

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE FOR ALL IT'S WORTH

10 February 2021 | *Week 4: Poetry, Proverbs & Prophetic Literature*

REVIEW OF STUDY QUESTIONS: GENESIS 22

I. Introduction

"The Tyger"

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand, and what dread feet?

What the hammer, what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil, what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright, i
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?
—William Blake, 1789

II. Poetry & Proverbs

A. Poetry

1. "Western" Poetry

2. Hebrew Poetry

- "parallels/parallelism"

O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.

Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing;
heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled. - Psalm 6:1

¹ Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

² Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

³ For when I kept silent,
my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

Selah

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. - Psalm 32:1-5

PSALM 42

TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A MASKIL OF THE SONS OF KORAH.

As a deer pants for flowing streams,
so pants my soul for you, O God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?

³ My tears have been my food day and night,
while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

A

⁴ These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
how I would go with the throng
and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of
praise,
a multitude keeping festival.

B

⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God;

for I shall again praise him, my salvation ⁶ and my God.

C

My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan
and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

⁷ Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls;
all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.

⁸ By day the LORD commands his steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

B

⁹ I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

¹⁰ As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

A

¹¹ Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God;

for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

C

B. Proverbs

1. "Western" Proverbs

- Birds of a feather flock together.
- Opposites attract.

- The early bird catches the worm.
- Good things come to those who wait.

- Fortune favors the bold.
- Look before you leap.

- Absence makes the heart grow fonder.
- Out of sight, out of mind.

- There is strength in numbers.
- Too many cooks (in the kitchen) spoil the broth.

- Better safe than sorry.
- Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

- Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.
- Nice guys finish last.

- The only thing constant is change.
- The more things change, the more they stay the same.

- The customer is always right.
- Buyer beware.

- Don't bring a knife to a gun fight.
- The pen is mightier than the sword.

2. Hebrew Proverbs

Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles his own household,
but he who hates bribes will live. (Pro 15:27)

Do not answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest you also be like him. (Pro 26:4)

Answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest he be wise in his own eyes. (Pro 26:5)

III. Prophecy

A. Literary Context

B. Historical Context

C. Christological Context

D. Example: Isaiah 7:1-17 & Matthew 1:18-25

ISAIAH 7:1-17

In the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah the king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not yet mount an attack against it. ²When the house of David was told, "Syria is in league with Ephraim," the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

³And the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-jashub your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field. ⁴And say to him, 'Be careful, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remaliah. ⁵Because Syria, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has devised evil against you, saying, ⁶"Let us go up against Judah and terrify it, and let us conquer it for ourselves, and set up the son of Tabeel as king in the midst of it," ⁷thus says the Lord GOD:

"It shall not stand,
and it shall not come to pass.

⁸For the head of Syria is Damascus,
and the head of Damascus is Rezin.

And within sixty-five years
Ephraim will be shattered from being a people.

⁹And the head of Ephraim is Samaria,
and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah.

If you are not firm in faith,
you will not be firm at all."

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹²But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." ¹³And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!"

MATTHEW 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

IV. Connecting to Christ

A. The Shape of the Psalter

B. The Shape of Hebrew Wisdom

- The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel ... (Prov 1:1)

- "My son..."

C. Near & Far Prophecy

JOEL 2

Blow a trumpet in Zion;
 sound an alarm on my holy mountain!
 Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the LORD is coming; it is near,
² a day of darkness and gloom,
 a day of clouds and thick darkness!
 Like blackness there is spread upon the
 mountains
 a great and powerful people;
 their like has never been before,
 nor will be again after them
 through the years of all generations.

³ Fire devours before them,
 and behind them a flame burns.
 The land is like the garden of Eden before
 them,
 but behind them a desolate wilderness,
 and nothing escapes them.

⁴ Their appearance is like the appearance of
 horses,
 and like war horses they run.
⁵ As with the rumbling of chariots,
 they leap on the tops of the mountains,
 like the crackling of a flame of fire
 devouring the stubble,
 like a powerful army
 drawn up for battle.

⁶ Before them peoples are in anguish;
 all faces grow pale.

⁷ Like warriors they charge;
 like soldiers they scale the wall.
 They march each on his way;
 they do not swerve from their paths.

⁸ They do not jostle one another;
 each marches in his path;
 they burst through the weapons
 and are not halted.

⁹ They leap upon the city,
 they run upon the walls,
 they climb up into the houses,
 they enter through the windows like a thief.

¹⁰ The earth quakes before them;
 the heavens tremble.
 The sun and the moon are darkened,
 and the stars withdraw their shining.

¹¹ The LORD utters his voice
 before his army,
 for his camp is exceedingly great;
 he who executes his word is powerful.
 For the day of the LORD is great and very
 awesome;
 who can endure it?

¹² “Yet even now,” declares the LORD,
 “return to me with all your heart,
 with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
¹³ and rend your hearts and not your
 garments.”

Return to the LORD your God,
 for he is gracious and merciful,
 slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
 and he relents over disaster.

¹⁴ Who knows whether he will not turn and
 relent,
 and leave a blessing behind him,
 a grain offering and a drink offering
 for the LORD your God?

¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 consecrate a fast;
 call a solemn assembly;

¹⁶ gather the people.
 Consecrate the congregation;
 assemble the elders;
 gather the children,
 even nursing infants.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,
 and the bride her chamber.

¹⁷ Between the vestibule and the altar
 let the priests, the ministers of the LORD,
 weep
 and say, “Spare your people, O LORD,
 and make not your heritage a reproach,
 a byword among the nations.
 Why should they say among the peoples,
 ‘Where is their God?’”

¹⁸ Then the LORD became jealous for his land
 and had pity on his people.
¹⁹ The LORD answered and said to his people,
 “Behold, I am sending to you
 grain, wine, and oil,
 and you will be satisfied;
 and I will no more make you
 a reproach among the nations.

²⁰ “I will remove the northerner far from you,
 and drive him into a parched and desolate
 land,
 his vanguard into the eastern sea,
 and his rear guard into the western sea;
 the stench and foul smell of him will rise,
 for he has done great things.

²¹ “Fear not, O land;
 be glad and rejoice,
 for the LORD has done great things!

²² Fear not, you beasts of the field,
 for the pastures of the wilderness are green;
 the tree bears its fruit;
 the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

²³ “Be glad, O children of Zion,
 and rejoice in the LORD your God,
 for he has given the early rain for your
 vindication;

he has poured down for you abundant rain,
 the early and the latter rain, as before.

²⁴ “The threshing floors shall be full of grain;
 the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

²⁵ I will restore to you the years
 that the swarming locust has eaten,
 the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter,
 my great army, which I sent among you.

²⁶ “You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,
 and praise the name of the LORD your God,
 who has dealt wondrously with you.
 And my people shall never again be put to
 shame.

²⁷ You shall know that I am in the midst of
 Israel,
 and that I am the LORD your God and there
 is none else.
 And my people shall never again be put to
 shame.

²⁸ “And it shall come to pass afterward,
 that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh;
 your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
 your old men shall dream dreams,
 and your young men shall see visions.

²⁹ Even on the male and female servants
 in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

³⁰ “And I will show wonders in the heavens and
 on the earth, blood and fire and columns of
 smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned to darkness,
 and the moon to blood, before the great and
 awesome day of the LORD comes. ³² And it
 shall come to pass that everyone who calls on
 the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in
 Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be
 those who escape, as the LORD has said, and
 among the survivors shall be those whom the
 LORD calls.

CASTLETON CORE: WEEK 4

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth | Study Questions | Joel 2

1. Read the text out loud and note any observations as you read it. (i.e., Are there any repeated words, key themes, or connections you see within the passage?)
2. What is the genre(s) of this passage? What in the surrounding passages help us interpret our text? Any places or people mentioned that are familiar or unfamiliar?
3. What historical context is needed to help you understand this passage? Are there any clues about the circumstances in which this prophecy was given?
4. What does this passage anticipate will be coming?
5. What role does this passage play in the broad scope of the biblical storyline? How does this passage connect to Christ?
6. What do you think is the main point of the text?
7. How does this passage challenge the way you think about God? How does this passage challenge the way you live?

Suggested Resources for Further Study

Online Resource

“The Shape of the Psalms”

<http://indysem.org/blog/2019/10/15/the-narrative-of-the-psalms>