

NT 615 - 5-3-1 – *Kaiser & Silva, ch. 9*

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Questions:

1. How much of the Old Testament is written in poetic form?
2. What are the three basic types of Hebrew parallelism that Robert Lowth introduced in 1753?
3. What three rhetorical devices characterize Hebrew Biblical poetry?
4. What are the three parts of every simile or metaphor?
5. What is the genre of Hebrew Wisdom literature?

Answers:

1. Approximately one-third of the Old Testament is written in poetic form.
2. Lowth introduced synonymous parallelism, antithetic parallelism, and synthetic parallelism.
3. (1) chiasm, (2) emblematic symbolism, (3) climactic parallelism
4. (1) the subject or item illustrated by the image, (2) the image of the direct or implied comparison, and (3) the point of the direct or implied comparison and similarity
5. Hebrew Wisdom is not simply one genre but a composite with many subgenres. Among these are the proverb, saying, riddles, allegory, admonition, dialogue, and onomastica.

Terms:

1. Pleonasm: a figure of speech that involves a redundancy of expression used to obtain a certain effect on the mind of the listener or reader.
2. Zeugma: a figure of speech that yokes two subjects or objects with one verb in which the verb functions appropriately for only one of the two subjects or objects.
3. Onomastica: lists of various topics, i.e., names or nouns

Summary:

Approximately one-third of the Old Testament is in poetic form. The key quality of Hebrew poetry is parallelism, where one verse or line corresponds with another. Another component is the terseness of form that divides into strophes or stanzas and the rhetorical device of a chiasm. Figures of speech are commonly used in poetry and divided into figures of comparison, addition or fullness of expression, relation and association, contrast, and omission. In the wisdom literature, it is vital to determine which subgenre it is part of to interpret it correctly.