

Special Literary Forms

I. Literary forms and genres.

A. Categories based on style, and each is read and appreciated differently from another.

1. Law
 - a. Literal expressions of God's instructions for the responsibilities of man on in community with God's people.
2. History
 - a. Literal stories and epochs of events that actually happened.
3. Wisdom
 - a. Aphorisms that teach the meaning of life and how to live
4. Poetry
 - a. books of rhythmic prose, parallelism, and metaphor.
5. Narrative
 - a. Literal stories: a written account of connected events.
6. Epistles
 - a. A letter, usually in a formal style.
7. Prophecy and Apocalyptic Literature.
 - a. Prophecy— Prophecy includes predictions of future events, warnings of coming judgment, and an overview of God's plan for Israel.
 - b. Apocalyptic Literature— is a specific form of prophecy, largely involving symbols and imagery and predicting disaster and destruction.

II. Varieties of eschatological theories:

- A. **Premillennialism**—Christ will return before the millennium (Pre-millennium). He will descend to earth and set up a *literal* one thousand year earthly kingdom with its headquarters in Jerusalem.
- B. **Postmillennialism**—Through evangelism, the whole world will eventually have saving knowledge of Christ. There will be a period when the world will experience

joy and peace because of its obedience to God. Christ will return to the earth at the end of the millennium (usually not a literal 1000 year period).

- C. **Amillennialism**—The millennium is symbolic and refers to the time between Christ's first and second coming, not to a literal 1000 year period. During this time, Christ will rule symbolically within human hearts. Christ's second coming will mark the end of this period.

III. Special literary forms and genres.

A. Similes

1. An expressed comparison (like, as) *The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed.*

B. Metaphor

1. An unexpressed comparison (omits words *like, as*). The subject and the thing with which its being compared are interwoven rather than separated: *You are the light of the world.*

C. Parable

1. An extended simile including greater explanation.

D. Allegory

1. An extended metaphor.

E. Proverb

1. Typically short, pithy sayings that express *general* truth in a memorable and catchy manner.

F. Types

1. A prophetic symbol.

Classify Each Passage

Basic Forms and Genre:

1. Law
2. History
3. Wisdom
4. Poetry
5. Narrative
6. Epistle
7. Prophecy and Apocalyptic Literature

1.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,
 To the saints who are at Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from
 God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
 Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as
 He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless
 before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ
 to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace,
 with which He favored us in the Beloved.

2.

“How beautiful you are, my darling,
 How beautiful you are!
 Your eyes are like doves behind your veil;
 Your hair is like a flock of goats
 That have descended from Mount Gilead.
 2 Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn sheep
 Which have come up from their watering place,
 All of which bear twins,
 And not one among them has lost her young.

3.

12 Now it came about, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli was watching her
 mouth. 13 As for Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, only her lips were quivering, but her

voice was not heard. So Eli thought that she was drunk. 14 Then Eli said to her, “How long will you behave like a drunk? Get rid of your wine!”

4.

A good name is better than good oil,
 And the day of one’s death is better than the day of one’s birth.
 2 It is better to go to a house of mourning
 Than to go to a house of feasting,
 Because that is the end of every person,
 And the living takes it to heart.
 3 Sorrow is better than laughter,
 For when a face is sad a heart may be happy.
 4 The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning,
 While the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.
 5 It is better to listen to the rebuke of a wise person
 Than for one to listen to the song of fools.
 6 For as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot,
 So is the laughter of the fool;

5.

“I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. 3 And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. 4 The first was like a lion but had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and set up on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. 5 And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and they said this to it: ‘Arise, devour much meat!’

6.

‘Now when anyone presents a grain offering as an offering to the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour, and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it. 2 He shall then bring it to Aaron’s sons the priests; and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil, with all of its frankincense. And the priest shall offer it up in smoke as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord.

7.

14 These are the heads of their fathers' households. The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn: Hanoch and Pallu, Hezron and Carmi; these are the families of Reuben. 15 And the sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the families of Simeon. 16 And these are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; and the length of Levi's life was 137 years. 17 The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, according to their families.