

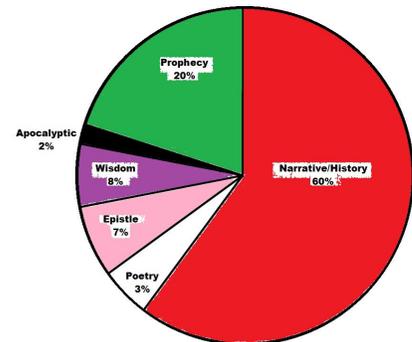
I. **BRIEF REVIEW OF WHAT WE HAVE STUDIED.**

A. The Law of Moses and the OT Narratives.

1. Apodictic Law has to do with laws that begin with do or do not. They are direct commands, generally applicable, telling the Israelites the sorts of things they are supposed to do to fulfill their part of the covenant with God (Lev. 19:9-14).
2. Casuistic Law is the counterpart to apodictic law and it is a law that is interpreted case-by-case. The elements of these kinds of laws are conditional. The law does not apply to everyone. It is conditional--based on a possible condition that may or may not apply to a given person at a given time. See Deut. 15:12-17.
3. Christians and the Old Law:
 - a. The OT law is a covenant.
 - b. The OT is not our testament.
 - c. Some stipulations of the OT have clearly not been renewed in the New Covenant.
 - d. The OT is for our learning.
4. What the Narratives are:

There are three levels of narratives in the OT.

 - a. The top level is that of the whole universal plan of God worked out through His creation.
 - b. The middle level is centered on Israel.
 - c. The lower level is where all the hundreds of individual narratives are that make up the other two levels.



B. The OT Psalms and Wisdom Literature.

1. It is possible to group the Psalms into seven, different categories:
 - a. Laments. See 3, 22, 31, 39, 42, 57, 71, 120, 139, 142.
 - b. Thanksgiving. See 18, 30, 32, 34, 40, 66, 92, 116, 118, 138.
 - c. Hymns of praise. See 8, 19, 104, 148, 149.
 - d. Salvation History. See 78, 105, 106, 135, 136.
 - e. Celebration and Affirmation. See Psa. 50, 81, 2, 18, 20, 45, 72, 110, 144, 24, 29, 47, 93.
 - f. Wisdom. See 36, 37, 49, 73, 112, 127, 128, 133.
 - g. Songs of Trust. See 11, 16, 23, 27, 62, 63, 91, 121, 125, 131.
2. Particular to wisdom literature is that of parallelisms:
 - a. Synonymous parallelism (Prov. 7:4).
 - b. Antithetical parallelism (Prov. 10:1).
 - c. "Formal" parallelism (Prov. 21:16).
 - d. Acrostics (Prov. 31:10-31).
 - e. Alliteration (Eccl. 3:1-8).
 - f. Numerical sequences (Prov. 30:15-31).

C. Prophecy and the OT Prophets.

1. The Function of the Prophets.
 - a. The prophets were covenant enforcement mediators.
 - b. The prophets' message was not their own, but God's.
 - c. The prophet's message is unoriginal.
2. Forms of Prophetic Utterance.
 - a. Forth-telling.

- b. Foretelling.
 - c. The lawsuit.
 - d. The woe.
 - e. The promise.
- D. The NT Gospels and the Parables of Jesus.
1. The Teachings of Jesus. Jesus taught in many different forms:
 - a. In parables (Lk. 15:11-32).
 - b. In hyperboles (Mt. 5:29,30).
 - c. In proverbs (Mt. 6:21).
 - d. In similes and metaphors (Mt. 10:16; 5:13).
 - e. In poetry (Mt. 7:7,8).
 - f. In questions (Mt. 17:25).
 - g. In irony (Mt. 16:2,3).
 2. Why Four accounts? Because each had a different audience:
 - a. Matthew was basically written to the Jews.
 - b. Mark was basically written to the Romans.
 - c. Luke was basically written to the Gentiles.
 - d. John was basically written to show Jesus' divinity.
 3. Learn to think horizontally.
 4. Learn to think vertically.
- E. Interpreting Acts and the NT Epistles.
1. Bible Instruction. Basically speaking the Bible instructs in four ways:
 - a. Facts (see Gen. 1:1-26).
 - b. Commands (Mt. 28:18-20).
 - c. Examples (Ac. 20:7 of Mt. 26:26-30).
 - d. Necessary Inference or Historical Precedent (Ac. 6:1-6).
 2. There are different authors but the epistles fall into the following parts:

a. Name of the writer.	d. Prayer wish or thanksgiving.
b. Name(s) of the recipient(s).	e. The body.
c. The greeting.	f. Final greeting and farewell.
 3. There is one thing that all of the Epistles have in common, and this is the crucial thing to note in reading and interpreting them: they are all what are technically called *occasional documents* (i.e., arising out of and intended for a specific occasion), and they are from the first century.

II. HOW TO INTERPRET THE REVELATION.

- A. As with most of the other biblical genres, the first key to the exegesis of the Revelation is to examine the kind of literature it is. In this case, however, we face a different kind of problem, for the Revelation is a unique, finely blended combination of three distinct literary types: apocalypse, prophecy, and letter.
- B. Revelation as Apocalypse.
1. The Revelation is primarily an apocalypse. The taproot of apocalyptic is the OT prophetic literature, especially as it is found in Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, and parts of Isaiah. Unlike most of the prophetic books, apocalypses are literary works from the beginning.
 2. Most frequently the “stuff” of apocalyptic is presented in the form of visions and dreams, and its language is cryptic (having hidden meanings) and is symbolic.
 3. The images of apocalyptic are often forms of fantasy, rather than of reality. By way of contrast, the non-apocalyptic prophets and Jesus also regularly used symbolic language, but most often it involved real images. But most of the images of apocalyptic belong to fantasy.
 4. Because they were literary, most of the apocalypses were very formally stylized. There was a strong tendency to divide time and events into neat packages. There was also a great fondness for the symbolic use of numbers. As a consequence, the final product usually had the visions in carefully arranged, often numbered, sets. Frequently, these sets, when put together, express something (e.g., judgment) without necessarily trying to suggest that each separate picture follows hard on the heels of the former.
- C. Revelation as Prophecy.
1. What makes John’s apocalypse different, is first of all, this combination of apocalyptic and prophetic elements. On the one hand, the book is cast in the apocalyptic mold and has most of the literary characteristics of apocalyptic. It is born in persecution and intends to speak about the end with the triumph of Christ and His church, and it is a carefully constructed piece of literature, using cryptic language and rich symbolism of fantasy and numbers.
 2. On the other hand, John clearly intends this apocalypse to be a prophetic word to the church. His book was not to be sealed for the future. It was a word from God for their present situation. See Dan. 12:4,9 and Rev. 22:10.
(Dan 12:4) But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.”
(Dan 12:9) He said, “Go *your way*, Daniel, for *these* words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.
(Dan 22:10) And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.
- D. Revelation as Epistle.
- It must be noted that this combination of apocalyptic and prophetic elements has been cast into the form of a letter. The significance of this is that, as with all epistles, there is an occasional aspect to the Revelation. It was occasioned at least in part by the needs of the specific churches to which it was addressed. Therefore, to interpret, we must try to understand its original historical context.
- E. The Historical Context.
1. The main themes are abundantly clear: the church and the state are on a collision course; and initial victory will appear to belong to the state. But the ultimate victory belongs to the church. The book can be summed up in two words: We Win!
 2. It should be noted here that one of the keys for interpreting the Revelation is the distinction John makes between two crucial words or ideas--tribulation and wrath. Tribulation (suffering and death) is clearly a part of what the church was enduring and was yet to endure. God’s wrath, on the other hand, is His judgment that is to be poured upon those who have afflicted God’s people. It is clear from every kind of context in the Revelation that God’s people will not have to endure

God's awful wrath when it is poured out upon their enemies, but it is equally clear that they will indeed suffer from the hands of their enemies.

F. The Exegesis of Revelation.

1. The first task of the exegesis of Revelation is to seek the author's, and therewith the Holy Spirit's, original intent. As with the 17 epistles, the primary meaning of the Revelation is what John intended it to mean, which in turn must also have been something his readers could have understood it to mean.
2. One must be especially careful of overusing the concept of the "analogy of Scripture" in the exegesis of the Revelation. The analogy of Scripture means the Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of other Scripture. Any keys to interpreting Revelation must be intrinsic to the text of Revelation itself or otherwise available to the original recipients from their own historical context.
3. One must have a sensitivity to the rich background of ideas that have gone into the composition of the Revelation. The chief source of these ideas is the Old Testament.
4. One must see the visions as wholes and not allegorically press all the details.
5. Apocalypses in general, and the Revelation in particular, seldom intend to give a detailed, chronological account of the future. Their message tends to transcend that kind of concern.