



Bible History

Poetry or Wisdom Books

I. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SECTION

A. Its Language

1. The reason for designating this section independent from other sections in scripture is twofold
 - a. Much of this section is written in a poetical style
 - b. Much of this section avoids the continuity of storyline found throughout other portions of scripture
2. The language in this section employs much parallelism.
 - a. The principle defined
 - (1) Parallelism occurs when two lines of text match up with a general correspondence of things to things and words to words.
 - (2) Most of the poetry and some of the prose in the Bible is strongly characterized by parallelism.
 - (3) Parallelism provides several advantages.
 - a) Words or phrases are often defined.
 - b) Truths are more strongly established (by saying something two times in slightly different ways).
 - c) Comparison of the two statements add to the meaning of the whole.
 - b. The principle illustrated
 - (1) Comparative parallelism—the same idea is repeated in different words
 - a) Identity (Psalm 104:9; Psalm 127:3; Proverbs 6:2)
 - b) Similarity (Job 6:5; Psalm 89:36; Proverbs 25:25)
 - (2) Contrasting parallelism—the second line gives the opposite thought or antithesis of the first (Job 6:25; Psalm 30:5; Psalm 118:8; Proverbs 14:34)
 - (3) Constructive parallelism—the second line adds something new to the first or explains it (Job 23:10; Psalm 51:12-13; Proverbs 14:12; Proverbs 24:9)
 - (4) Compound parallelism—the above forms of parallelism may be combined in more complex ways (Job 24:5; Psalm 1:1-2; Psalm 27:1; Psalm 126:5-6; Isaiah 1:3)

B. Its Purpose

1. The purpose of the greater portion of Old Testament scripture is to tell the past or future history of the nation of Israel.
2. In this section, however, with few exceptions, the purpose is to promote wisdom through literary means.



II. A SURVEY OF JOB

A. The Statistics of the Book

1. Forty-two chapters
2. 1,070 verses

B. The Characters of the Book

1. Job—a son of Issachar (Genesis 46:13)
2. Eliphaz—a son of Esau (Genesis 36:4, 11)
3. Bildad—descended from Abraham likely through Shuah (Genesis 25:2, 6)
4. Zophar—likely from Naamah (Joshua 15:20-21, 41)
5. Elihu

C. The Outline of the Book

1. Introduction (Job 1:1-5)
2. Satan's assault (Job 1:6 – Job 2:10)
3. Job's communications (Job 2:11 – Job 42:9)
4. Satan's defeat (Job 42:10-13)
5. Conclusion (Job 42:14-17)

D. The Purpose of the Book—Patience

III. A SURVEY OF PSALMS

A. The Statistics of the Book

1. 150 chapters; Note: Technically, the divisions are identified as psalms.
2. 2,461 verses

B. The Outline of the Book

1. The first book (Psalm 1 – Psalm 41)
2. The second book (Psalm 42 – Psalm 72)
3. The third book (Psalm 73 – Psalm 89)
4. The fourth book (Psalm 90 – Psalm 106)
5. The fifth book (Psalm 107 – Psalm 150)

C. The Purpose of the Book—Praise

IV. A SURVEY OF PROVERBS

A. The Statistics of the Book

1. Thirty-one chapters
2. 915 verses



B. The Outline of the Book

1. The words of the wise (Proverbs 1:6 – Proverbs 9:18)
2. Proverbs by and for Solomon (Proverbs 10:1 – Proverbs 29:27)
3. The words of Agur (Proverbs 30:1 – Proverbs 31:31)

C. The Purpose of the Book—Prudence

V. A SURVEY OF ECCLESIASTES

A. The Statistics of the Book

1. Twelve chapters
2. 222 verses

B. The Outline of the Book

1. Introduction (Ecclesiastes 1:1)
2. The anti-chief good (Ecclesiastes 1:2 – Ecclesiastes 6:9)
3. The chief good (Ecclesiastes 6:10 – Ecclesiastes 12:12)
4. The conclusion (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)

C. The Purpose of the Book—Purpose

VI. A SURVEY OF SONG OF SOLOMON

A. The Statistics of the Book

1. Eight chapters
2. 117 verses

B. The Outline of the Book

1. The introduction (Song of Solomon 1:1-11)
2. The Shulamite and her beloved together (Song of Solomon 1:12 – Song of Solomon 2:7)
3. The Shulamite and her beloved apart (Song of Solomon 2:8 – Song of Solomon 3:5)
4. The Shulamite and her beloved together (Song of Solomon 3:6 – Song of Solomon 5:1)
5. The Shulamite and her beloved apart (Song of Solomon 5:2 – Song of Solomon 8:4)
6. The conclusion (Song of Solomon 8:5-14)

C. The Purpose of the Book—Perseverance