

PRINCIPLE FIVE: Understanding Genre (Part 2)

Understanding Hebrew Poetry:

Characteristics:

- Concise, concentrated expressions of thought
- Emotional language, spoken *from* the heart *to* the heart
- Visual language that uses creative imagery and vivid metaphors
- Poetic forms, including Hebrew parallelism



Suggestions:

- Pay attention to Hebrew parallelism and how the thought of one line is either restated, expanded, or contrasted in the next line
- Remember that imagery and emotion are used to express something about the world we live in or the God who made it
- Listen to the tone of a poem to understand what is going on in the poet's heart and the emotions being elicited by the author

Questions to Consider – Hebrew Poetry:

Reread Jonah 2:1-10.

What does the imagery and emotions of this chapter express about who we are, the world we live in, or the God who made it?

How does Jonah use Hebrew parallelisms to restate, expand, or contrast the thought of one line in another?

Where does the tone of the prayer shift? What does this shift express about the heart of the one praying?

What emotions does the tone of the prayer elicit in the audience?

How does this prayer shape our understanding of Jonah?

How does this prayer shape our expectations for the rest of the story?

What does the author accomplish by shifting from the narrative of chapter 1 to the poetry of chapter 2?