of the Eternal Son of God.

(Proverbs 8:1-30-31-36) ("Rejoicing" in NASB & ESV = "Playing" in CJB; "Played" in WYC & "Laughing in EXB.)

a. A Biblical & Relational Definition of Wisdom. (Biblical Life-Skills in Fear of God. Practical Areas.)

Blessing vs. Curse Realms; Living in Harmony w/ God's Righteous Order; Every Part of Life.

No Deception, No Blame shifting, Cover-Ups; Etc. (e.g. Proverbs 1 & / or Ecclesiastes 12.)

b. 2 Paths: Path of the Wise (Righteous) vs. the Path of Fools (the Wicked); [e.g. Psalm 1]

C. Chapter 3 of "A Guide to the Psalms Series": Biblical Imagery (2 Weeks Ago)

1. Rhyme & Rhythm in World Poetry vs. Imagery (aka Word Pictures) (Sovereign Translation Purpose)

2. Biblical Imagery (Word Pictures): Not Lost in Translation – God's Providential Foresight.

D. Chapter 4: Intro to the Nature of Hebrew Poetry – Parallelism(s) (Last Week)

1. Building Blocks of Hebrew / Biblical Poetry: Words; Cola; Lines; & Strophes (aka Stanzas)

2. Biblical (Hebrew) Parallelism Defined: The correspondence that intentionally exist between two juxtaposed lines, segments (cola) or strophes in a poem or song.

Note 1: These corresponding connections can be by rhyme, word-play or grammar (does not come through in translation); or by imagery or meaning (which comes through when translated.)

II. Today: Chapter 5: Eight Literary Devices Used in the Biblical Imagery of the Psalms.

A. **Simile:** A comparison usually linked together by using comparative words such as: "like" or "as."

(Psalm 102:6) I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. (NKJV)

(Psalm 102:6) I am like a desert owl of the wilderness, like an owl of the waste places; (ESV)

(**Note:** Static, Synonymous, Emphatic Parallelism. Also Personification. Explain.) (Cf. Psalm 114:1-4.)

(Psalm 37:1) ¹ Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers!

² For they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb. (ESV) (*Similes*)

B. **Metaphor:** A comparison usually not linked together by using comparative words such.

(Psalm 23:1) The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

(**Note:** Metaphor in 1st cola. Synthetic Progressive Parallism w/ both colas. Next Week Types of Parallelism)

C. Metonymy: Figure of speech consisting of the use of the name of one object or concept for another.

(e.g. "Scepter" for "Sovereignty." Count "heads" for count "people.") (Cf. Matthew 21:25)

(Psalm 5:9) For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction;
their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue. (ESV)

(Note: Metonymy & Metaphor. Static, Synonymous, Emphatic Parallelism w/ ABBA structure.)

(Psalm 24:4) He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. (ESV)

(Note: Metonymy. Hands represent actions or outworked life. Heart represent inner motivations and attitudes. {Cf. Matthew 12:34} Static, Synonymous, Emphatic Parallelism w/ ABBA structure.)

D. Synecdoche: A figure of speech in which the part represents the whole or the whole is used for the part.

Or, a figure of speech in which the general is used for the specific or specific for general.

(Psalm 24:4) He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. (ESV) (Cf. Psalm 119:160)

(Note: Synecdoche. Hands & heart represent entire life of the whole person. As does false & deceit.)

(Psalm 44:6) For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me. (ESV)

(Note: Synecdoche. "bow" & "sword" represent weapons or military might / armies. Trust YHWH.)

E. Hyperbole: An obvious exaggeration to drive home or emphasize a point. Use of an extravagant statement not to be taken literally, but to focus attention. ("I would never use Hyperbole in a million years.")
(Psalm 18:7-8) ⁷ Then the earth shook and quaked; And the foundations of the mountains were trembling And were shaken, because He was angry. ⁸ Smoke went up out of His nostrils, And fire from His mouth devoured; Coals flamed forth from Him. (NASB / ESV Hybrid.)

(Psalm 42:3a) My tears have been my food day and night, ("writer's embellishment")

(Psalm 107:26) They rose up to the heavens, they went down to the depths; Their soul melted away in *their* misery.

F. Apostrophe: Addresses an inanimate thing as if it was a person; a person not present as if they were present; or an imaginary person as if they were present.

(Psalm 24:7) Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in!

(Psalm 87:3) Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. (Cf. Matthew 23:37) (Cf. Psalm 103a)

(Psalm 148:3) Praise Him, sun and moon, praise Him, all you shining stars! (ESV)

G. Anthropomorphism: Assigning to God Human Characteristics or Body Parts to help our understanding.

(Psalm 10:12) Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up Your hand. Do not forget the afflicted.

(Psalm 31:2) Incline Your ear to me, rescue me quickly; Be to me a rock of strength, A stronghold to save me.

H. Mythological Historical Allusions: A Literary Device that uses extra-Biblical historical imagery from Israel's surrounding rival pagan nations to mock their false gods. (Eg. Canaanites & Babylonians vs. YHWH)

(Psalm 74:12-14) ¹² Yet God my King is from of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

¹³ You divided the sea by your might; you broke the heads of the sea monsters on the waters.

¹⁴ You crushed the heads of Leviathan; you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

III. **Upcoming Messages:**

More on the Nature of Hebrew Poetry – Parallelism Types or Genres;

An Overview of the Bible & the Place of the Wisdom Literature in General; Intro to Biblical Numerology;

The Psalms in Church History; Various Psalm Favorites Explored; Etc.



(Listen to Series at <http://gcfdayton.org/podcasts/sunday-school/>) (Request Outlines at steven@gcfdayton.org)