

I. Narrative in the Hebrew Bible (See further <http://www.bible.gen.nz/0/narrative.htm>)

Pentateuch (Torah): The overarching framework of the Pentateuch is a narrative from the creation of the world to the death of Moses. In addition, much of Genesis and Exodus, as well as some of the other books, consist of chains, series, or cycles of stories—albeit interspersed with other material, such as genealogies, legal traditions, and even poetic material.

Prophets (Neviim):

Former Prophets – Almost wholly narrative: the overarching framework is the tale of Israel’s history that picks up where the Pentateuch left off and ends with the Babylonian Exile. Often called the Deuteronomistic History, this cycle of books begins with the conquest and settlement in the Land under the leadership of Moses’ successor Joshua (Joshua) and then a series of charismatic tribal leaders (Judges), then recounts the rise of Israelite monarchy, its split into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, and Judah’s destruction at the hands of the Babylonians (1-2 Samuel; 1-2 Kings). Some poetic material interspersed (e.g., Song of Miriam in Exodus; Song of Deborah in Judges; Hannah’s prayer in 1 Samuel).

Later Prophets – Most prophetic books consist mainly of prophetic oracles, although there are some narrative elements in Jeremiah, Isaiah, and also in the other books (e.g., in accounts about prophetic commissions). By contrast, Jonah is a narrative about a prophet, which recalls the tales about prophets (e.g., Elijah) found in the Deuteronomistic History.

Writings (Ketuvim):

Psalms, Job, and Proverbs are mainly other genres (e.g., poetry, aphorisms, parables, dialogue) but the frame of Job is a story [see II below].

The five scrolls: Ruth & Esther are narratives, whereas Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and Lamentations contain other material, both poetic and didactic.

Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 & 2 Chronicles are all narrative. Daniel is framed as a series of tales about a single hero, whereas Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 & 2 Chronicles are historical prose about the people as a whole, akin to the Deuteronomistic History.

II. Story as Structuring Device: Poetry and Prose in the Book of Job

Prose Framework	1-2, Prologue, Job's test/tragedy
	<i>Poetic Core</i>
	<i>3: Job's Lament</i>
	<i>4-28, Dialogue Cycles</i>
	<i>29-31, Job's Final Discourse</i>
	<i>[32-37, Elihu's Speeches]</i>
	<i>38-41, Theophany (i.e., appearance of God)</i>
	42, Epilogue, Job's reversal of fortune

III. Literary Structure of Jonah

Chapter 1, Jonah's receives a call from God and flees from it (trope of the reluctant prophet; cf. Moses); he is cast into the sea and swallowed by a fish.

Chapter 2, Jonah's prayer in the belly of the fish

Chapter 3, Jonah second call to preach to Nineveh, opening with a second instruction from God and closing with God "changing his mind". Ninevah repends.

Chapter 4, Jonah's anger and God's rebuke

Parallels between chapters 1 and 3:

Jonah commissioned; he deals with foreigners who are in a life threatening situation; they act to avert the tragedy; God provides salvation

Parallels between chapters 2 and 4:

Focus on Jonah's relationship with God.