



## Teaching the Bible Classically with Dr. Fred Putnam

### Lecture 7: Poetry (II)

#### Outline:

##### Start with something short and familiar (such as Psalm 23).

- The Psalms are our human response to God in light of our circumstances.
- These poems are telling something about who God is, who we are, and our relationship with him.
- Students need to see that this is something worth reading and getting into.
- Put the study of scripture in the context of who God is. Scripture is literature, but it is not just literature.

#### Psalms

- Psalm 1: Wisdom/instruction
- Psalm 13: Lament
- Psalm 104: Retelling of Genesis 1
- Psalms 105-106: How does a poem tell us history?

#### Books of Wisdom

- Job
  - Job knows that God blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked.
  - Chapter 38: Job gets his wish to talk with God.
    - What is God's tone of voice when he asks, "Who is this that darkens counsel with words without wisdom?"
    - What if God is talking to Job like a father to a son?
  - Chapter 42:6: Job says, "I am comforted in dust and ashes." Job is giving a statement of trust in God.
  - Assign parts in reading Job, give the characters voices, and act it out.
- Proverbs
  - "Mirror for Princes," this is a book for the young men of Solomon's kingdom who were destined to become the upper crust of society.
  - Why does a leader need to know these things?
  - Everybody is a leader in some way: father, husband, pastor, elder, Sunday school teacher, teacher, or if you have a job.
  - This is what kind of people we need for the kingdom to persevere.
  - A proverb is like a little story, they are tiny sayings in Hebrew.



- Students can write fan fiction about the story that brought about a proverb. Make the proverb come alive.
- As you read the Proverbs, keep track of a topic and collect all of the verses about the topic. Put them together to understand the concept as the beginning of wisdom.
- Song of Songs
  - What would it take to have someone pay that much attention to you that they would describe you in such a way?
  - Think of the images as not merely visual, think of them as tactile, and an observation of nature. These two lovers pay attention to the whole created order around them.
  - Think beyond the immediate first impression. Help them to unpack the metaphors.
- Ecclesiastes
  - Vanity means “breath” rather than “vanity”.
  - The author is not calling life meaningless, but it is transitory, ephemeral. Life is not permanent.
  - There is a time for everything. Live in the moment that God has given you.
  - Whatever your hand finds to do, do with all your might.

## Questions

- What do you notice?
- What is this about?
- Why might someone write a poem like this? What does this reflect?