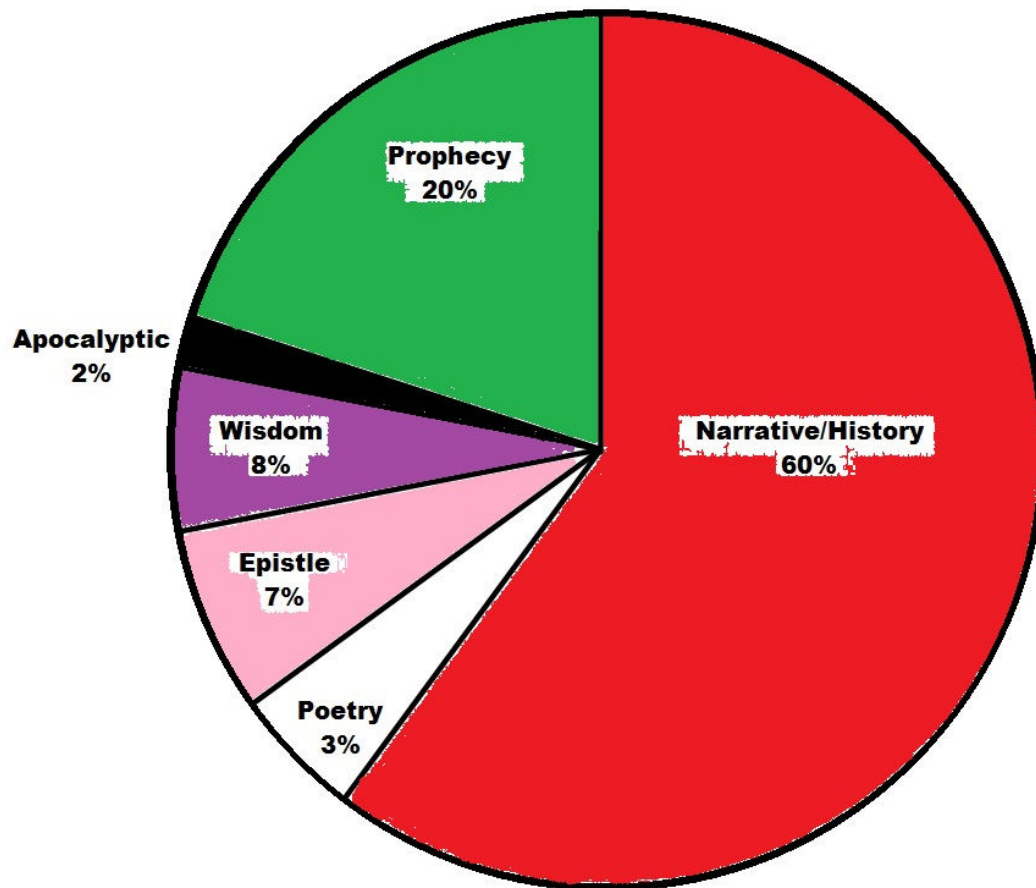


I. PERIODS OF REVELATION.

- A. The Patriarchal Period (from Adam to Moses).
- B. The Mosaic Period (from Moses to Malachi).
- C. The Christian Period (from Christ to the end of time).

II. THE DIFFERENT GENRES (Literary Forms) TO BE STUDIED.

- A. The Law. Some of the covenant stipulations for OT Israel.
- B. The Old Testament Narratives. Over 40% of the OT is in narrative form.
- C. The Psalms. Instead of God speaking to man, it is man speaking to God. Israel's prayers and ours.
- D. The Wisdom Literature. A very special look at Ecclesiastes, Proverbs and Job.
- E. The Prophets. The fore-tellers and forth-tellers of Israel. How they tried to get the people to follow the Law.
- F. The Gospels. One story with many dimensions and different audiences.
- G. The Parables. "Do you get the point?"
- H. The Book of Acts. Understanding how one handles examples and the historical precedent in the book is important.
- I. The Epistles. Public letters written to God's people trying to help them with specific problems.
- J. The Revelation. Apocalyptic literature also includes Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah.



### III. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SETTING.

- A. Who is doing the speaking or the writing?
- B. To whom is the command or observation given?
- C. About whom is the passage speaking?
- D. When was the passage in question spoken?
- E. Where was the speaker when the message was given?
- F. What were the circumstances about the statement spoken?
- G. Why is the passage included in its context?

### IV. THE TYPES OF LANGUAGE USED.

A. **Literal language.** It means what it says and says what it means.

B. **Figurative language.** "A symbol used to tell a story."

One is to interpret a passage figuratively if:

1. It involves an impossibility or an absurdity (Lk. 9:60).  
But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God."
  2. It involves a contradiction or inconsistency (Jn. 11:25,26).  
Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"
  3. It involves an immoral conclusion (Mt. 18:8,9).  
"If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. 9 If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.
  4. It implies its meaning from the context (Rev. 7:14).  
I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
  5. It is plainly stated to interpret it figuratively (Jn. 2:18-21).  
The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body.
  6. It is more apt to be figurative for the reason of common sense (Jn. 4:10-15).  
Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." 11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? 12 You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."  
15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw."
- C. Some rules for understanding figurative language:
1. Determine what kind of figure (of speech) it is. See next section.
  2. If possible, follow the author's explanation (Lk. 8:11).  
Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God.
  3. Try to harmonize the figurative with the literal.
  4. Try to harmonize the figurative with the custom of the times.
  5. Do not press the meaning too far. The details may not be as important as you think.
  6. Remember that figures of speech change over the years.

## D. Figures of Speech.

### 1. Parable:

A simple, normal real life story or illustration used to present a moral truth.

#### a. The parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37).

And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" **26** And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" **27** And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." **28** And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE." **29** But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

**30** Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. **31** And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. **32** Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, **34** and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on *them*; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. **35** On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' **36** Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' *hands*?" **37** And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

#### b. The parable of the prodigal son (Lk. 15:11-32).

And He said, "A man had two sons. **12** The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them. **13** And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. **14** Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. **15** So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. **16** And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving *anything* to him. **17** But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! **18** I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'" **20** So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion *for him*, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. **21** And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' **22** But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; **23** and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; **24** for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.

**25** "Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** And he summoned one of the servants and *began* inquiring what these things could be. **27** And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.' **28** But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and *began* pleading with him. **29** But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and *yet* you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; **30** but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.' **31** And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. **32** But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and *has begun* to live, and *was* lost and has been found.'"

#### c. The parable of the two men (Lk. 18:9-14).

And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: **10** "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You

that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. **12** I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ **13** But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ **14** I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.’”

d. **The parable of the soils (Mt. 13:3-16).**

And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, “Behold, the sower went out to sow; **4** and as he sowed, some *seeds* fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. **5** Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. **6** But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. **7** Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. **8** And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. **9** He who has ears, let him hear.”

**10** And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” **11** Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. **12** For whoever has, to him *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. **13** Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. **14** In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says,

‘YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND;  
YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;

**15** FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL,  
WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR,  
AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES,  
OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES,  
HEAR WITH THEIR EARS,  
AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN,  
AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.’

**16** But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

2. **Fable:**

Similar to a parable but made up of fictitious or imaginary characters or story.

a. **Fable of the thorn bush (2Kgs. 14:8-10).**

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, “Come, let us face each other.” **9** Jehoash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, “The thorn bush which was in Lebanon sent to the cedar which was in Lebanon, saying, ‘Give your daughter to my son in marriage.’ But there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trampled the thorn bush. **10** You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has become proud. Enjoy your glory and stay at home; for why should you provoke trouble so that you, even you, would fall, and Judah with you?”

b. **Fable of the trees (Jud. 9:7-15).**

Now when they told Jotham, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted his voice and called out. Thus he said to them, “Listen to me, O men of Shechem, that God may listen to you. **8** Once the trees went forth to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, ‘Reign over us!’ **9** But the olive tree said to them, ‘Shall I leave my fatness with which God and men are honored, and go to wave over the trees?’ **10** Then the trees said to the fig tree, ‘You come, reign over us!’ **11** But the fig tree said to them, ‘Shall I leave my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to wave over the trees?’ **12** Then the trees said to the vine, ‘You come, reign over us!’ **13** But the vine said to them, ‘Shall I leave my new wine, which cheers God and men, and go to wave over the trees?’ **14** Finally all the trees said to the bramble, ‘You come, reign over us!’ **15** The bramble said to the trees, ‘If in truth you are anointing me as king over you, come and take refuge in my shade; but if not, may fire come out from the bramble and consume the cedars of Lebanon.’”

3. **Simile:**

A comparison using the terms “like” or “as.” At Jesus’ baptism (Mt. 3:16).

After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove *and* lighting on Him,

- b. Two similes concerning forgiveness (Isa. 1:18).  
 “Come now, and let us reason together,”  
 Says the LORD,  
 “Though your sins are as scarlet,  
 They will be as white as snow;  
 Though they are red like crimson,  
 They will be like wool.
- c. A comparison of humans to sheep (Isa. 53:6).  
 All of us like sheep have gone astray,  
 Each of us has turned to his own way;  
 But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all  
 To fall on Him.
4. Metaphor:  
 A comparison made because of a likeness involved.
- a. Jesus describes Herod (Lk. 13:32).  
 And He said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third *day* I reach My goal.’”
- b. Jesus calls Himself bread (Mt. 26:26).  
 While they were eating, Jesus took *some* bread, and after a blessing, He broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”
5. Allegory:  
 A metaphor extended into a story to illustrate some truth.
- a. The story of Hagar and Sarah (Gal. 4:21-31).  
 Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? **22** For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. **23** But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. **24** This is allegorically speaking, for these *women* are two covenants: one *proceeding* from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. **25** Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. **26** But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. **27** For it is written,  
 “REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR;  
 BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR;  
 FOR MORE NUMEROUS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE  
 THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND.”  
**28** And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. **29** But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, so it is now also. **30** But what does the Scripture say?  
 “CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON,  
 FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF  
 THE FREE WOMAN.”  
**31** So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.
- b. The armor of spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:11-17).  
 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. **13** Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. **14** Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, **15** and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; **16** in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*. **17** And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

6. Riddle:  
An analogy written up as a puzzle.
- a. Samson's riddle about his life (Jud. 14:14).  
So he said to them,  
"Out of the eater came something to eat,  
And out of the strong came something sweet."  
But they could not tell the riddle in three days.
7. Hyperbole:  
An exaggeration of some statement for the purpose of emphasis.
- a. The grasshopper complex (Num. 13:33).  
There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."
  - b. People too many to count (1Sam. 13:5).  
Now the Philistines assembled to fight with Israel, 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and people like the sand which is on the seashore in abundance; and they came up and camped in Michmash, east of Beth-aven.
8. Irony and sarcasm:  
A sharp remark uttered in contempt or in ridicule.
- a. Jesus is mocked (Mt. 27:29).  
And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
  - b. Insults at the crucifixion (Mk. 15:29-32).  
Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ha! You who *are going to* destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, **30** save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" **31** In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking *Him* among themselves and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. **32** Let *this* Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!" Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.
9. Interrogation:  
To question for effect, often not seeking an answer.
- a. No escape from neglect (Heb. 2:3).  
how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,
  - b. Four questions that make four true statements (1Cor. 9:1).  
Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?
  - c. One and only one possible answer (Isa. 40:12-14).  
Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand,  
And marked off the heavens by the span,  
And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure,  
And weighed the mountains in a balance  
And the hills in a pair of scales?  
**13** Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD,  
Or as His counselor has informed Him?  
**14** With whom did He consult and *who* gave Him understanding?  
And *who* taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge  
And informed Him of the way of understanding?
10. Metonymy:  
To substitute one word for another, because they are related.
- a. Not the container but the contents (1Cor. 11:25,26).  
In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

- b. The teachings of Moses, not his body (Ac. 15:21).  
For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”
11. Personification:  
A figure where inanimate beings have personal attributes.
- a. Human actions given to water (Psa. 114:3).  
The sea looked and fled;  
The Jordan turned back.
  - b. Human actions given to nature (Isa. 55:12).  
“For you will go out with joy  
And be led forth with peace;  
The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you,  
And all the trees of the field will clap *their* hands.
12. Anthropomorphism:  
The ascribing of human forms or attributes to God.
- a. Three human characteristics given to God (Ex. 33:22,23).  
and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. **23** Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen.”