**Rooted Week 3 Study Guide**

**Understanding Genre: Law, Narrative & Wisdom**

**Law:**

A general rule is, unless an OT rule/law is somehow restated or reinforced in the NT, it is no longer directly binding on God’s people.

Laws that are not reinforced on God’s people in the NT: the civil laws and the ritual laws.

**Summary Dos and Don’ts:**

* Do see the OT law as God’s fully inspired Word for you. Don’t see the OT law as God’s direct commands to you.
* Do see the OT law as the basis for the old covenant, and therefore for Israel’s history. Don’t see the OT law as binding on Christians.
* Do see God’s justice, love, holiness, and high standards revealed in the OT law. Don’t forget to see that God’s mercy is made equal to the severity of the standards.
* Do see the OT law as a paradigm – providing examples for the full range of expected behaviour. Don’t see the OT law as complete. It is not technically comprehensive (doesn’t address and answer every possible issue or question).
* Do remember that the essence of the law (The 10 commandments and the two chief laws – love God and love neighbour), is repeated in the prophets and renewed and even amplified at times in the NT. Don’t expect the OT law to be cited frequently in direct quotes by the prophets or the NT.
* Do see the OT law as a generous gift to Israel, bringing much blessing when obeyed. Don’t see the OT law as a grouping of arbitrary, annoying regulations limiting people’s freedom.

**Narrative**

Over 40% of the OT is narrative. Sometimes an entire book is narrative like Genesis or Joshua, and sometimes parts of a book is narrative like Daniel which also has prophecy.

**General guidelines for OT narrative:**

**Look for 5 basic components:**

Plot – the development, the conflict, and the resolution

Scene – Focus on time and place of the narrative

Characters – the characters are central. Some characters show up for a long time like Abe, David, Samuel, some show up for a very short time like Ehud but all still important. These were real people with real struggles and real victories and real issues. Look for comparison and contrast among characters.

Dialogue – what the characters actually say contributes greatly to their development – good stories take the time to introduce the characters…

Narrator – look for the implicit meaning he conveys and look for irony.

**Practice time! Judges 15**

**Wisdom Books:**

Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon (also poetry)

The goal of wisdom lit is to apply the Word to practical living. The wisdom books are not a collection of universal promises. They are insights and guidelines for general living and for development of godly character.

Prov. 19:11, 16:31, 16:8, 22:6, 24:19-20

Proverbs is all about getting wisdom and the basic approach to life – it’s rational and ordered. Generally, this is how things go and will go in life as you seek godly wisdom.

There are exceptions to the general though. Exception 1: Suffering of the righteous (Job). Exception 2: The failure of the rational, ordered approach to provide ultimate meaning (Ecclesiastes). Exception 3: The irrationality of romantic love and passion between a husband and wife (Song of Solomon).

**Ecclesiastes**

**Song of Solomon**

**Resource:** Visual Theology Guide to The Bible – Seeing and Knowing God’s Word by Tim Challies and Josh Byers