



LITERARY STYLES IN THE BIBLE

OPENING QUESTION

What is your favourite type of media?

LEVEL 1

VIDEO



Literary Styles in the Bible

by The Bible Project

Question:

The video talked about how the different literary styles in the bible help us to explore different areas of our faith. If the Bible was being put together today, what media styles do you think would be most helpful for helping people to develop their faith?

LEVEL 2

BIBLE

Genesis 2:5-24 (NRSVCE) The second creation story

In the day that the Lord[a] God made the earth and the heavens, **5** when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; **6** but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— **7** then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground,[b] and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. **8** And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. **9** Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. **11** The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; **12** and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. **13** The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. **14** The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. **16** And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

18 Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." **19** So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man[c] there was not found a helper as his partner. **21** So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman,[d] for out of Man[e] this one was taken." **24** Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. **25** And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

Question:

As mentioned in the video, the literary style of a story is incredibly important. This story of Creation is an 'allegorical narrative'. This means that while not everything is literal, everything reveals profound truths about God, mankind and the relationship between the two. What do you think are three of the most important things this story can tell us?

LEVEL 3

CATECHISM

How can Sacred Scripture be "truth" if not everything is right?

The Bible is not meant to convey precise historical information to us. The Bible's goal is to convey God's divine love for mankind and to illustrate how, through Jesus, the way of His salvation is found.

God is intimately involved with His creation and "chose certain men who... made full use of their own faculties and powers so that, they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written and no more" (Second Vatican Council, DV 11). It is because of this we can say "The books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach [the] truth [as they] were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit" (Second Vatican Council, DV 11). (CCC 103-019)

Question:

Catholicism often talks about being 'inspired by the Holy Spirit'. What do you think this means? How do you think God communicates with people today?