

☞ **Ming Dao Bible Lecture III** ☞
How to Teach and Preach Narrative
Dr. Bruce K. Waltke

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Section I: Narrative Theology

I. Introduction

- A. Importance of Subject.
 - 1. 40% of Bible is Narrative.
 - 2. Primary History is Spine of Bible.
- B. Definition of Narrative Criticism: cf. a Painting.
- C. Story (Event).
Plot (Rhetoric).
- D. Three Aspects of Narrative Theology.
 - 1. History: Event.
 - 2. Aesthetics / Rhetoric: Plot. (Jos. 15:63; Jud. 1:21)
 - 3. Theology: Message.

II. Narrative Criticism, History and Fiction

- A. Story is History, Not Fiction.
 - 1. Time and Place indicated.
 - 2. Genealogies.
 - 3. Sources.
 - 4. Aetiologies.

"The historiographic function surfaces in the frequent dating, in the commentary on names and places, in the etiological-looking tales, in the genealogies and other items or even patterns, like chronology, that seem to resist assimilation to any higher order of coherence."¹

History: The late Bernard Baruch said: "Everyone is entitled to his opinion; no one has a right to be wrong about the facts."²
- B. Plot is Similar to Fiction.
Fiction: Biblical narrator shares common ground with the novelist in that both generate a mood stance: reflection, exploration, edification, celebration (i.e., strengthen community bonds), cathartic cleansing, and / or sheer delight.

¹ M. Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1987), 23.

² Millard J. Erickson, "Evangelical Theological Scholarship in the Twenty-first Century," *JETS* 46/1 (2003), 11.

III. Real Author Versus Implied Author

- A. Real Author: Anonymous.
- B. Implied Author: Prophet.

IV. Real Audiences Versus Implied Audiences

- A. Real Audiences (Narratee): Anonymous.
- B. Implied Audiences: Covenant People.
- C. A Priori of the Narrator.
 - 1. The Inerrancy of the Source assures the audience that the inspired narrator does not deceive his audience.
 - 2. The proud re-interpret Scripture to push their own agendas.

V. Theology: Evaluative Point of View

- A. Within Story: Multiple Points of View.
 - 1. God's Point of View: Authoritative.
 - a. By Direct Quote. (Gen. 2:18; 7:1; 22:15-18)
 - b. By Quoting a Prophet or Messenger. (Gen. 32:28)
 - c. By Direct Statement of Narrator. (Gen. 13:13)
 - d. By Providence.
 - ◆ direct statement. (Gen. 12:17-20)
 - ◆ covenant justice. (Gen. 37:31-33; 38:26)
 - 2. Hero's Point of View: Confirmed by God or covenant faith. (Gen. 50:20; 12:10-18)
 - 3. Agents' Point of View. (Gen. 21:22)
- B. Within Plot: Narrator's Point of View.
 - 1. Direct Statement. (Gen. 16:6; 25:34)
 - 2. Characterization.
 - a. Outer Description. (Gen. 25:27-28)
 - b. Direct Characterization. (Gen. 6:9)
 - c. Character's Thoughts. (Gen. 18:17; 27:41; 37:24; 1 Sam. 18:17)
 - d. Speech. (Gen. 17:17)
 - e. Action. (Gen. 8:9)
 - f. Speech and Actions. (Gen. 25:27-32)
 - 3. By hints of style. (Gen. 4:4-5)

Section II: Poetics

I. Introduction

- A. Definition: Poetics is the study of the literary devices that an author uses to construct his composition. According to Adele Berlin, poetics is: "an inductive science that seeks to abstract the general principles of literature from many different manifestations of those principles as they occur in actual literary texts."

- B. Authors, Not Redactors: Source critics speak of "the redactor," who stitched the sources together; literary critics are more apt to speak about "an author," who made every word count and who was in full control of his material.
- C. Implications: These critics assume that nothing is in the text for naught, and every feature in the text is there for a reason and needs to be explained. (Avigdor Bonchek)

II. Poetic Techniques

- A. *Leitwort*: *Yalad* - "bear", "beget".
- B. Motif: "Stone." (Gen. 28:10-18; 29:1-13; 31:45)
- C. Sequence of Action. (Gen. 1:1-2:4)
- | Day | Form (<i>tôhû</i>) | Fill (<i>bôhû</i>) | Day |
|-----|---|--|-----|
| 1 | Light (vv. 3-5) | Lights (vv. 14-19) | 4 |
| 2 | Firmament (vv. 6-8)
~ Sky
~ Seas | Inhabitants (vv. 20-23)
~ Fish
~ Birds | 5 |
| 3 | Dry Land (vv. 9-10)
Vegetation (vv. 11-12) | Land Animals (vv. 24-26)
Humanity (vv. 27-31) | 6 |
- D. Refrain: 10 *toledoth*.
- E. Contrast. (Gen. 25:21 versus 30:2)
- F. Comparison. (Gen. 20:22-33; 26:1-33)
- Abraham: Matriarch Protected and Philistines Sue for Peace. (Gen.21)
 - Isaac: Matriarch Protected and Philistines Sue for Peace. (Gen.26)
- G. Logic. (Gen. 27:18-24; 29:25)
- Jacob deceives father by blindness of sight.
 - Laban deceives Jacob by blindness of night.
- H. Climax / Intensification. (Gen. 12:1-3; 15; 17; 22:1-19)
- I. Alternating Patterns. (1 Kings 19:9-18)
- J. Chiasms. (1 Kings 1-11)
- K. Janus: Janus passages are used as part of the overall structure in Genesis, which is divided into sections by the refrain, "These are the accounts of the line of" (*tôledôt*). Between each of these sections is a short pericope that connects the *tôledôt* (cf. Gen. 4:25-26; 6:1-8; 9:18-27, etc.).
- L. Gaps and Blanks: No Account of the Line of Abraham = Isaac. (Gen. 22:1-18)
- M. Anachrony: Table of Nations. (Genesis 10:1-20; cf. Gen. 10:25)
- N. Generalization and Particularization. (Gen. 1:1)
- O. Summarization. (Gen. 2:1)
- P. Scenic Depiction. (Gen. 32:22, 31)

- Q. Preparation / Foreshadow. (Gen. 22:1; 25:28)
- R. Inclusio: "Seed." (Gen. 16:1; 21:2)
- S. Intercalation. (Gen. 6:9; cf. 5:32 and 9:28)

Alternating Patterns (1 Kings 19:9-18)

- A Setting: at the cave, and the word of *I AM* came
- B *I AM*'s question: What are you doing here, Elijah?
- C Answer: "I have been very zealous... kill me too."
- D Then the *I AM* said
- E Wind... not in wind
- F Earthquake... not in earthquake
- G Fire... not in fire
- H Sound of sheer silence
- A' Setting: at the cave a voice came
- B' Question: What are you doing here, Elijah?
- C' Answer: "I have been very zealous... kill me too."
- D' Then the *I AM* said
- E' Anoint Hazael
- F' Anoint Jehu
- G' Anoint Elisha
- E'' Hazael kills
- F'' Jehu kills
- G'' Elisha Kills
- H' 7,000 have not bowed to Baal

Chiasms (1 Kings 1-11)

- A Prophet intervenes in the royal succession (1:1-2:12a)
- B Solomon eliminates threats to his security (2:12b-46)
- C The early promise of Solomon's reign (3:1-15)
- D Solomon uses his gift for the people (3:16-4:34)
- E Preparations for building temple (5:1-18)
- F Solomon builds the temple (6:1-38)
- X Solomon builds 'rival' buildings (7:1-12)
- F' Solomon furnishes the temple (7:13-51)
- E' Solomon dedicates the temple (8:1-9:9)
- D' Solomon uses his gifts for himself (9:10-10:29)
- C' Tragic failure of Solomon's reign (11:1-13)
- B' *I AM* raises up threats to Solomon's security (11:14-25)
- A' Prophet determines the royal succession (11:26-43)