

The Bible The Poetical Books

The Bible contains some of the best poetical writings in human history, even the secular world attests to that by using some of the poetical books of the Bible for entire courses in poetry analysis and composition. But there is more to them than just the poetical styling of their writing. They have truth, spiritual understanding, and expression of man's emotional and mental dealings with circumstances far greater than they can handle on their own. Each of the poetical books reveals the nature of man in this world and the ability to rise above this world by worshiping God by surrendering to His character and plan. There are five poetical books grouped together in the Old Testament, starting with Job and ending with Song of Solomon.

The book of Job is the first of the poetical books. It focuses on the fragility of man and life. In its beginning God grants Satan the ability to prove Job's faithfulness to God. This is one of the primary focuses of Job: God is the ultimate authority. He is sovereign. As Satan does his best to get Job to turn from God, Job relies on his knowledge of God's character and submits to God's authority over him. The highlight of this book is God's answer to Job and his friends about who He is.

The next poetical book is one of the most read books of the Bible, Psalms. It focuses on praising God and seeking Him throughout the circumstances of life. In it psalmists (writers of the psalms) are expressing their praise to God for who He is and what He has done. Often times also they are expressing their need for rescue by God from their circumstances or those seeking to do them harm. Psalms is the source of many modern Christian songs and hymns.

The third poetical book is the book of Proverbs. It focuses on the source of wisdom, acquiring wisdom, and the benefits of using wisdom in everyday life. Wisdom in Proverbs refers to understanding how to use knowledge in every day circumstances. Because wisdom needs knowledge first it requires learning. One of the repeated statements in Proverbs is "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." So it makes sense that there is also an aspect of learning and listening to God being the One with complete knowledge.

Ecclesiastes is the story of one man's quest for satisfaction in anything besides God. As the fourth book in the group of poetical books it focuses on human viewpoint (things as the way man sees them). Since man is sight based Solomon, the story teller, explains that he explored everything available in the world. Money, possessions, relationships, power, ego; none of them are ultimately satisfying to man. As is famously quoted, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity" summarizes the failed investigation of Solomon to find anything that satisfies man apart from God. Solomon preaches this reality to those who are wise enough to listen and heed his sermon.

Lastly, Song of Solomon, poetically reveals the nature of man's relationship with his right woman. It focuses on the principles of romance and love between man and the woman God created as a counterpart for him. While some have shied away from it because of some of its content, it remains profitable for instruction on what is righteous between a man and his wife. In Song of Solomon, God expresses the amazing nature of the relationship that He intends for a man and his wife to enjoy.

The poetical books use imagery to tell about the relationship man has with God, life, wisdom, and one another. There remains in their pages but one summary truth: fear God and walk with Him.