

# Lesson 1

## NOTES

### GETTING STARTED

- Listen to Introduction and Interpreting Narrative: Literary, Historical, and Theological Perspectives - 01 and 02.
- Read Dillard and Longman, ch. 1; Pratt, chs. 5-6.

### UNDERSTANDING

#### *Purpose*

- To discuss literary, historical, and theological perspectives with regard to interpreting the narrative sections of the Old Testament.

#### *Objectives*

- The student will understand literary concerns including genre, plot, characterization, point of view, and the canonical order of the historical books.
- The student will understand historical issues related to authorship of the historical books, including the Deuteronomistic History.

### INVESTIGATING

- I. Introduction and Syllabus Overview.
- II. Literary Issues in Interpreting Narrative.
  - A. Genre.
    1. The importance of genre.
      - a) What type of writing or what kind of literature a work is.

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- b) Illumines the text's purpose, method of presentation, and helps in interpretation.
  - c) Gives a reader certain expectations.
2. Genre of the historical books.
- a) Robert Alter: "fiction" because it reads more like a modern novel than history.
  - b) Historical Narrative: written to tell readers what actually happened to Israel.
  - c) Prophetic Narrative: a prophetic evaluation of Israel's history.
    - (1) History written from a perspective that evaluates what is taking place from a certain standard.
    - (2) The standard by which the nation and the kings will be judged is the law.
      - (a) Covenant curse and blessing (Deut 27-28).
    - (3) History from a theological perspective.
      - (a) God is working out his purposes in history (RH).
      - (b) History is linear and has a goal (against Modernism).
      - (c) There is a metanarrative, one story, that explains everything else (against Postmodernism).

### B. Plot.

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1. What happens in a story in light of cause and effect.
  2. Basic aspects of plot that help cause and effect unfold.
    - a) Conflict.
    - b) Resolution.
    - c) Movement from conflict to resolution.
      - (1) Rising action creates interest and brings the conflict to the breaking point.
      - (2) Resolution of the conflict.
      - (3) Falling action concludes a story after the resolution.
    - d) See "Structure in Hebrew Narrative," located at the end of this lesson.
  3. Types of plot.
    - a) Tragic plot: the character reaches success, but it is short-lived and there is usually a bad end - inverted U-shaped plot.
    - b) Comic plot: the character goes through very difficult times, but overcomes these problems by the end of the story - U-shaped plot.
- C. Characterization.
1. The way authors depict the characters in the stories.
  2. Different kinds of characters: see

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“Characterization in Hebrew Narrative,” located at the end of this lesson.

3. The interpretation of characters: exemplary exegesis.
  - a) Definition: a character of the Bible becomes a model or example for someone to follow.
    - (1) Direct application that bypasses the historical situation or the literary context of the book.
    - (2) Moralistic emphasis.
  - b) Examples.
    - (1) David and Goliath: you are David and God wants you to fight the giants in your life with faith and courage.
    - (2) Elijah: great spiritual let downs follow great spiritual victories.
    - (3) Elisha and the axe head floating: will you be able to make an axe head float if you have the faith?
    - (4) Nehemiah: a manual for leaders that helps you relate to a touchy boss, handle executive discouragement and unwarranted criticism?
    - (5) John Knox' preaching: in his applications he transferred people and events from the OT to his own time.
      - (a) Israel was equivalent to Scotland or England.
      - (b) Mary Tudor was Jezebel, that

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- cursed idolatrous woman.
- (c) Idolatry in the OT was linked to Catholicism.
  - (d) Queen Elizabeth was same as Deborah.
4. Is all exemplary exegesis bad?
- a) An idealistic portrayal of the judges that ignores the bad things they did.
    - (1) Early Judaism's use of judges in Ecclesiasticus (Ben Sirah).
      - (a) The judges also . . . whose hearts did not fall into idolatry and who did not turn away from the Lord - may their memory be blessed!
    - (2) Heb 11 seems to give an idealistic portrayal of the judges as examples for us to follow. Here is an idealistic portrayal of the judges which ignores the negative things that the judges did. Block comments: the idealistic portrayal is not based on historical grammatical exegesis. [68]
  - b) Can we use the judges as models for us to follow?
    - (1) Block's analysis (*Judges/Ruth*, NAC): we should not use the judges as models.
      - (a) Heb 11:32.
        - (i) An extraordinary interpretation.

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- (ii) Emphasis on faith fits the homiletical aims of the author.
  - (iii) Not historical grammatical exegesis.
  - (iv) Modern meaning: Canaanization of Israel // Canaanization of North American Christianity.
- c) Not all exemplary exegesis is bad.
- (1) Greidanus (*The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text*, 179).
    - (a) One question to ask, therefore, is whether the author intended his original readers to identify with a certain character . . . which will leave the way open for discerning intended models for self-recognition. It is clear . . . that in the Old Testament the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are presented as figures in which Israel is to recognize itself; these forefathers represented Israel.
  - (2) What is true about the patriarchs may be true about other OT figures, like Elijah (Jas 5:16-17).
5. The dangers of exemplary exegesis.
- a) Characters become examples of universal human attitudes toward life, ideal people not real people.

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- b) Description can be mistaken for prescription.
  - c) Moralism: drawing moral inferences from isolated elements.
    - (1) Overlooks the author's intention and the literary context of the book.
      - (a) Very anthropocentric (horizontal), individualistic.
      - (b) Reductionist: overlooks broader concerns related to covenant or leadership.
- D. Point of view: the vantage point from which the story is told.
- 1. This can change in a narrative.
    - a) Ruth's point of view in chapter 2 as she goes to find a field.
    - b) Boaz' point of view in the middle of the night (chapter 3) when he finds a woman at his feet.
  - 2. The omniscient narrator.
    - a) The basic point of view of the narrator, one who tells the story.
    - b) Omniscient:
      - (1) He relates things which only God could know (people's thoughts and motivations).
      - (2) He claims to know why God does certain things.

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- E. The canonical order of the books.
  - 1. Traditional division of the Hebrew OT (MT).
    - a) Torah (the first five books of Moses).
    - b) Nebi'im: the former prophets (Joshua-Kings) and the latter prophets (the major and minor prophets).
    - c) Ketubim: the Writings (including wisdom books, Ruth, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles).
  - 2. The LXX order which our English Bibles follow.
    - a) Ruth is after Judges.
    - b) After Kings is Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, which presents Israel's history from the Conquest to the Persian period.
    - c) Presents the material primarily as historical accounts detailing all the events of Israel's history.
  - 3. The Hebrew order emphasizes more the prophetic nature of the material.

### III. Historical Issues: Authorship.

- A. OT books do not designate authorship which is not uncommon in the ANE.
- B. Deuteronomistic History (DH): an historical critical issue.
  - 1. Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), originally published in 1934.

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- a) Traditional three-fold division: Torah/  
Pentateuch as first division.
  - b) Noth's division: Tetrateuch (Genesis-  
Numbers) with Deuteronomy-Kings (DH)  
a single work.
2. Historical background.
- a) JEDP or source criticism (Wellhausen) was  
dominant in the Pentateuch.
  - b) Noth denied that any of the sources go  
beyond Deuteronomy.
3. Characteristics of the work.
- a) Deuteronomy-Kings put together by one  
author who wrote during the exilic period.
    - (1) Author called the Deuteronomist  
(Dtr.).
    - (2) Author witnessed the fall of Jerusalem  
and wrote around 550 BC.
  - b) The larger framework is indicated by key  
speeches.
    - (1) The speeches look forward and  
backward in an attempt to interpret  
the course of events.
    - (2) The major speeches.
      - (a) Deut 1-3: an introduction to the  
DH bringing the Mosaic period  
to a close.
      - (b) Josh 1: transition to the conquest

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- (speech by Yahweh and Joshua).
- (c) Josh 23-24: transition to the judges period (speech by Joshua).
  - (d) 1 Sam 12: transition from the judges period to the kings period (speech by Samuel).
- (3) A unity that uses both pro-monarchy and anti-monarchy material.
- c) Theology.
- (1) The importance of retribution theology.
    - (a) God's just judgment unifies the history and explains the events of 722 and 586.
    - (b) The law was the norm for the relationship between God and the people and the yardstick to judge human conduct.
  - (2) The importance of Josiah's reformation: the demand for one place of worship.
4. Responses to Noth:
- a) A Josianic edition (Frank Cross).
    - (1) Features of the text point to a pre-exilic composition at the time of Josiah with later exilic modifications.
    - (2) DH became a propaganda tool of the Josiah reformation.

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- b) An exilic edition with several editors.
  - (1) Richter begins with a "Book of Saviors" (Retterbuch).
    - (a) The first redactor (Rdt1) provided the editorial framework for the individual accounts of the deliverers.
    - (b) The second redactor (Rdt2) prefaced the stories with the account of Othniel (3:7-11) and added numerous amplifications of the people's sins.
    - (c) The third redactor (DtrG) inserted the fragments of the minor judges and integrated the work into the broader DH.
  - (2) Becker focuses on disposition toward the monarchy.
    - (a) The major part (2:11-16:31) is the work of the Deuteronomistic historian (DtrH), who is fundamentally opposed to the monarchy.
    - (b) The major part was expanded with large and small redactions by DtrN, who also was opposed to the monarchy but stressed more the people's guilt.
    - (c) The final editor (RP, a scribe from the same circle of the priestly redactors of the Pentateuch) composed the framework (1:1-18, 22-26; 19:1-21:25) and added other additions influenced by Joshua.

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- c) A literary approach by Polzin.
  - (a) The book is viewed more holistically, but there is a complex and subtle dialogue between the authorial dogmatism of retributive justice (as Moses voiced in Deuteronomy) and views more critical of that which stress Yahweh's compassion.
  
- 5. A recent textual analysis.
  - a) Anthony Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien, *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History: Origins, Upgrades, Present Text* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).
  
  - b) A summary - This book makes visually accessible to the interested reader the information, insights, and thinking of critical scholarship in Deuteronomy through 2 Samuel. The present authors agree with Cross that that the first addition was pre-exilic, culminating in Josiah's reform, and that then it was revised during the exile.
  
  - c) This book tries to make sense of the biblical text. However, the Bible cannot always be read as a literary unity, but can be a repository for traditions that are stored. Accepts the existence of Deuteronomistic and priestly groups.
  
  - d) The exilic revision contains texts that counter the optimism of the Josianic DH with a pessimism that anticipates the final outcome. There are two focuses to this negative material: one traces the failure to the very nature of the monarchy (royal

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focus); the other places an emphasis on the responsibility of the people, who went along with their kings, and emphasizes the God-given laws that king and people were to observe (national focus).

e) The font and formatting explained:

- Left flush margin: Josianic deuteronomist and everything prior to him.
- Main pre-DH: Prophetic Record and its sources and prophetic contribution.
- Other pre-DH: single box.
- Josianic DH: from the Dtr
- Everything after the Josianic Dtr: indented
- Revision: royal focus (indented)
- Revision: national focus (indented)
- Other: double sideline (indented)

f) DH Analysis of 1 Sam 10. (see appendix Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him; he said, "The LORD has anointed you ruler over his people Israel. You shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their enemies all around. Now this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you ruler over his heritage: (2) When you depart from me today you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah; they will say to you, 'The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has stopped worrying about them and is worrying about you, saying: What shall I do about my son?' (3) Then you shall go on from there further and come to the oak of Tabor; three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three kids, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. (4) They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from them. (5) After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, at

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the place where the Philistine garrison is; there, as you go to the town, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the shrine with harp, tambourine, and flute, and lyre playing in front of them; they will be in a prophetic frenzy. (6) Then the spirit of the LORD will possess you, and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person.

(7) Now when these signs meet you, do whatever you see fit to do, for God is with you.

(8) And you shall go down to Gilgal ahead of me; then I will come down to you to present burnt offerings and offer sacrifices of well-being. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do.

(9) As he turned away to leave Samuel, god gave him another heart; and all these signs were fulfilled that day.

(10) When they were going from there to Gibeah, a band of prophets met him; and the spirit of God possessed him, and he fell into a prophetic frenzy along with them. (11) When all who know him before saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another, "What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" (12) A man of the place answered, "And who is their father?" Therefore it became a proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (13) And his prophetic frenzy ended.

And he went home.

(14) Saul's uncle said to him and to the boy, "Where did you go?" And he replied, "To seek the donkeys; and when we say they were not to be found, we went to Samuel." (15) Saul's uncle said, "Tell me what Samuel said to you." (16) Saul said to his uncle, "He told us that the donkeys had been found." But about the matter of the kingship, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything.

(17) Samuel summoned the people to the LORD at Mizpah.

(18) and said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued

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you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.'

(19) But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses; and you have said, 'No! but set a king over us.' Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans."

(20) Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. (21) He brought the tribe of

Benjamin near by its families, and the family of the Matrites was taken by lot. Finally he brought the family of the Matrites near man by man, and Saul the son of Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him he could not be found. (22) So they inquired again of the LORD, "Is someone still to come here?" and the LORD said, "See he has hidden himself among the baggage." (23) Then they ran and brought him from there. When he took his stand among the people, he was head and shoulders taller than any of them. (24) Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see the one whom the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people." And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

(25) Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship; and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the people back to their homes.

(26) Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went warriors whose hearts God had touched. (27) But some worthless fellows said, "How can this man save us?" They despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

Now Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, had been grievously oppressing the Gadites, and the Reubenites. He would gouge out the right eye of each of them and would not grant Israel a deliverer. No one was left of the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not gouged out. But there were seven thousand men who had escaped

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from the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead.

### 6. Problems with DH.

- a) The Dtr.'s begin to multiply.
  - (1) Secondary features in Joshua and Judges attributed to DtrN (nomistic?).
  - (2) Later contributions in 1-2 Kings emphasizing prophetic concerns attributed to DtrP (prophetic?).
  - (3) Richter's "Deliverer Book" (Judg 3-9) underwent two deuteronomic redactions before reaching the hands of Dtr.
  - (4) Campbell identified a pre-dtr "Prophetic Record" that reaches from 1 Samuel to 2 Kgs 10.
  - (5) Vermeulen has claimed to detect three redactional levels which he identifies as Dtr 575, Dtr 560, and Dtr 525, the numbers referring to the dates of supposed activity.
- b) Pan-Deuteronomism?
  - (1) Little did Noth envision that, by the end of the twentieth century, his lone deuteronomistic writer sitting in exilic Palestine would blossom into a 'school' spanning half a millennium and impacting all divisions of the Hebrew canon.
  - (2) Linda S. Schearing, and Steven L. McKenzie, ed. *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon*

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*of Pan-Deuteronomism*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, 13.

- (3) In 1951 a book entitled *The Old Testament and Modern Study*, there was only one index reference to the Deuteronomic History. Today all is changed. The Deuteronomists have sometimes been praised or blamed for virtually every significant development within ancient Israel's religious practice - the danger of pan-Deuteronomism - seeing the influence of the Deuteronomist everywhere.
- (4) Some years ago to be considered good, an OT specialist had to reconstruct a primitive Decalogue or a new festival; today, a self-respecting doctoral student has to find the hand of a Deuteronomist somewhere in the Bible. This is the only way into the guild.
- (5) Maybe the concept has become so amorphous that it must be abandoned, for if everybody is a Deuteronomist then nobody is one.

c) Distinct characteristics and emphases of each book overlooked.

### C. Other views of authorship of the Former Prophets.

- 1. Distinct characteristics and emphases of each book might lead to the view that the individual books come from different authors.
- 2. The nature of the material is ambiguous in the evidence of whether each of the books come from a period close to the events, or from a

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period later than the events.

### 3. Peculiarities of each book (Joshua-Kings).

#### a) Joshua.

- (1) Some of the material in Joshua is ancient reflecting the time period of the second millennium.
  - (a) Historical descriptions and use of names (see Hess, TOTC).
  - (b) The vividness of eyewitness reports (14:6-12; 15:16-19; 17:14-18).
- (2) Other factors that reflect a period later than the events.
  - (a) The Jebusites still occupied Jerusalem could be anywhere from Joshua's day to David, who conquered Jerusalem.
  - (b) The book gives a retrospective evaluation of the elders who outlived Joshua (24:31) reflecting a time after Joshua.
  - (c) Modern equivalents for names of places reflect a later time when these cities were no longer called by these names: 15:8-9 Jerusalem, after David.

#### b) Judges.

- (1) The importance of the phrase in 18:30 "until the day of the captivity of the land" (ESV, NIV, NASB).

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Local explanations (nearer in time):

- (a) The captivity of the region around Dan, who set up their own sanctuary in the period of the Judges (Archer): period of the judges.
- (b) Land (אֶרֶץ, 'erets) should be taken as ark (אֲרוֹן, 'arôn) which would refer to the disaster that befell Israel in the battle at Shiloh when the ark was taken (1 Sam 4).
- (c) A reference to a Philistine captivity based on the parallelism in the verse:

"until the day of the captivity of the land" (vs 30)

"as long as the house of God was at Shiloh" (vs 31)

More distant explanations:

- (a) A reference to Dan, but the later period of 732 in the Assyrian conquest when Tiglath-pileser took over the kingdom of Samaria.
  - (b) The events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile.
- (2) The importance of the refrain in the last section of Judges may relate to the purpose and date of the book (17:6,

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18:1, 19:1, 21:25).

- (3) The refrain: "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes," an underlying, positive view of the monarchy as an answer to the days of the judges?
- (4) Those who emphasize the refrain in relation to the purpose of the book date the book early.
  - (a) Early in Saul or David's reign (Young).
  - (b) Early monarchy when the benefits and blessings of kingship were still fresh (Harrison).
  - (c) Monarchical period before the failures of kingship (Pratt).
  - (d) The period of Manasseh: the refrain reduces the population of Israel to the moral and spiritual level of Israel's kings in later years (Block).
  - (e) From early in David's reign to after the division of the kingdom (IOT does not emphasize the refrain as much for the purpose of the book).
- c) Samuel: evidence reflecting a time later than the events.
  - (1) The mention of the length of David's reign (2 Sam 5:4) means that portions were written after David's death.

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- (2) The separation of the activities of Judah and Israel suggests that portions may have come after the division of the kingdom (931) - 1 Sam 27:6.
  - (3) The explanatory comment in 1 Sam 9:9 was probably added after the 8th century (Amos 7:12).
  - (4) The apparent attempt to parallel the story of David with the history of Israel points to the last events in the book of kings (see Bergen).
- d) Kings: evidence reflecting a time later than the events.
- (1) The scope of the events: from Solomon's rise (970) to Jehoiachin's treatment by the Babylonians in the 37th year of his imprisonment (560).
  - (2) The final form would need to be later.
4. The phrase "to this day" is found throughout Joshua-Kings.
- a) The meaning of the phrase.
    - (1) A personal testimony to confirm a received tradition.
    - (2) Ambiguous: not always a clear indicator of a specific time period.
  - b) The use of the phrase in the Former Prophets.
    - (1) Most of the uses of this phrase before Kings are pre-exilic.

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- (a) Josh 4:9 a heap of stones still standing - for how long can they stand?
  - (b) Josh 5:9 place called Gilgal, mentioned next in Judg 3:19.
  - (c) Josh 6:25 Rahab still alive, which must be fairly close to the events.
  - (d) Josh 16:10 Canaanites in Gezer up until Pharaoh destroyed the city and gave it to Solomon (1 Kgs 15).
  - (e) Judg 1:21 Jebusites in Jerusalem until David.
  - (f) 1 Sam 27:6 Ziklag belongs to the kings of Judah, which could be anytime to 586.
- (2) The use of the phrase in Kings is ambiguous.
- (a) Before the fall of Jerusalem (586) and exile.
    - (i) 1 Kgs 8:8 a statement about the poles in the holy place up to 586.
    - (ii) 1 Kgs 9:21 a statement about forced labor that Solomon raised.
    - (iii) 2 Kgs 8:22 Edom in revolt against Judah's authority.
  - (b) Not clear if before the exile, could

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be after 586.

- (i) 1 Kgs 9:13 the name Hiram gave to some cities from Solomon.
- (ii) 2 Kgs 2:22 a water source that was healed by Elisha.
- (iii) 2 Kgs 10:27 Jehu makes a temple of Baal a refuse dump.
- (iv) 2 Kgs 14:7 Sela in Edom renamed Joktheel.
- (v) 2 Kgs 16:6 Edomites dwell in Elath.
- (vi) 2 Kgs 17:23 Israel carried into exile by Assyria.
- (vii) 2 Kgs 17:34 people brought into Israel by Assyria still practice their own rituals.

5. Evidence for the use of sources (pre-canonical sources) in the Former Prophets.

a) Joshua: the writings of Joshua  
the book of Jashar (10:13)

b) Judges.

- (1) Secondary judge lists (10:1-5, 12:8-15): five obscure names that follow a basic pattern but play no part in the narrative which show the author had access to lists (5 completes the number 12).

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Pattern:PN judged Israel after  
him  
He judged Israel X years  
The PN died and buried  
in GN [Block 54-55]

- (2) Primary hero stories: exploits of individual judges treasured and preserved in writing, then collected.
  - (3) Conquest records: record of tribal activities (achievements and failures [1:1-36]).
- c) Samuel.
- (1) The book of Jashar (2 Sam 1:18). Nothing is really known about this work and it is mentioned elsewhere only in Josh 10:13.
  - (2) The Court Records of King David (1 Chr 27:24).
  - (3) The Records of Samuel the seer (1 Chr 29:29), which may include much of the information of Samuel.
  - (4) The Records of Nathan the prophet (1 Chr 29:29).
  - (5) The Records of Gad the seer (1 Chr 29:29).
- d) Kings.
- (1) The Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kgs 11:41) which may be the main source for chaps 1-11.
  - (2) The Book of the Chronicles of the

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- Kings of Israel a source for every Northern King's reign except for Jehoram and Hoshea.
- (3) The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah a source for every Southern King's reign except for Ahaziah, Athaliah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.
6. Different views of how the Former Prophets came together.
- a) Multiple authors whose works were supplemented by scribes.
- (1) Each book had a major author whose material was edited by the scribes who added the explanatory phrases.
- (2) Suggestions of authorship.
- (a) Most recognize the books are anonymous.
- (b) Other suggestions.
- (i) Joshua: Talmud, Archer: Joshua wrote his own book. Anonymous eyewitness but Joshua's writing a major source (Young).
- (ii) Judges: Talmud: Samuel. Archer: Samuel or a student of his.
- (iii) Samuel: Talmud: Samuel, Nathan and Gad. Written by a prophet who used sources (Young).

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- (iv) Kings: Talmud, Archer: Jeremiah. A prophetic contemporary of Jeremiah (Young).
- b) Multiple authors who used sources to put together the information.
  - (1) Each book had a major author whose sources already contained the explanatory information, although some could have been added by the author.
  - (2) The individual books were produced fairly close to the events themselves.
    - (a) Joshua: a generation or two after Joshua's death in the period of the judges (1350-1051), the earliest possibility the beginning of the monarchy (1045) – Harrison.
    - (b) Judges: early in the monarchy before the failure of kingship (Archer, Young, Harrison). See the discussion above about the refrain in Judges.
    - (c) Samuel: after the division of the kingdom (Archer, Young); perhaps as late as the exile since used as a source by Kings (Pratt).
    - (d) Kings: there is general consensus it was an exilic work around 550.
- c) A single anonymous author produced Joshua-Kings combining diverse sources into a coherent whole about 550 BC.

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- (1) A parallel with Herodotus' ancient history of Greece where he connects diverse traditions with one another but makes it into one work.
- (2) Evidence from Sumerian and Assyrian records that sources can be updated over many centuries with extreme fidelity to a received tradition.

### *Structure in Hebrew Narrative*

\* The following information can help you divide the narrative into sections and see the flow of the drama.

#### I. The division into scenes

##### A. Shifts in time may indicate scene boundaries

1. Subsequent events: gaps in sequence
2. Simultaneous action: retraces the same time period
3. Antecedent action: may give background information

##### B. Changes of setting

1. Change of place
2. Environmental factors
3. Change of characters

#### II. Larger structure of the narrative

##### A. Types of dramatic flow

1. Report - describes a situation
2. Unresolved tension - lays out the problem
3. Resolution - the solution

##### B. Symmetry of dramatic resolution

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### 1. The beginning and the ending

- a) Circular: ends at place it began
- b) Contrast: end contrasts with the beginning
- c) Developmental: ends at different place/new situation

### C. Patterns of dramatic resolution

- 1. 2 step: problem-resolution
- 2. 3 step: problem-turning pt-resolution
- 3. 4 step: problem-rising action-falling action-resolution
- 4. 5 step: problem-rising action-turning pt-falling action-resolution

\* See Richard Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1993), 151-230.

### *Characterization in Hebrew Narrative*

\* The following are key questions to ask about the characters of a narrative:

I. Who are the characters?

II. How are the characters presented?

- A. Description of appearance
- B. Social status
- C. Actions
- D. Direct speech

III. How much of the character is revealed?

- A. In depth, multifaceted portrait; thinking, feeling, choosing (round)
- B. Single trait, plain (flat)
- C. No exposure of personality, only mentioned

# Lesson 1

## NOTES

(functionary)

IV. What role does the character play?

- A. Protagonist: viewpoint through which we view the action
- B. Antagonist: major character against protagonist
- C. Ambivalent: does not clearly support protagonist or antagonist

V. What purpose does characterization play in the story?

- A. Round characters are central figures
- B. Helps to see the basic drama of story
- C. Reader response:
  1. Sympathetic - approval, admiration
  2. Antipathetic - reject, contempt
  3. Mixed - positive and negative qualities

\* See Richard Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1993), 129-150.

## DEVELOPING

### *Application*

1. Write a one page response to the following situation:

What might be a few reasons that it is good to know some of the critical views regarding this section of Scripture?

### *Suggested Reading*

*A Biblical History of Israel* chapter 1

Brettler, Mark Zvi. *The Book of Judges*. OT Readings. Routledge Press, 2002.

# Lesson 1

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## EVALUATING

*Review Course Glossary*

*NOTES*