

b. Epistles

These come in several varieties but in the New Testament there are essentially four: personal letters, such as Philemon; apologetic letters like first Peter; polemical letters after the pattern of Jude, and the doctrinal letters that are mostly associated with Paul and may contain elements of all of the above items.

All that is true of the narrative literature must be kept in mind when studying the Epistles but beyond this it is important to know, when possible, the particular problem addressed and the circumstances attendant to it. Some attention must be given to the sorting of the personal and didactic materials as well.

The great burden of materials in the Epistles is didactic although now and then an historical note of good interest is seen. The didactic portion usually occupies the position of rebuke, correction, further instruction, or consolidation of what has already been presented by the writer.

c. The Apocalyptic

There is less of this literature in the New Testament than in the Old. The Book of Revelation is the best known New Testament apocalyptic portion although there are significant amounts in some of epistles and strong hints in the Gospels.

Approaching this literature the position of the author is somewhat less important and the particular problems of the company are also not so significant. Context is always useful but in the apocalyptic the matter of speech figures and language devices is very important.

The material features strong imagery with little chronological orientation. A cryptic nature is often displayed. Perhaps more than any other genre, the apocalyptic requires the consideration of all similar literature for a fuller understanding.

3. Special classes of literature: the parts of the whole.

- a. Discourses
- b. Parables
- c. Diary events
- d. Allusions