

Psalms and Proverbs Assignment

Name _____ Instructor _____ Date _____

Hebrew Poetry

The Psalms and Proverbs are written in poetic form. Understanding the characteristics of Hebrew poetry will help you better understand thousands of poetic passages in the Old Testament. The two most important features to be aware of when reading Hebrew poetry are PARALLELISM and REPETITION.

PARALLELISM: This term refers to the frequent repetition of identical, similar or related ideas. Two lines in a Hebrew poem may say the same thing using different sets of words, or they may contrast each other, or build on one another. Here are a few types of parallelism that you will encounter in the Psalms and Proverbs.

1. Synonymous parallelism. The second or subsequent line repeats or reinforces the sense of the first line as in Psalm 44:2...

“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud,
your sins like the morning mist.”

2. Antithetical parallelism. The second or subsequent line *contrasts the thought* of the first, as in Proverbs 10:1...

“A wise son brings joy to his father,
but a foolish son grief to his mother.”

3. Synthetic parallelism: The second or subsequent line provides *more information about or completes* the thought in the first line. Notice each new line of Obadiah 1:21 provides additional information...

“Delivers will go up from Mount Zion
To govern the mountains of Esau
And the kingdom will be the Lord’s.”

REPETITION: Like modern songs, many Psalms have a “refrain” or repeated phrase that emphasizes key ideas. Repetition helps readers identify what the author wants to emphasize.

Read Psalm 107 on the last page of this handout.

1. Circle at least two examples **synonymous** parallelism. Make sure you label each example.
2. Look for one or more repeated refrains. Underline phrases that are repeated throughout the Psalm.

Proverbs

Read Proverbs 10 & 11. In the space below, list five characteristics of a fool and cite the verse where you find each characteristic.

Which one of these characteristics is most true of you? Why?

Psalm 107

<p>1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.</p> <p>2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say this those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,</p> <p>3 those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.</p> <p>4 Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle.</p> <p>5 They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.</p> <p>6 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.</p> <p>7 He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.</p> <p>8 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,</p> <p>9 for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.</p> <p>10 Some sat in darkness and the deepest gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains,</p> <p>11 for they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High.</p> <p>12 So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help.</p> <p>13 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.</p> <p>14 He brought them out of darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains.</p> <p>15 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,</p>	<p>16 for he breaks down gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron.</p> <p>17 Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities.</p> <p>18 They loathed all food and drew near the gates of death.</p> <p>19 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.</p> <p>20 He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.</p> <p>21 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.</p> <p>22 Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.</p> <p>23 Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters.</p> <p>24 They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep.</p> <p>25 For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves.</p> <p>26 They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away.</p> <p>27 They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end.</p> <p>28 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress.</p> <p>29 He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.</p>	<p>30 They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven.</p> <p>31 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.</p> <p>32 Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders.</p> <p>33 He turned rivers into a desert, flowing springs into thirsty ground, and fruitful land into a salt waste, because of the wickedness of those who lived there.</p> <p>34 He turned the desert into pools of water and the parched ground into flowing springs;</p> <p>35 there he brought the hungry to live, and they founded a city where they could settle.</p> <p>36 They sowed fields and planted vineyards that yielded a fruitful harvest;</p> <p>37 he blessed them, and their numbers greatly increased, and he did not let their herds diminish.</p> <p>38 Then their numbers decreased, and they were humbled by oppression, calamity and sorrow;</p> <p>39 he who pours contempt on nobles made them wander in a trackless waste.</p> <p>40 But he lifted the needy out of their affliction and increased their families like flocks.</p> <p>41 The upright see and rejoice, but all the wicked shut their mouths.</p> <p>42 Whoever is wise, let him heed these things and consider the great love of the LORD.</p>
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Synonymous

Synthetic

Antithetical