

Pre-Revelation Introductions (Literature and Literary Devices)

The book that we will be studying is known by several names: *The Book of Revelation*, *The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, *Revelation*, and *The _____ of St. John the Apostle*.¹

Note: We are not studying the Book of Revelations. There is only _____ book.

This type of literature is called, “_____ Literature.”²

This type of literature visualizes settings, characters, and events that differ from ordinary _____.

Visionary literature is subdivided into two types of genre: Prophetic and Apocalyptic.

I. Prophetic: Prophetic literature is a genre of literature whereby someone divinely inspired _____ (preaching or proclaiming something old in a new way or for a new season) or _____ (predicting some future event or happening not yet revealed).

Old Testament Prophets: Moses, Samuel, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets

Note: The Jewish Old Testament is divided into three sections: The Law (Torah), the Prophets (Nevi'im), and the Writings (Kethuvim).

It is interesting to observe that _____ is not in the Prophetic Section. His work is not predominantly prophetic in nature but has prophetic sections. It is historical narrative in nature.

Joshua, Judges, and _____ are included in the Prophets because prophets and prophetic activity play an important

¹*The Holy Bible*, New American Catholic Edition, 1969. New York: Benzinger Brothers, Inc.

²Ryken, Leland, *How to Read the Bible as Literature and Get More Out of It*, 1984. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing.

role in those writings.³ For example, _____ and _____ are predominant in 1st and 2nd Kings.

New Testament Prophets: John the Baptist, _____, Peter, Paul, Agabus

Jn. 21:18-19

Acts 2:14-21 with Joel 2:28-32

Acts 11:28

Acts 21:10

Why study prophecy?

1. Over _____ of the Bible was prophecy when it was written.

According to “The Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy” by J. Barton Payne, there are 1,239 prophecies in the Old Testament and 578 prophecies in the New Testament for a total of 1,817. These prophecies are contained in 8,352 of the Bible’s verses. Since there are 31,124 verses in the Bible, the 8,352 verses that contain prophecy constitute 26.8 percent of the Bible’s volume.⁴

2. Prophecy demonstrates the faithfulness, _____, and supernatural power of God.

Josh. 21:45

1 Kgs. 8:56

³*The Jewish Study Bible*, 2004. New York: Oxford Press, 451.

⁴<https://gracethrufaith.com/ask-a-bible-teacher/much-bible-prophecy/>. Cited 1-22-19.

3. Prophecy encourages believers to have _____ in times of doubt and distress.

1 Thess. 4:13-18

2 Pt. 3:3-13

4. Prophecy _____ believers to live holy lives.

2 Cor. 7:1

Titus 2:11-15

5. Prophecy reveals God's perfect plan and _____.⁵

Is. 46:10-13

6. Prophecy always points, in some way, to _____.

Rev. 19:10

II. Apocalyptic: Apocalyptic literature is a genre of writing that developed in post-Exilic Jewish culture. "Apocalypse" (ἀποκάλυψις) is a Greek word meaning "revelation", "an _____ or unfolding of things not previously known and which could not be known apart from the unveiling".

Biblical Apocalyptic referencing:

Luke 2:32 –

Romans 16:25 –

⁵ Mock, Dennis, *Bible Study Methods and Rules of Interpretation*, 1989. Bible Training Centre for Pastors, manual, 71.

Non-biblical/canonical referencing: 1 Enoch (cited in Jude 14), The Assumption of Moses (cited in Jude 8-10), The Sibylline Oracles, The Apocalypse of Elijah, the Dead Sea Scrolls, etc..

What's the difference between prophetic and apocalyptic literature?

“It is not always possible to apply the distinction neatly to important texts in the Hebrew Bible, but it is useful to keep the following important differences in mind.

First, prophets and apocalypticists have different _____. Prophets tend to be action-oriented, passing critical judgment on individual events as they unfold in the political and religious development of Israel, which is under both divine and Davidic sovereignty. Apocalyptic works are products of people dedicated to the written word as a vehicle for passing judgment on the _____, not just that of Israel and its monarchy.

Second, the _____ of the biblical works they have produced differs markedly. Prophets describe specific examples of injustice seen in the context of an ethical struggle within Israel, which God's judgment over his people will resolve on the coming “Day of the Lord.” Writers of apocalyptic works offer more generalized and highly symbolic visions of the reign of evil, visions that only a divinely commissioned “angel” [messenger] can interpret. God's judgment will be manifest in a final cosmic cataclysm, a final battle (sometimes called Armageddon) between the forces of Good and Evil.

Finally, prophetic texts generally claim authorship by name while apocalyptic texts typically use a _____, either to add credibility to their visions of the “future” or to avoid retaliation from the authorities of their own day.”⁶ For example, the writers included in the Pseudepigrapha.

⁶https://www.papertrell.com/apps/preview/The-Handy-Religion-Answer-Book/Handy%20Answer%20book/What-s-the-difference-between-prophetic-and-apocalyptic-lite/001137024/content/SC/52cafece82fad14abfa5c2e0_default.html. Cited 1-22-19. Brackets – mine.

Visionary Literature: Be ready

1. Be ready for the _____ of ordinary reality.

Is. 32:9-10, 14

Amos 9:13

2. Be ready to use your _____ to picture a world that transcends earthly reality.

Rev. 4:8

Rev. 6:4

Rev. 12:3-4

3. Be ready for a _____ series of diverse, self-contained units.

Rev. 4-5

Rev. 6

Rev. 7

General Rules of Interpretation:

1. _____ interpretation: Taking words, phrases, and sentences in their usual, normal, natural, customary and common sense.

“When the plain interpretation makes plain sense interpret it plainly.”

Gen. 2:7

John 8:24

Heb. 9:27

Note: A literal meaning can be conveyed using _____ language and is often stated as such.

Lk. 13:31-32

Jer. 17:1

Gal. 4:21-26

2. Allegorizing or _____: Looking for secret or hidden meanings which are often unrelated to the true meaning of the passage (very subjective).

Esther – Esther represents the Church. Haman represents the Devil. Mordecai represents the Holy Spirit.

Is. 11:1 – the Branch is _____ who produces Jesus.

A passage can only have _____ real meaning but multiple applications. It cannot have multiple meanings with exponential applications.

3. Sign: A _____ by which persons or things are distinguished and made known. In Scripture it is used generally to speak to the senses for the purpose of displaying divine power and promise. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, "signs" are connected to the miraculous, and associated with immediate divine _____.

Lk. 2:12

Matt. 12:38-39

4. Symbol: Symbols are a path or a _____ to revelation. A Bible Symbol is a word or phrase in the Bible that has a deeper alternative meaning that is _____ to the plain, and obvious meaning.

Ex. 13:16

Mal. 4:2

Key: A symbol will _____ have a non-symbolic meaning. In other words, there is _____ something real that undergirds and gives meaning to the symbol.

Rev. 1:12-16

Visionary literature is heavily symbolic but seldom pictorial. Symbol writing does not paint pictures but ideas. The symbol is a code word for a more specific and literal meaning. The purpose of symbols is to “reveal” not to “hide.”

Symbols are often found in: Similes, Metaphors, and Numbers.

Similes: A figure of speech involving the _____ of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more emphatic or vivid (e.g., as brave as a lion, crazy like a fox).

Ps. 144:3-4

Prov. 23:31-32

Metaphors: A figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is _____ another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them

John 1:35 –

Rev. 5:6 -

Numerology: Values used in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament that imply _____ or attributes of the value rather than to an actual quantity. Also known as “Gematria.”

Matt. 1:17

Matt. 14:20

John 21:11

5. Prophetic _____: A prophecy may have an immediate, mediate, and long-term application at the same time. The emphasis, however, may be different.

Is. 7:14 with Mat. 1:23

1 Kgs. 17:1 with Mal. 4:5-6 with Matt. 11:14 with Lk. 9:30 with Rev. 11:3

General Questions of the Text:

1. What does it say? Language, words, grammar, syntax, context, etc...
2. What did it mean to those who received it? Cultural context
3. What does it mean to me? Cultural context without violating the above two.