

## Narrative & Social Analysis

NARRATIVE Analysis observes the literary structure of the story:

1. Characterization (“Who?”)
  - a. Round characters - complex and dynamic
  - b. Flat characters – simple and consistent
  - c. Stock characters – single trait and function
2. Settings (“Where?” and “When?”)
  - a. Spatial – physical location
  - b. Temporal – chronological location
  - c. Political-cultural
3. Plot (“What?” and “Why?”)
  - a. Conflict – clash of actions, ideas desires or wills
  - b. Causality – relationship between events in the narrative
4. Rhetoric / Techniques of persuasion (“How?”)
  - a. Point of View proposed (norms, values and general world view)
  - b. Narrative patterns (juxtaposition/comparison, intercalation, climax, pivot, repetition, *inclusio*, foreshadowing, etc.)
  - c. Symbolism – juxtaposition of literal and metaphorical meanings
  - d. Irony – juxtaposition of expected meaning and surprising one.

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SOCIAL Analysis is the application of insights from cultural anthropology and sociology of the Biblical times:

1. Social description – a study of the literary and material remains of the ancient Mediterranean world to reconstruct what daily life was like among the various social groups (e.g., housing, work, social).
2. Social history – a study of how various social groups in the ancient Mediterranean world were affected by the social and political movements of the time (e.g., the Jewish War in A.D. 66-73).
3. Sociological analysis – a study of the social order behind the world view expressed by a society (e.g. isolation from family and cultural group may indicate a movement of social revolution).
4. Cultural anthropological analysis – a study of the system of symbols that define a culture and represent the common understanding of life held by its members (e.g., honor/shame, clean/unclean, group identity).

A good and inexpensive starting place to get to know the NT background is to buy “The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament” by Craig Keener. In this volume you will find social customs and social dynamics provided for every chapter in the New Testament. Study bibles with archeological notes also add much to our understanding of the biblical times. Please do not hesitate to contact us for more resources. And always remember that the Bible is not a group of disconnected stories, but ONE STORY: The Plan of Redemption through Jesus Christ!