

# Salvation

Means: Delivered or rescued from

JUSTIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION	GLORIFICATION
Delivered from the penalty of sin  Romans 3:23-26	Delivered from the power and dominion of sin  1 Timothy 4:15-16	Delivered from the presence of sin  1 Peter 1:3-9,13

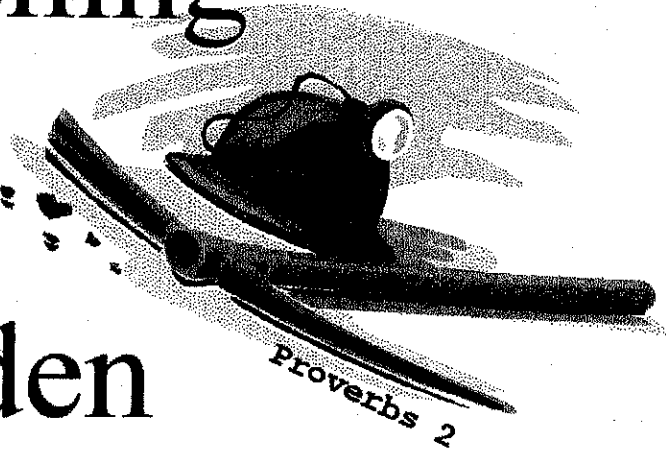
**Remember:** The intent of the writer of scripture is found in the words of the scripture's context.

# Searching

# For

# Hidden

# Treasure



---

A Guide to  
Understanding the Bible

Jay Gelder  
7/08

# **Searching For Hidden Treasures**

A Guide to understanding the Bible

## **A. Introduction**

1. What This Study Is
2. Why This Study Now

## **B. Prerequisites For Bible Study**

1. The Revelation of God in the Scriptures
2. The Inspiration of the Scriptures
3. The Inerrancy of the Scriptures
4. The Illumination of the Scriptures
5. The Condition of the Bible Student

## **C. General Principles Of Biblical Interpretation**

1. Observation, Interpretation, Application/Actualization
2. Grammar
3. Context
4. Background/Historical Study
5. Author's Intention

## **D. Special Principles Of Biblical Interpretation**

1. Figures of Speech
2. Epistolary Literature
3. Historical Narrative
4. Poetical Literature
5. Proverbial Literature
6. Parabolic and Allegorical Literature
7. Typological Literature
8. Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature

## **E. Required Materials For Class**

1. Bible
2. Pen, and/or pencil
3. Paper for note taking
4. A ready and willing heart to search the Scriptures!

## **F. Recommended Reading For Class<sup>1</sup>**

1. "How to understand your bible", by T. Norton Sterrett.
2. "How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth", Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart
3. "The Joy of Discovery", Oletta Wald

---

<sup>1</sup> All three paperback books recommended are easy to understand, and very helpful.

## Introduction

### **What This Study Is**

The **objective** of this bible study class is to provide you with a basic overview of both 1) a definition and a use of some very important general and specific principles of biblical interpretation, and 2) the inductive bible study method.

The **goal** of this bible study class is to assist you both to acquire and to utilize some necessary tools for accomplishing your bible study with the greatest profit for you, and therefore resulting in God's greatest glory.

The **intention** of our investigation into the disciplines of biblical interpretation and our application of these age-old principles of rightly discerning "what God has said" is to encourage you, and to help you, in your endeavor to handle the word of truth accurately.

### **Why This Study Now**

The **reason** for this study is to serve as a reminder to those persons who are already studying the Scriptures of the benefits reaped by the disciplined use of the inductive bible study method. Also, it is to serve as an introduction into the acquisition of and the use of sound principles of biblical interpretation to the less practiced student of the bible. In both circumstances, the desired purpose of the "Searching for Hidden Treasures" study is to help equip the bible student for his life long journey through God's word.

## Prerequisite for Bible Study

The bible is the word of God. As such, the bible is both divine in character and spiritual in content. Therefore, for the bible student to seek for and to successfully find the bible's hidden treasures of knowledge and wisdom of the Lord, he must recognize, acknowledge, and accept the bible's authenticity, its authority, and its accuracy.<sup>2</sup>

### A. The Character of Scripture

1. **The Revelation of God in the Scriptures** (Truth Divinely Disclosed)  
(The subject matter of the message)
  - a. The word revelation is derived from the Greek word *apokalupsis*, which means a *disclosure*, an *unveiling*, an *uncovering*, and a *revealing*.
  - b. Hence, revelation signifies God unveiling His truth to mankind. It is an unveiling of truth about God that man would not otherwise know (Gal. 1.11-16, 3.23; Eph. 1.17).
  - c. God has disclosed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ (Jn. 1.14; Rom. 16.25; Lk. 2.32).
  
2. **The Inspiration of the Scriptures** (Truth Divinely Accurate)  
(The method by which man communicates his God given message to others)
  - a. The word inspiration is from the Greek word *theopneustos*, which means God breathed, or inspired by God. The origin and source of Scripture is God (2 Tim. 3.16-17).
  - b. 2 Tim. 3.16-17
    1. All Scripture is God breathed (the entire bible).
    2. All Scripture is profitable (useful):
      - a) for teaching (instruction).
      - b) for reproof (expose, show one's fault).
      - c) for correction (restore).
      - d) for training in righteousness (instruction).
        - (1) that the man of God may be adequate (complete, or fitted).
        - (2) equipped for every good work (furnished, or supplied).
  - c. 2 Pet. 1.20-21
    1. Prophecy of Scripture originated in God's will, not in man's human will.
    2. Men from God:
      - a) spoke (historical fact).
      - b) moved by the Holy Spirit (the efficient cause).

---

<sup>2</sup> The first or primary attitude towards God's word.  
Jay Gelder  
6/13/08

### 3. **The Illumination of the Scriptures** (Truth Divinely Made Known)

(The work of the Holy Spirit in the believer by which he has his spiritual understanding opened to understand the meaning of Scripture. Illumination is not new revelation)

a. The word illumination is derived from the Greek word *photidzo*, which means to give light, to illumine, to bring to light, and to make known.

b. Eph. 1.18-19/

1. The eyes of the believer's heart are enlightened by God to know:

a) what is the hope of His calling.

b) what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.

c) what is the surpassing greatness of His power towards us who believe.

c. 1 Cor. 2.9-16

1. The Holy Spirit of God makes known to the saints the things freely given to us by God:

a) revealed through the Spirit.

b) the Spirit of God knows the thoughts of God.

c) we have received the Spirit who is from God.

d) the Spirit teaches combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

e) we can appraise, accept, and understand the things of God.

f) we have the mind of Christ.

d. Jn. 14.26; 16.14-15

### 4. **The Inerrancy of the Scriptures** (Truth Divinely Truthful)

(The bible tells the truth)

a. The definition of the word inerrancy means without error.

b. By this word is meant that the Scriptures possess the quality of freedom from error. By the very nature of God's self-disclosed essence and attributes, there can not be any error in His word.

1. God's incommunicable attributes:

a) self-existence

b) unchangeableness

c) infinity

(1) perfection

(2) eternity

(3) immensity, omnipresence

d) unity

2. God's communicable attributes:

a) spirituality

(1) life

(2) personality

b) intellectual attributes

(1) knowledge

(2) wisdom

(3) truthfulness

(4) faithfulness

- c) moral attributes
  - (1) goodness
    - (a) love
    - (b) grace
    - (c) mercy
  - (2) holiness
  - (3) righteousness
- d) attributes of sovereignty
  - (1) the sovereign will of God
  - (2) the sovereign power of God
- c. Since God's word is truth (Jn. 17.17), and all the Scriptures were breathed-out by God (2 Tim. 3.16), then all the Scriptures are true.

Without hesitation the Scriptures declare that they are from God, by the Holy Spirit, and according to God's divine nature... they all are truthful in every part. The Scriptures also reveal that to properly comprehend this divine truth the bible student must of necessity be spiritually conditioned to understand them.

## **B. The Condition of the Bible Student**

### **1. The Bible Student Must Be Born Again.**

- a. The bible student must have a **new heart**: directed towards God (1 Cor. 2.12-14).
- b. The bible student must have a **hungry heart**: daily food for spiritual growth (Prov. 2.4-5; Matt. 4.4; 1 Pet. 2.2).
- c. The bible student must have an **obedient heart**: does the will of God (Psa. 119.57-64).
- d. The bible student must have a **diligent heart**: careful and persevering (2 Tim. 2.15).
- e. The bible student must have a **teachable heart**: (responsive, humble, and willing to learn (Isa. 50.4; Jas. 1.21).
- d. The bible student must have a **dependent heart**: (reliance upon divine will and power) (Prov. 3:5-6; Jn. 14.16-17, 26; 16.13-14, 15).

### **2. The Bible Student Must Trust The Scriptures**

(Review notes on the Character of Scripture, p.3-5)

#### **Some Questions to Ponder Because Someone May Ask:**

- a. Why do I need to study the bible?
- b. Why do I need human teachers, since the Holy Spirit teaches me?
- c. I read the bible often, why can't I understand it?
- d. If the bible is to be believed, why are there errors and contradictions in it?
- e. Isn't the bible just another religious book about God?
- f. Wasn't the bible written by men who make mistakes?
- g. Isn't the bible just a collection of ancient religious writings, edited many times over the past centuries, and which were written to reflect the cultural and moral climate of the times?
- h. Since the bible was written thousands of years ago, how can its teachings be applicable to this modern and enlightened generation?

## General Principles of Biblical Interpretation

The following considerations of the general rules of biblical interpretation are designed to acquaint and to equip the bible student with some necessary interpretive tools for his work. The diligent application of these principles to the biblical text will result in the student discovering many precious gems of divine truth, by which one can grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God is the Author of all things (1 Cor. 8.6; Eph. 4.6; Col. 1.16). Therefore, He is the Author of man's languages. In His infinite wisdom He has utilized man's languages to give us the Old Testament and the New Testament Scriptures. He accomplished this task faultlessly. Each word, phrase, clause, and sentence were written in such a manner as to provide for us an understandable and reliable communication from God to man. God has spoken. And it is now our task as bible students to ascertain: 1) What God has said; 2) What God meant by what He said; and 3) What God wants me to do.

Our approach to bible study in this class will be the inductive bible study method. This discipline of study is "scientific in its order of procedure: 1) It begins with the observable... what do you see here?, 2) It follows with the interpretive... what does it mean?, and 3) It pleads for application... how does this affect you?"<sup>3</sup> Inductive bible study is "objective and impartial; for it demands that one first examine the particulars of the Scriptures and that one's conclusions be based on these particulars."<sup>4</sup> The particulars of Scripture that we will be examining are as follow: observation of the grammar, and observation of the context.

### A. The Observation of the Grammar

Grammar consists of two things: the form of words and the relationship of words. We must ask the question, "What part of speech is the word being examined, and how does it relate to the other words in the context?"

#### 1. The Form of Words

##### a. Part of Speech:

- 1) a noun is a word used to name a person, place or thing, or an idea.
- 2) a pronoun is a word used in place of a noun. It may stand for a person, place, thing, or idea.
- 3) an adjective is a word used to modify a noun or pronoun.

---

<sup>3</sup> Irving L. Jensen, *Independent Bible Study*, p.37.

<sup>4</sup> Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*, p.7.



- 4) a verb is a word that expresses action or helps to make a statement.
  - (a) tense
    - (1) past
      - [a] imperfect = action in progress in past time (Jn. 1.1).
      - [b] aorist = states the fact of the action or event without regard to its duration. It is point action (Jn. 1.3a).
      - [c] perfect = completed action having reached its consummation and existing in a finished state (Jn. 1.3b).
    - (2) present
      - [a] action is continuous: progressive, durative (Jn. 4.24).
    - (3) future
      - [a] predicts an event which is expected to occur in future time (Jn.14.26).
  - (b) mood
    - (1) indicative = denotes verbal idea as actual (Jn. 3.16b).
    - (2) subjunctive = assumes contingency/probability (Jn. 1.7).
    - (3) imperative = command, or entreaty (I Thess. 5. 16-22).
    - (4) optative = the mood of possibility, often it is used to convey a wish or hope for a certain action to occur (2 Thess. 3.5).
  - (c) voice
    - (1) active = describes the subject as producing the action (Heb. 1.2).
    - (2) passive = denotes the subject as receiving the action (Jn. 1.13).
    - (3) middle = denotes the subject as participating in the results of the action (Jn.1.14; Jn. 1.1).
- 5) an adverb is a word used to modify a verb. Adverb expresses relationships of time, place, manner, and degree.
- 6) a preposition is a word used to show the relation of a noun or pronoun to some other word in a sentence. They mark the direction and relative position of the action, motion, or state expressed by the verb.
- 7) a conjunction is a word which joins words and groups of words.

## 2. Relationship of Words

- a. A sentence is a group of words expressing a completed thought.
  - 1) the subject of a sentence is a word or combination of words naming a person, place, thing, or idea about which something is being said.
  - 2) the verb of a sentence is a word that expresses action or helps to make a statement.
  - 3) the direct object of the verb receives the action of the verb or shows the result of the action. It answers the question "what?" or "whom" after the verb.
  - 4) the indirect object of the verb usually tells to whom or for whom the action of the verb is done.
  - 5) a phrase is a group of words used as a single part of speech and not containing a verb and its subject.
  - 6) a clause is a group of words containing subject and predicate and used as part of a sentence.

## **B. The Observation of the Context**

Context means the portions of Scripture surrounding the one you are studying, both before and after it. Context means: **con** (with) the **text**. Two levels of context are recognized: the near and the far, or remote. The near or immediate context is what comes just before or after a verse, or sentence being studied. It may be a sentence, or one or more paragraphs. The far context may be the preceding or next chapter, or some other part of the same book. However, everything should be studied in the light of the whole Bible.

### **1. Observe Key Words**

- a. observe words of advice, admonitions, warnings, promises, and encouragements.
- b. observe words of reason for, and results for doing things.
- c. observe contrasts, comparisons, and illustration.
- d. observe words of repetition, and progression of ideas.
- e. observe words used as a question.
- f. observe words which are used as connectives:
  - 1) but = introduces a contrast
  - 2) if = introduces a conditional clause
  - 3) for, because, therefore = introduces a conditional clause
  - 4) in order that = sets forth a purpose
- g. observe words of atmosphere:
  - 1) joy
  - 2) thanksgiving
  - 3) concern
  - 4) humility
  - 5) zeal
  - 6) anger
  7. caution
- h. observe words of time
  - 1) after
  - 2) immediately
  - 3) then
- i. observe words of location/place
- J. observe words of similar meaning

### **2. Record Your Own Observations**

- a. circle, underline, and hi-lite with a marker what you consider important.
- b. make a chart for your observation:

3. **Look Up Meaning of Words in A Dictionary**

- a. Bible dictionary
- b. Webster's dictionary
- c. Vines Expository dictionary of the New Testament

4. **Use a Concordance to Check Other Uses of a Word in Other Contexts**<sup>5</sup>

- a. Concordance for the bible version you are studying
- b. New Testament Greek and Old Testament Hebrew lexicon

5. **Consult Grammar Book(s)**

- a. High School
- b. College
- c. Hebrew and Greek

6. **Consult Bible Atlas**<sup>6</sup>

7. **Consult other Bible Translations**

New King James  
New American Standard  
Revised Standard  
New Berkeley  
New International

Good News  
New English Bible  
Jerusalem Bible  
New Testament in Modern English  
The Living Bible

8. **Consult Commentaries**

I strongly recommend that the use of a commentary in Bible study is to be a last step in the process: for checking out the validity of your discoveries and hard work; and what others are saying about God's word.

Listed below are some sources for acquiring the resources materials suggested in the Bible study tools listed above:

- a. Church Library
- b. Local Christian book stores
- c. Local used book stores: religious/theological section (Adams Avenue Book Store)!
- d. Christian Book Distributors  
P.O. Box 7000  
Peabody, MA 01961-7000  
1-800-Christian (1-800-247-4784)  
<http://www.christianbook.com>
- e. Amazon.com

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.blueletterbible.org/> is an excellent study tool with concordance and lexical helps.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.christianbook.com/> sells most reference books used to assist one in bible study.

## **B. The Observation of the Historical Background**

In order for the Bible student to accurately determine the meaning a biblical author intended to communicate, he must share the author's history. He must acquaint himself with the political, social, religious, geographical, and personal lives of those in the Bible. The bible student must be able to visualize real people with real feelings in real situations. He must attempt to understand the people and events fairly and sympathetically from a first century viewpoint.

The following steps are suggested as a study method to gain a thorough knowledge of all the historical references in a certain book, chapter, or paragraph of study. The steps involved are:

1. Read the entire book, chapter, or paragraph for all historical references.
2. List all material discovered under one of the following headings:
  - a. Take (5) sheets of paper and label each one with one of the subject headings:
    - 1) Author's circumstances
    - 2) Reader's circumstances
    - 3) Date
    - 4) Individual and Divine names
    - 5) Geography
  - b. Record your observations from your historical research on to the appropriate record sheet.

See next page

## Observational Chart

<b>Scripture Passage</b>	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Questions for Understanding</b>

**Example of observation of one paragraph: James 1.5-8**

**Author's Circumstances**

**Reader's Circumstances**

**Individual and Divine Names**

**Geography**

Here is an example of a bible study outline which I made after my inductive bible study of James 1.5-8, by observing the form of words, the relationship of words, and the observation of the context (1.1-8).

Title: **Divine Wisdom**

Theme: **Praying in Faith for Wisdom Produces Stability in All Our Ways**

Outline:

**A. The Character of Divine Wisdom Described**

1. Its source is from God
2. Its supply is for men
  - a. It is given with generosity
  - b. It is given without reproach

**B. The Condition of Divine Wisdom Defined**

1. It is sought by prayer
2. It is sought in faith
3. It is sought not-in-doubt

**C. The Consequences of Divine Wisdom Disclosed**

1. Its reception produces maturity
2. Its deprivation produces instability

- c. Write out on a piece of paper, from your collected materials of the subject under consideration, a summary of the facts. This will enable you to have a clearer understanding of why the author wrote the book, to whom he wrote it, and what were the circumstances of the readers that prompted his writing it, and where and when he wrote it.

For example let's examine James 1.9-11. Please read in your bible version **James 1.9-11**, then record your observations of the historical data on the chart below:

<p><b>Author's Circumstances:</b></p>
<p><b>Reader's Circumstances:</b></p>
<p><b>Individuals and Names:</b></p>
<p><b>Geography:</b></p>



### **C. The Visualization of the Author's Intent**

The aim of the bible student is to ascertain the author's intent for writing the book. He seeks to know **why** the author wrote, and **how** he structured the writing in order to carry out his purpose for writing. One helpful procedure to the bible student in discovering the intent of the author is the making of a **synthetic chart**. The synthetic chart is a way to get a graphic view of the book as a whole as a result of noting its main parts and their relationship to each other and to the whole.<sup>7</sup>

The main parts of the book are its paragraphs, its segments (a group of paragraphs), and its divisions (groups of segments).

The word synthesis means "to place together" various parts or elements to make up a whole. We will do a synthetic study of the Old Testament book of Jonah. Our goal will be to learn to follow the main thread of thought in Jonah from beginning to end, and thus be able to think our way through the book.

Here are some guidelines that will help you make an effective chart:

1. Prepare an adequate number of vertical spaces to record the summary of each paragraph or chapter in a book.
2. Summarize in a brief phrase the contents of each paragraph or chapter in a book and use the space between the vertical lines to record your summary. In the lower left hand corner of each vertical space state the reference (chapter and verse) with which each paragraph or chapter begins.
3. Note the successive paragraphs or chapters which have a common topic or which are in some way closely related to one another, and combine them to form the main divisions of the book. Give a suitable title to each main division of the book and indicate the chapter and verses covering each main division. These main divisions provide the basic outline or structure of the book.
4. Clarify the contents of each main division. Divide the main divisions into their natural textual subdivisions. This will enable you to see the contents of each main division with more clarity.

Please turn to page 16 and fill in the synthetic chart.

---

<sup>7</sup> James Bragga, *How to Study the Bible*, p.11.  
Jay Gelder  
6/13/08

**Synthetic Chart**  
The Book of Jonah


## Special Principles of Interpretation

Besides the general principles that guide us in interpreting all language, special types of language require special principles. The bible student must recognize that the bible uses both literal and figurative-literal language. In interpretation, the literal approach recognizes both kinds of usage and interprets accordingly.

The following consideration of some of the special principles of biblical interpretation is to acquaint the bible student with some interpretive tools for assisting him in his task of discovering accurately what God has said.

### A. Figures of Speech

A figure of speech is an expression using words in a non-literal sense, or unusual manner, to add vividness, beauty, and interest to what is said or written. Figures of speech express accurate truth about an actual historical event, or person, place, or thing. Context and syntax (the arrangement and study of relationships among words, phrases, and clauses forming sentences: sentence structure) provide important clues to intent and thus meaning of figures of speech.

#### 1. Figures of Comparison

##### a. Metaphor

- 1) contains an implied comparison in which a word or phrase ordinarily and primarily used of one thing applied to another.
- 2) Psa. 31.3  
Psa. 109.29  
Matt. 26.26

##### b. Simile

- 1) a simile is much like a metaphor, except that the comparison is actually expressed using words **like** or **as**.
- 2) Job 41.24  
2 Pet. 2.12

##### c. Guidelines for interpretation

- 1) notice whether the point of comparison is mentioned in the verse or context.
- 2) if the point of comparison is not mentioned, consider the objects being compared and take the natural meaning as the most likely one.
- 3) use parallel passages (if there are any). Don't speculate.

## **2. Figures of Relation**

### **a. Metonymy**

- 1.) the name of one thing is used in the place of that of another associated with or suggested by it (e.g. the White House for the President).
- 2) 2 Cor. 3.15  
Rev. 3.7

### **b. Synecdoche**

- 1) a part is used for a whole, an individual for a class, a material for a thing or a reverse of these (e.g. bread for food; copper for a penny).
- 2) Gen. 42.38  
Jeremiah 25.29  
Matt. 6.11

## **3. Other Figures of Speech**

### **a. Personification**

- 1) the writer speaks about a non-personal or non-living thing as though were a person: that is, he attributes personal characteristics to things which do not have them.
- 2) Psa. 98.8  
Deut. 32.1  
Isa. 44.3  
Psa. 19.2

### **b. Apostrophe**

- 1) words addressed to a person or thing, whether absent or present, or imaginary.
- 2) Psa. 68.16  
Isa. 54.1  
Micah 6.2

### **c. Hyperbole**

- 1) hyperbole is deliberate exaggeration for emphasis
- 2) Psa. 119.136

### **d. Interrogation**

- 1) is a special kind of question: a query which can have only one answer. Since the answer is obvious, the writer needs not give it.
- 2) Jer. 32.27  
Matt. 7.16  
1 Cor. 10.22

e. Irony

- 1) irony says the opposite of what it means.
- 2) Job 38.21  
1 Cor. 4.8  
2 Cor. 11.19

f. Euphemism

- 1) euphemism substitutes a more agreeable expression for something unpleasant.
- 2) Acts 7.60  
Judges 19.22

g. Litotes

- 1) litotes states something by denying its opposite.
- 2) Psa. 51.17

h. Pleonasm

- 1) the use of more words than necessary for the expression of an idea.
- 2) 2 Sam. 7.22  
Deut. 3.27

Figures of speech add beauty, vividness and emphasis to language. If we can recognize and interpret them in the bible, God's word will come to us with greater strength and clarity. God's word is rich with meaning. Figures of speech add to our comprehension of that meaning.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> T. Norton Sterrett, *How To Understand Your Bible*, p. 101.

## **B. Epistolary Literature**

Epistles are ancient letters whose form is notable, for of the thousands of ancient personal letters that have been found, most of them have a form exactly like those in the New Testament.

### **1. The Form of the Epistle**

- a. Name of the writer
- b. Name of the recipient
- c. Greeting
- d. Prayer wish or thanks giving; thanks giving and prayer; thanksgiving and doxology.

"The epistles are not disguised doctrinal treatises. They are written in a way of ordinary correspondence, and deal with situations, whether doctrinal or practical, needing immediate attention... they all deal with some aspect of the redemptive message and experience."<sup>9</sup>

"The epistles are loaded with theology. But one must always keep in mind that they were not primarily written to expound Christian theology. It is always theology at the service of a particular need."<sup>10</sup>

## **C. Historical Narrative**

"The bible contains more of the type of literature called narrative than does any other literary type (40% of the Old Testament is narrative). The following Old Testament books are largely or entirely composed of narrative material: Genesis, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, Jonah, Haggai. Exodus, Numbers, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Job also contain substantial narrative portions. In the New Testament large portions of the four Gospels and almost all of Acts are also narrative."<sup>11</sup>

Narratives are stories: God's story. All narratives have a plot and characters. They tell us things that happened. Their purpose is to show God at work in His creation and among His people. The narratives glorify Him, help us to understand and appreciate Him, and give us a picture of His providence and protection.

Here are (10) principles for interpreting narratives:

1. A narrative does not directly teach a doctrine.
2. A narrative usually illustrates a doctrine taught propositionally elsewhere.

---

<sup>9</sup> Steven Barabas, *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, p. 257.

<sup>10</sup> Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, p. 49.

<sup>11</sup> Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, p. 79.

3. Narratives record what happened, not necessarily what should have happened or what ought to happen every time. Therefore, not every narrative has an individual identifiable moral of the story. (Cf. Gideon and the fleece).
4. What people do in narratives is not necessarily a good example for us. Frequently, it is just the opposite.
5. Most of the characters in narratives are far from perfect.
6. We are not always told at the end of the narrative whether what happened was good or bad. We are expected to judge that on the basis of what God has taught us directly and categorically elsewhere in scripture.
7. All narratives are selective and incomplete. Not all details are always given (Cf. Jn. 21.25). What does appear in a narrative is everything that the inspired author thought important for us to know.
8. Narratives are not written to answer all our theological questions. They have particular, specific limited purposes and deal with certain issues, leaving others to be dealt with elsewhere in other ways.
9. Narratives may teach either explicitly or implicitly.
10. In the final analysis, God is the hero of all biblical narratives.

#### **D. Poetical Literature**

The bible contains a great deal of poetry: Not only Psalms and Proverbs, but also Job, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, and large parts of the prophets.

The features of bible poetry are clear in Hebrew. The outline below will help you to recognize these features:

##### **1. Parallelism**

- a. The main feature of Hebrew poetry is a rhythm of thought (rather than of sound) called parallelism. This poetry is written in couplets, two lines that are related to each other in some way. Occasionally there are three lines (Isa. 41.5) or even four (Psa. 27.1).
  - 1) Repetition: expressed by identical or synonymous parallelism. The two lines express the same or similar thought in different words (Isa. 1.3; Psa. 33.2)
  - 2) Contrast: expressed by antithetic parallelism. The two lines express contrasting, or even contradictory thoughts, to make the truth more emphatic and forceful. Often the second line of a couplet starts with but... indicating a contrast (Prov. 15.1).
  - 3) Addition: expressed by synthetic parallelism. In this, the second line adds a complimentary thought to the first (Psa. 9.10).
  - 4) Expansion: expressed in climatic parallelism. The second line repeats part of the first, but adds something fresh (Psa. 34.4).
  - 5) Transformation: expressed in emblematic parallelism. Emblematic means symbolic or representing. One line is literal, while the other is figurative (Psa. 22.16; 42.1)

## **E. Proverbial Literature**

Three Old Testament books are commonly known as “wisdom books.” Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, and Job; also a number of Psalms and the Song of Solomon fit the wisdom label.

Wisdom literature tends to focus on people and their behavior, how successful they are at making Godly choices, and whether or not they are learning how to apply God’s truth to the experiences they have.

Here are some rules that will help you make a proper use of proverbs, and be true to their divinely inspired intent:

1. Proverbs must be read as a collection, balancing one with another, and understood in comparison with the rest of Scripture.
2. Proverbs are intensely practical.
3. Proverbs are worded to be memorable, through the use of parallelism (Prov. 7.4; 10.1).
  - a. Alliteration (Eccl. 3.1-8)
  - b. Numerical sequences (Prov. 30. 15-31).
4. Proverbs strongly reflecting ancient culture need sensible “translation” so as not to lose their meaning.
5. Proverbs may use highly specific language, exaggeration, or any variety of literary techniques to make their point.
6. Proverbs give good advice for wise approaches to certain aspects of life, but are not exhaustive in their coverage.
7. Rightly used, Proverbs will provide practical advice for daily living.

## **F. Parabolic and Allegorical Literature**

**Parables** are simple, direct little stories, which are mostly found in the first three gospels. It has a beginning and ending (something of a plot).

The general rule of interpretation is that a parable has one main lesson, even though some parables have many details.

Parables function as a means of calling forth a response on the part of the hearer. The parable itself is the message. It is told to address and capture the hearers, to bring them up short about their own actions, or to cause them to respond in some way to Jesus and His ministry.

The typical parable uses a common event of natural life to emphasize or to clarify an important spiritual truth. The point of the story is to be found in the intended response.



Let's read and examine a parable of Jesus that is recorded in its full original context: Luke 7.40-42.

What is the context?

What are three points of reference?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Was the identification by the hearers of the points of reference of the parable immediate?

What is the lesson of this parable?

Conclusion: the parable is a word of judgment calling for a response from Simon. He could scarcely have missed the point. Further we should note that the woman heard the parable as well. She too will identify with the story as it is being told. But what she will hear is not judgment, but Jesus' and God's acceptance of her.

**Allegory** is a story where each element in the story means something quite foreign to the story itself. An allegory maybe called an extended metaphor. Allegory sets forth one thing in the image of another, the principle subject being inferred from the figure rather than by direct statement.

For example, in the allegory of the Christian's armor (Eph. 6.10-17) there are several points of comparison. Each part of the Christian armor is significant, and each is necessary for the Christian to be "fully armored."

See John 10 and the allegory of the Good Shepherd and the sheep:

### Points of Comparison

Point of Reference	Identification
Shepherd	Jesus
Sheep	No mention
Gate Keeper	No mention
Fold	No mention
Door	Jesus
Robbers	Those who came before Jesus
Stranger	No Mention
Wolf	No mention
Hireling	No mention

Not all the elements in this allegory have been identified for us. Do not try to identify all the features in an allegory. Jesus did not do so for the allegories in John 10 and 15. Consider only interpretations that are quite clear, not doubtful. Do not make forced or fanciful ones.

### **G. Typological Literature**

A type is a preordained representative relationship which certain persons, events, and institutions bear to corresponding persons, events, and institutions at a later time in salvation history. God prefigured His redemptive work in the Old Testament, and fulfilled it in the New Testament: in the Old Testament there are shadows of things which shall be more fully revealed in the New.

The prefiguration is called the type; the fulfillment is called the antitype.

A well known example of a biblical type is found in Jn. 3.14-15, where Jesus says, "just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. (NASB).

Jesus pointed out two corresponding resemblances:

1. The lifting up of the serpent and Himself.
2. Life for those who responded to the object lifted up.

Here are three primary characteristics of types:

1. There must be some notable point of resemblance or analogy between the type and its antitype.
2. There must be evidence that the type was appointed by God to represent the thing typified.
3. It must prefigure something in the future.

Classification of types:

1. Persons: Rom. 5.14, Adam is a type of Christ as the head of the race. Abraham is the father and type of all who believe.
2. Institutions: Lev. 17.11; 1 Pet. 1.19, the sacrifices are types of the cross. The Passover prefigures our redemption in Christ.
3. Offices: Deut. 18.15, Moses the prophet was a type of Christ.
4. Events: 1 Cor. 10.6-11, the wilderness wanderings were types for our benefit.
5. Actions: Jn. 3.14-16, the lifting up of the brazen serpent is a type of the crucifixion.
6. Things: Ex. 25.8, cf. Jn. 1.14, the Tabernacle was a type of the incarnation... the presence of God with His people.

## **H. Prophetical and Apocalyptic Literature**

In both the Old Testament and the New Testament a prophet is a spokesman for God who declares God's will to the people. Prophecy refers to (3) things:

1. Predicting future events (Rev. 22.7).
2. Revealing concealed facts concerning the present (Lk. 1.67-69).
3. Dispensing instruction, comfort, and exhortation (Acts 15.32; I Cor. 14.3, 4, 31).

Some guidelines for interpretation of prophecy:

1. In each prophecy seek to understand first its meaning for the people at the time, its near fulfillment, and its practical message.
2. Consider the literal meaning.
3. Look for figures of speech, symbols, types, etc. in the passage.
4. Look for the theme of God's sovereign purpose.
5. Look for the theme of the Messiah.
6. Look for the Messiah's suffering.
7. Look for the Messiah's triumph.

Apocalyptic literature's primary focus is the revealing of what has been hidden, particularly with regards to the end times.

Some Old Testament passages which contain apocalyptic literature are: Dan. 7-12; Joel, Amos, and Zechariah. In the New Testament apocalyptic passages are found in Matt. 24-25, and the Revelation.

## Bibliology

### Readings on Bible Study Methods and Helps

- Louis Berkhof, **Principles of Biblical Interpretation**, Baker Book house, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1994.
- James Braga, **How to Study the Bible**. Multnomah Press, Portland, Oregon, 1982.
- Joseph C. Dillow, **The Reign of the Servant Kings**, Schoettle Publishing Co., Hayesville, NC., 1993.
- Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart, **How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth**, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1993.
- Norman Geisler and Ronald Brooks, **Come Let Us Reason**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1990.
- J. Edwin Hartill, **Principles of Biblical Hermeneutics**, Academie Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1947.
- Irving L. Jensen, **Independent Bible Study**, Moody Press, Chicago, 1992.
- How to Profit From Bible Reading**, Moody Press, Chicago, 1985.
- Bernard Ramm, **Protestant Biblical Interpretation**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1993.
- T. Norton Sterrett, **How to Understand Your Bible**, Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1978.
- R. A. Torrey, **How to Study the Bible for the Greatest Profit**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1989.
- Robert A. Traina, **Methodical Bible study**, Francis Asbury Press, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1985.
- Henry A. Virkler, **Hermeneutics-Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1989.
- Oletta Wald, **The Joy of Discovery in Bible study**, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1975.

### Readings on Revelation, Inspiration, Inerrancy, and Illumination

- Louis Berkhof, **Systematic Theology**, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988.
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, **Systematic Theology**, Dallas, Texas, Dallas Seminary Press, 1974.
- W. Robert Cook, **Systematic Theology in Outline Form**, Portland, Oregon, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1974.
- Paul Enns, **The Moody Handbook of Theology**, Chicago, Moody Press, 1989.
- Norman Geisler & William Nix, **From God to Us**, Moody Press, Chicago, 1974.
- Norman Geisler, **Systematic Theology, Volume One, Introduction, Bible**, Bethany House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2002.

Carl F. H. Henry, **Revelation and the Bible**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1958.

Charles Hodge, **Systematic Theology**, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989.

Charles Caldwell Ryrie, **Basic Theology**, Wheaton, Illinois, Victor Books, 1986.

Augustus Strong, **Systematic Theology**, Old Tappan, New Jersey, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1979.

Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, **The Inspiration and authority of the Bible**, The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Phillipsburg, N.J., 1948.

### **On-Line Bible Study Resources**

<http://biblos.com/>

<http://www.blueletterbible.org/>

<http://www.ccel.org/>