

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE HOW TO READ TYPES (GENRE) OF BIBLE LITERATURE

History	<p>“His story.” The wider picture. Look for Examples to follow or avoid - reasons & consequences.</p>
Law	<p>“His way.” Maintaining holiness. Seriousness of sin. Look for ways to stay holy.</p>
Prophecy	<p>“His warnings.” Judgment, mercy forgiveness. Look for parallels in today’s society & the Church.</p>
Poetry	<p>The truth behind the literal words. Aids to worship. Human emotions. Look for ways of enlarging one’s vision of God. Look for ways of dealing with human emotions. (Note: In most publications of the Bible passages of poetry can be identified by the ragged margins in the print layout.)</p>
Wisdom	<p>Observations from life & experience. Look for good advice on all aspects of daily living.</p>
Gospels	<p>A unique form of history. Accounts of the life & teaching of Jesus. during His earthly ministry (not biographies). Look for growing in an understanding of the character of Jesus. Look for what Jesus teaches us.</p>
Letters	<p>Guidance on Christian living from Church leaders. Look for guidance in Christian and Church life. [Note: We get a lot of our ‘doctrine’ of “Christian truths’ from the letters but this was not the purpose they were written. The explanation of the doctrines arose out of the practical situations being addressed (e.g. salvation by faith was explained to counter the heresy of trying to earn one’s way into God’s favour)].</p>
Apocalyptic	<p>“Behind the scenes.” Revealing spiritual forces behind world events. Look to gain understanding of why things are as they are in the world, what to expect, take comfort in trials and hope in the final outcome. Note: Though each Book of the Bible is predominantly of one particular type of literature, most contain passages of a different type. Daniel, for example, though regarded as a book of prophecy, contains a good proportion of history, some poetry and some apocalyptic sections.</p>