



You Can Understand the BIBLE

ANSWER KEY

Guidelines for Interpreting Scripture

By

Daniel L. Segraves

A Study Guide

Adapted by Linda Poitras

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Chapter 1

Introducing Hermeneutics

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the word “hermeneutics.

The word “hermeneutics” comes from the Greek *hermeneuo*, which means “to explain” or “to translate.”
(Used in John 1:38, 42; 9:7; and Hebrews 7:2.)

i. means “to interpret fully.”

2. What is “biblical hermeneutics?”

When referring to the interpretation of Scripture, the proper term to use is “biblical hermeneutics.”
Biblical hermeneutics is the science of interpreting the Scripture.

Chapter 2

Misunderstanding Scripture

What Have You Learned?

1. List eight (8) major causes of misinterpretation of Scripture.

- 1) A failure to recognize the communication gaps existing between the modern reader and the ancient peoples of Scripture;
- 2) A failure to distinguish between the dispensations;
- 3) A failure to recognize the different covenants;
- 4) A failure to distinguish between the three ethnic groups addressed in Scripture;
- 5) A failure to consider all that the Bible has to say on a given subject;
- 6) A failure to consider the context;
- 7) A failure to understand the significance of prophetic gaps in the midst of a passage; and
- 8) A failure to understand the purpose for parables.

2. Give an example of biblical hermeneutics at work. The example should include book, chapter and verse.

Nehemiah 8:8.

After the return from captivity of the Jewish remnant, Ezra stood to read the book of the Law of Moses. With him stood several other men. *“So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.”*

- 1) The reading was distinct. Since the words of the Bible are not ordinary, but the very words of God, they should be read carefully, thoughtfully, and distinctly—never rushed. *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16).*
 - 2) *“They gave the sense.”* This may refer too the translation of the Hebrew words into the language of the people, Aramaic or Chaldee.
 - 3) *“They caused them to understand the reading.”* They explained to the people the meaning of the Scriptures.
3. Write from memory the key verse for this book.
- 2 Timothy 2:15: *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*
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Chapter 3

Tools for Bible Study

What Have You Learned?

1. List two (2) different types of available tools for Bible study.
1. Strong, James. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. New York. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1890.
 2. Young, Robert. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., reprinted 1980.
2. List at least ten (10) different books that would be helpful for Bible study in the beginner's library.
- 1) Green, J.P., Sr. *The New Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament*. Lafayette, IN: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1976.
 - 2) Bridges, Ronald and Weigle, Luther A. *The King James Bible Word Book*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1994.
 - 3) Vine, W. E. *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.,
 - 4) Berry, George Ricker. *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958. (This work is particularly useful because it is based on the same Greek text as the KJV. Other inter-linears tend to reflect the minority text found in most modern translations. This causes confusion when the reader does not realize there are different Greek texts upon which translations are based.)
 - 2) Pick, Aaron. *Dictionary of Old Testament Words for English Readers*, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1977.
 - 3) Tenney, Merrill C., *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.
 - 4) Webster, Noah. *Noah Webster's First Edition of An American Dictionary of the English Language*. Anahiem, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1967. (Mail order address: 2946 5th

Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94132. This is a facsimile reprint of the original 1828 edition. I have found it particularly helpful since Webster used the King James Version to define many words. Many old English words no longer in common use are defined here.)

- 5) Pfeiffer, Charles F. *Baker's Bible Atlas*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1962.
 - 6) Elwell, Walter A., ed. *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, volumes 1 and 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988.
 - 7) Geisler, Norman L. and Nix, William E. *A General Introduction to the Bible*, revised and expanded. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986.
 - 8) Walton, John H. and Matthews, Victor H. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary, Genesis-Deuteronomy*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.
 - 9) Keener, Craig. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary New Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
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Chapter 4

Communication Gaps

What Have You Learned?

1. List the three (3) basic considerations in bridging the linguistic gap.
 - Vocabulary;
 - Grammar; and
 - Genre.
2. List the four (4) essential considerations when examining the vocabulary of Scripture.
 - The etymology of the word;
 - A comparative study of the word;
 - The cultural meaning of the word; and
 - The cognate languages.
2. Explain the basic difference between analytic and synthetic languages.
 - a. *Analytic Languages*: These are languages in which the order of the words in a sentence determines the role each word plays in that sentence (e.g., whether a word is a subject, indirect object, or direct object). Hebrew and English are both analytic languages in that they stress word order.
 - b. *Synthetic Languages*: These are languages in which the ending of a word determines the role it plays in the sentence. Greek is a synthetic language stressing word ending.
4. List the three (3) basic areas of concern when considering the genre of biblical literature.

Literary style:
Literary expression
Figures of speech:
5. Explain the significance of the cultural gap.

The Cultural Gap—obviously quite different for students today than the culture of the ancient Hebrews or early Christians. Many passages of Scripture cannot be clearly understood without an appreciation for the manners and customs of the people of the day.

Though the Bible is adapted to all nations, it is in many respects an Oriental book. It represents the modes of thought and the peculiar customs of a people who, in their habits, widely differ from us.

6. Discuss the importance of the geographical gap.

The Geographical Gap—all of the stories of the Bible take place in a locale entirely foreign to most readers. Since so much of Scripture is tied to places—cities, rivers, lakes, mountains, desert—an understanding of these things is essential to obtain a clear grasp of their significance.

7. List three (3) things to consider in a study of history.

- 1) Three things to consider in a study of history are the:
- Political,
 - Economic, and
 - Religious climates.

Chapter 5

The Six Biblical Sciences

What Have You Learned?

1. List and define each of the six (6) biblical sciences.

1. Canonology—the English word “canon” is from the Greek *kanon*, which has to do with a rod or straight edge. It was something by which to measure. The science of biblical canonology concerns itself with the questions of which books are inspired of God and to be included in the canon of Scripture.

2. Historical Criticism—deals with “the literary and documentary character of the books of the Bible:

- . . .[the] Authorship of the book,
- Date of its composition,
- Historical circumstances,
- The authenticity of its contents, and
- Its literary unity.”

3. Textual Criticism—concerns itself with establishing the original wording of the text of Scripture. This is done by:

Comparing ancient manuscripts and consulting other indicators of the original text, like:

- The early translations,
- Quotations from or allusions to Scripture by the early church fathers, and
- The reading of the lectionaries—including portions of Scripture copied out by hand for us in the church on special holy days.

4. Hermeneutics—having to do with properly interpreting Scripture. It aims to understand Scripture as the original readers did. When a correct hermeneutic is used, the meaning the reader will get from Scripture will be the meaning the author intended.

5. Exegesis—a compound word formed from the two Greek words *ex* and *egeomai*, “exegesis” has to do with explaining or interpreting. It literally means “to guide” or “lead” out. Exegesis may be thought of as applied hermeneutics. It is the opposite of *eisegesis*, which has to do with reading a meaning into a Scripture.

6. Biblical Theology—the English word “theology” is a compound of the two Greek words *theos* (God) and *logos* (word),. It is the doctrine of God. Biblical theology is the logical result of all the previous sciences.

Chapter 6

Methods of Interpretation

What Have You Learned?

1. List and define the five (5) methods of interpretation of Scripture.

- A. **The Allegorical Method**—with roots in the attempt to wed biblical theology and Greek philosophy in the theological school at Alexandria, Egypt, essentially denies the literal meaning of Scripture in its search for hidden meanings not apparent on the surface.

Allegorism is the method of interpreting a literary text that regards the literal sense as the vehicle for a secondary, more spiritual and more profound sense.

- B. **Mystical Method**—has its origins in the “Hagadic method of exegesis developed by the Palestinian Jews in the inter-testamental period.” It developed as “interpreters mistook application for interpretation.”

- 1) While the mystical method has somewhat in common with the allegorical method, in that both reject the plain meaning in favor of a hidden meaning, the mystical method differs from the allegorical method in that it sees a multiplicity of meanings beneath any word passage. Allegorism sees only one mystical meaning.

- B. **The Devotional Method**—defined by Ramm as “that method of interpreting Scripture which places emphasis on the edifying aspects of Scripture, and interpreting with the intention of developing spiritual life.”

- C. **The Rationalistic Method**—Germany was the source of a great deal of rationalistic theory during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The basis of this viewpoint was a denial of the supernatural. Rationalism denies that Scripture is actually the inspired Word of God. Miracles are disregarded. Rationalism is humanistic in essence, for it sets the interpreter up as the final arbiter of truth. If the Scripture can be understood and explained by the interpreter’s intellect, it is accepted. If not, it is rejected.

- D. **The Literal Method**—“the method that gives to each word the same exact basic meaning it would have in normal, ordinary, customary usage, whether employed in writing, speaking or thinking.”

Also known as the grammatical method because it holds that the meaning of any text can be determined by the consideration of grammar and history.

The literal method “recognizes that a word may have different meanings in different contexts and thus must be interpreted in the light of its contextual usage. It contends that though a word may possibly have several meanings, in any one particular usage it generally will have but one intended meaning.”

Chapter 7

The Dispensational Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. List the seven (7) dispensations.

- (1). **The Dispensation of Innocence**
(2) **The Dispensation of Conscience**

- (3) **The Dispensation of Human Government**
- (4) **The Dispensation of Promise**
- (5) **The Dispensation of Law**
- (6) **The Dispensation of Grace**
- (7) **The Dispensation of the Millennium**

3. Give the point of origin and the point of termination of each of these dispensations.

- (1) **The Dispensation of Innocence**, beginning with the creation of man and extending to the fall of man (Genesis 1: 26 – 2: 25).
- (2) **The Dispensation of Conscience**, beginning with the fall of man and extending to the world-wide flood (Genesis 3-7).
- (3) **The Dispensation of Human Government**, beginning after the flood and extending to the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 8:1-11: 9).
- (4) **The Dispensation of Promise**, extending from the call of Abraham to the Exodus from Egypt (Genesis 11:10 – Exodus 15:21).
- (5) **The Dispensation of Law**, extending from Sinai to Calvary (Exodus 19 – Matthew 5: 17-18; John 19:30; Galatians 3: 15-19; Romans 10:4; Hebrews 9: 16-22).
- (6) **The Dispensation of Grace**, extending from the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost to the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the Great Tribulation (Acts 2 – Revelation 5:14).
- (7) **The Dispensation of the Millennium**, extending from the Second Coming to the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20; Psalm 2, 11).

4. Identify the basis of salvation in every dispensation.

The basis of salvation in every age is the death of Christ

5. Identify the requirement for salvation in every dispensation.

The requirement for salvation in every age is faith.

6. Identify the object of faith in every dispensation.

The object of faith in every age is God

7. Identify the variable between the dispensations.

The content of faith and the way faith is expressed changes in the various dispensations.

8. Explain why Christians do not observe the Jewish Sabbath.

The Sabbath was a sign between God and Israel only.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ”
(Colossians 2: 16-17).

We conclude that the Sabbath belonged to the dispensation of the law only. It would be a serious error to bring this dispensational distinctive into the dispensation of grace.

Chapter 8

The Covenantal Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Covenantal Principle.

The Covenantal Principle is defined as “that principle by which the interpretation of a verse or group of verses is determined by a consideration of its covenantal setting.” In other words, we must discover which covenant the Scripture we are studying belongs to.

2. List each of the eight (8) covenants, when they were established, with whom they were established, and whether they were conditional, unconditional, or a combination of both.

- a) The Edenic Covenant—established in Genesis 1: 28-30; 2:15-17. It was a conditional covenant designed to govern the life of man in the Garden of Eden. It ended when Adam failed to keep the condition and was expelled from the garden.
- b) The Adamic Covenant—made before Adam was actually expelled from the garden. It was an unconditional covenant consisting of a curse and a promise (Genesis 3: 14-19). It was designed to order the life of man outside of Eden, and it is still in effect.
- c) The Noahic Covenant—was instituted with Noah after he left the ark (Genesis 8:20 – 9:17).
 - 1. It was an unconditional covenant, guaranteeing that God would never destroy the earth with water again;
 - 2. That no new curse would be put on the ground;
 - 3. That the natural order of seasons would continue;
 - 4. That animals would fear man; and
 - 5. That meat could be included in the human diet.
 - 6. It also included the establishment of capital punishment (Genesis 9:6).
 - a. This covenant is still in effect and will continue to be until the earth is renovated by fire (2 Peter 3: 12-13).
- d) The Abrahamic Covenant—was instituted in Genesis 12:1-3 and elaborated upon in Genesis 13: 14-17; 15: 1-18; and 17: 1-8.
 - 1. In it God promised to make of Abram a great nation, to bless him, to make his name great, to make him a blessing to others, and to bless those who blessed him and to curse those who cursed him.
 - 2. It will finally be completely fulfilled during the Millennial Dispensation.
- e) The Mosaic Covenant—parallels the Dispensation of the Law, and it was a conditional covenant, hinged upon the obedience of Israel to the Law of Moses (Exodus 20).
 - 1. There were specific promises of blessings and curses depending upon Israel's obedience to or disobedience to the Law.
 - 2. The covenant ended with Israel's final and great disobedience with their rejection of the Messiah.
- f) The Palestinian Covenant—was actually a continuation of the Mosaic Covenant and was made in view of the disobedience of the Jewish people to the Mosaic Covenant. (See Deuteronomy 27-30.)
 - 1. It was a conditional covenant—based on Israel's repentance—promising the return of the dispersed Jews to the land of Palestine, their conversion, great blessing and prosperity, and judgment upon the nations that have persecuted them.
 - 2. The covenant will end with the inauguration of the new heavens and new earth.
- g) The Davidic Covenant—was announced to David by the prophet Nathan (2 Samuel 7: 8-19; Psalm 89: 34ff). It was both conditional and unconditional.
 - 1. The conditional aspect of the covenant provided that a human descendant of David would always sit on his throne. This depended upon the faithfulness of his human descendants: if they would be faithful to God, the Davidic lineage on the throne would endure forever.

2. David's descendants did not fulfill this requirement and were ultimately removed from the throne. (See Jeremiah 22:30; Ezekiel 21: 25-27; Hosea 3:4.)
3. There was, however, none to take their place; the throne has been vacant since.
- h) The New Covenant—an unconditional covenant God has made with Israel and Judah (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8: 8; Matthew 26: 27-28).
 1. The covenant is based upon the blood of Christ, and it involves a much greater and more intimate relationship with God than that available through the Mosaic Covenant.
 2. With the inauguration of this covenant, Israel will have a superior knowledge of God and will be led by the Holy Spirit instead of by laws written in tables of stone.
 3. This covenant will begin to be fulfilled with Israel during the Millennium.

Chapter 9

The Ethnic Division Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Explain the meaning and significance of the Ethnic Division Principle.

The Ethnic Division Principle has to do with the rightly dividing the word of truth in relation to the three ethnic groups addressed in Scripture: the Jews, Gentiles, and the church. 1 Corinthians 10:32 is vital to an understanding of this principle: *"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God."*

9. Identify the three (3) ethnic groups to whom Scripture is addressed.

- The Jews;
- The Gentiles; and
- The church of God.

10. Explain why the church is not the tabernacle of David.

The church is not the tabernacle of David. This reference to that tabernacle is directed to the Jewish people that will experience salvation during the time of the millennium. The most common application made of this teaching is that the New Testament church is to pattern its worship after that of David. .” The phrase “the tabernacle of David” occurs only three times in Scripture. Two of the references have already been mentioned: Amos 9: 11 and Acts 15: 16. The third reference clearly identifies the tabernacle

“And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness” (Isaiah 16:5).

This prophecy concerns the reestablishment of David's throne, not the erecting of a tent. Nor does it concern the New Testament church age, which was not made known to the prophets of old (Ephesians 3:2-6).

The ultimate expression of the tabernacle of David will be seen in the Millennium, when the re-gathered nation of Israel will enjoy peace and prosperity (Amos 9: 11-15).

The idea that the church is the tabernacle of David is disproved by a simple observation: James declared this tabernacle would be rebuilt after the return of the Lord. He has not returned.

“...and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up” (Acts 15:16).

The church stands in a special relationship with God as the bride of Christ. As such it is unrelated to the Law of Moses and to the future dealings of God with the nation of Israel.

Chapter 10

The Typical Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Typical Principle.

The definition of the Typical Principle is: "A type is a divinely appointed illustration of some scriptural truth." The words "divinely appointed" are especially important in this definition. They limit the Typical Principle to that which is clearly revealed in Scripture to be a type.

2. Explain the difference between an innate type and an inferred type.

"An innate type is a type specifically declared to be such in the New Testament.

"An inferred type is one that, not specifically designated in the New Testament is justified for its existence by the nature of the New Testament materials on typology."

11. List the six (6) kinds of types in Scripture.

- 2) Persons—This would include Adam, Abraham Elijah and perhaps others.
 - 3) Institutions—This would include the ceremonial law (e.g. sacrifices, sabbaths, new moons, feasts, etc.).
 - 4) Offices—This would include the offices of Moses (leader; lawgiver), Aaron (priest), and Melchisedec (king and priest).
 - 5) Events—This would include the wilderness wanderings.
 - 6) Actions—This would include the lifting of the brazen serpent.
 - 7) Things—This would include the Tabernacle.
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Chapter 11

The First Mention Principle

What Have You Learned

1. Define the First Mention Principle.

The First Mention Principle is "[t]hat principle by which God indicates in the first mention of a subject, the truth with which that subject stands connected in the mind of God."

In general, the first time a thing is mentioned in Scripture it carries with it a meaning which will be consistent throughout the entire Bible. ...Since God knows the end from "the beginning, as an author He was able to formulate in the first mention of a thing that which characterize it in its progressive unfolding."

2. List three (3) things to keep in mind when using the First Mention Principle.

- a. The first step in using the first mention principle is to accurately locate the first mention.
- b. Never refer only to the first mention of a word in the Bible, rather try to discover if the principle of that word has been demonstrated previous to its use.

- a) To illustrate point 2, if we looked for the first mention of baptism under the word “baptism,” we would start with the New Testament. But by looking for the principle or subject, we find a very early Old Testament reference.
- c. No subsequent mention of a subject should be used to contradict or violate that which is in the first mention.

Chapter 12

The Progressive Mention Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Progressive Mention Principle.

The Progressive Mention Principle is defined as “that principle by which God makes the revelation of any given truth increasingly clear as the Word proceeds to its consummation.”

2. Explain why we believe Mark 16: 9-20 is authentic Scripture.

Beisner’s attack on the authenticity of Mark 16: 9-20 reveals that he is not himself fully satisfied with his argument. He says, “Since there is serious doubt concerning the originality of Mark 16: 16 it should not be used as proof of doctrine.” If he believed his view to be unquestionably correct, he would not need to appeal to this so-called doubt. The “serious doubt” is based on the fact that one Greek manuscript, Sinaiticus, simply omits Mark 16: 9-20. One other, Vaticanus, also omits it, but leaves a blank space exactly the right size for the inclusion of the passage. This proves that the scribe copying the manuscript was either working from a more ancient manuscript which included the passage, but he for some reason omitted it, or that he was working from a more ancient manuscript which also omitted the passage, but which also left the blank space, indicating the testimony of a still more ancient manuscript. In any case, the blank space left by Vaticanus testifies to the existence of the passage prior to the copying of the manuscript, which is dated about 350 A.D.

Every other Greek manuscript extant that includes Mark includes the passage in question, as do the earliest church fathers, the most trusted ancient versions, and the lectionaries.

“The progressive mention principle is...[a]n extension of the first mention principle, and [a] part of the complete [full] mention principle. ...because truth is progressively unfolded in Scripture, no one verse contains the whole truth on any given theme.”

Chapter 13

The Full Mention Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Full Mention Principle.

The Full Mention Principle is also known as the Complete Mention Principle. It may be defined as “that principle by which God declares all we need to know upon any subject vital to our spiritual life.”

2. Explain the significance of the Full Mention Principle.

“The complete [full] mention principle is to be seen as the ultimate end of:

- The first mention principle, and
- The progressive mention principle, and

- Will logically be used in connection with both.”

The use of these three principles begins logically with the First Mention Principle, proceeds to the Progressive Mention Principle, and concludes with the Full Mention Principle.

The result of the correct application of these principles will be systematic theology.

3. As briefly as possible, explain why the Hebrew Tetragram YHWH is pronounced “Jehovah.”

The first Bible translator to transliterate YHWH as Jehovah was William Tyndale in the sixteenth century.

The Tetragrammaton (YHWH) is spelled with the Hebrew letters *yod hey waw hey*.

The Hebrew alphabet contains no vowels, only consonants.

Originally, the vowel sounds were transmitted by tradition, as the Scriptures were read aloud in public.

The Jewish people had stopped vocalizing the name after the Exile when, in an attempt to live more rigorously by the Law of Moses, they sought to avoid the risk of taking the name of God in vain by refraining from speaking it altogether.

Instead, when the Scriptures were read publicly, the Jewish people would substitute *Adonai* for YHWH. *Adonai* means “master” or “lord.”

When the Massoretes added their system of dots and dashes to the Hebrew text, they inserted the vowel sounds for *Adonai* into YHWH.

They did not mean for people to pronounce YHWH with these vowels; they meant for the vowel markings to remind the reader to say *Adonai*. But Christians unaware of this thought they should pronounce YHWH with the vowels belonging to *Adonai*. The result was *YeHoWaH*, which is actually not a word at all. The letter “Y” was substituted with the letter “J” to avoid confusion with other letters and subsequently this became the origin of the current English “J”. This factor, together with the insertion of the vowel sounds for *Adonai* into the Tetragrammaton, results in *JeHoWaH*.

The Hebrew *waw* (as it was pronounced by the Massoretes) is pronounced *vav* in more recent Hebrew, resulting in *JeHoVaH*.

We can be certain, however, that is not the original pronunciation of the Tetragram YHWH.

The Hebrew language has no equivalent to the English “jay” sound. Most scholars believe that YHWH was originally pronounced something like Yahweh.

12. Explain why “Jesus” means “Jehovah-Savior.”

“Jesus” means “Jehovah-Savior” or “Yahweh-Savior.”

The English transliteration of the Greek name is *Jesous*.

The first two letters, “Je,” are the English transliteration of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew abbreviation for YHWH, YH, or—as it appears in the King James Version in Psalm 68: 4—JAH.

The letters *sou* are the English transliteration of the Greek transliteration of a form of the Hebrew word *yasha*, which means “salvation.” So the name “Jesus” is formed from two Hebrew words, YHWH and *yasha*.

YHWY is the name of God; “*shua*” is from *yasha*, which means “salvation.”

The meaning of “Jesus” is thus “Yahweh is Salvation,” “Yahweh is Savior,” or “Yahweh-Savior.”

Chapter 14

The Context Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Context Principle.

The Context Principle is defined as “[t]hat principle by which God gives light upon a subject through either near or remote passages bearing upon the same theme.”

2. Explain the significance of the Context Principle.

“The word ‘context’ is composed of two Latin words:
‘con,’ meaning ‘together’;
‘textus,’ meaning ‘woven’;

And denotes something that is woven together. ...it signifies the connection of thought running through either the whole of Scripture, a Testament, a book of the Bible, or a particular passage.”

The Context Principle, when correctly applied to Bible interpretation, will rightly determine the true meaning of all Biblical doctrine. An interpretation that may seem plausible will never contradict what the Scripture says elsewhere on that subject? Proper use of the Context Principle will help us practice good exegesis (getting out of the text the truth that is there) rather than eisegesis (reading into the text something that is not there).

Finally, the context of the entire Bible must be considered. No individual verse can be wrested out of its largest context to have some meaning foreign to the general testimony of Scripture.

Chapter 15

The Agreement Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Agreement Principle.

The Agreement Principle is defined as: “That principle under which the truthfulness and faithfulness of God become the guarantee that He will not set forth any passage in His Word that contradicts any other passage.”

2. Explain the significance of the Agreement Principle.

The proper use of the Agreement Principle recognizes that no Scripture will contradict another.

- 1) Any apparent contradiction is simply a lack of knowledge.
- 2) There is other information that, if known, would reconcile the supposed differences.

“There are always critics who declare that the Bible is full of discrepancies, inaccuracies, contradictions, and errors, but the Bible is not a Bible of mistakes, and this is guaranteed by the God of truth and faithfulness”—Psalm 119: 90; John 17: 17.

Chapter 16

The Gap Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Gap Principle.

The Gap Principle is defined as “[t]hat principle of divine revelation whereby God in the Jewish Scriptures ignores certain periods of time, leaping over centuries without comment.”

2. Explain the significance of the Gap Principle.

The understanding of the Gap Principle is helpful in seeing the scope of the long range prophetic utterances of the

Bible. Knowing that the prophets themselves did not always understand their messages, that the timing of their prophecies were not made clear to them helps us to understand that there could be significant gaps in the timing of future events. The Gap Principle has often been explained by saying that the prophets saw the mountain peaks of prophecy (The high points), but they did not see the valleys between.

3. Define premillennialism.

Premillennialism is the belief that Jesus Christ will return bodily to the earth to introduce a 1,000 year period of peace on earth, during which He will rule all nations with “a rod of iron.”.

4. Define amillennialism.

Amillennialism is the belief that the 1,000 year reign of Christ is to be taken allegorically or “spiritually,” and that it represents the church age, during which believers enjoy peace with God and have the ability to cast out devils.

5. Define postmillennialism.

Postmillennialism is the belief that the church will bring in the millennium by the gradual conversion of the world through preaching the gospel and infiltration into positions of leadership and influence in government, education, business, the arts and sciences, and so forth.

Chapter 17

The Double Reference Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Double Reference Principle.

The Double Reference Principle is defined as “that peculiarity in the writings of the Holy Spirit, by which a passage applying primarily to a person or event near at hand, is used by Him at a later time as applying to the Person of Christ, or the affairs of His kingdom.

2. Explain a caution in the use of the Double Reference Principle.

Use the Double (dual) Reference Principle only when the New Testament reveals a double reference. Without this restriction there is no limit to the fanciful interpretations that could be forced on Scripture.

3. Discuss the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

The Double Reference Principle is influenced by the use the New Testament makes of the Old Testament. The New Testament quotes or alludes to the Old Testament in many places, but not all New Testament references to the Old Testament are to be understood in the same way they are used for a variety of reasons.

A. In some New Testament references, the Old Testament is said to be fulfilled. That is, there are places where the New Testament quotes from the Old Testament as a specific fulfillment of prophecy (e.g., Matthew 1: 22-23).

B. In some New Testament references, quotations from the Old Testament are preceded by the words “it is written,” without a specific claim that an Old Testament prophecy is fulfilled. In other words, New Testament writers sometimes borrow Old Testament words to make a point without claiming that their point is a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

Chapter 18

The Christo-Centric Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Christo-Centric Principle.

The Bible is a Christ-centered book. The central message of all Scripture is Christ, the Messiah. Although men, cities, and nations have a large part in Biblical prophecy, its chief subject is a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. List the conditions under which the Christo-Centric Principle can be used.

- A. The ultimate purpose of the written Word is to bring us to Christ, the Living Word.
- B. This principle can be used only when the verse or passage under consideration speaks of Christ either:
 - 1) Characteristically
 - a) Typically
 - b) Symbolically
 - 2) Prophetically
 - 3) Historically
 - 4) Doctrinally
- C. A verse should never be applied directly to Christ unless it possesses Christo-Centric characteristics.
- A. This principle should never be used when the resultant interpretation violates the actual literal sense of Scripture.
- B. The Old Testament Scriptures that contain Christo-centric characteristics must be interpreted in the light of New Testament clear revelation of Christ.

Chapter 19

The Comparative Mention Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Comparative Mention Principle.

The definition of the Comparative Mention Principle is “that principle by which a certain verse or group of verses may be interpreted by comparing and/or contrasting it with another verse or group of verses.”

2. List the seven (7) areas of Scripture in which comparison and contrast are used.

- A. Principles—see, for example, the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28: 1-6, 15-19.
- B. Events
 - 1) See John 3: 14-15.
 - 2) See Luke 17: 26.
- C. Symbols
 - 1) See 2 Corinthians 3: 1-18.
- D. Persons
 - 2) See 1 Corinthians 15: 45-49.

- E. Places
 - 1) See Hebrews 12: 18-21, 22-29.
 - 2) See Revelation 11: 8.

- A. Prophecy
 - 1) See Acts 2: 14-36.

- B. Parables
 - 1) See Matthew 13: 3-9, 18-23.

3. List the six (6) guidelines that should be followed when the Comparative Mention Principle is used.

- A. Whenever there is more than one verse or passage in Scripture that deals with the same subject.
- B. No doctrine should be formulated on the basis of one verse or passage of Scripture.
- C. Passages can be compared only when, by reason of internal evidence, they are shown to deal with the same subject.
- D. Passages should not be compared when, by so doing interpretation is derived that conflicts with other clear statements of Scripture.
- E. When comparing verses or passages, first determine the meaning of the clearer passages and then proceed to interpret the more obscure.
- F. The Comparative Mention Principle may be used to solve problems and apparent discrepancies in Scripture. Sometimes two apparently contradictory verses may be reconciled by considering an appropriate third verse."

Chapter 20

The Moral Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Moral Principle.

The Moral Principle is defined as "[t]hat principle by which the interpretation of a verse or passage is determined by discerning the moral it contains."

Chapter 21

The Parabolic Principle

What Have You Learned?

1. Define the Parabolic Principle.

The definition of the Parabolic Principle is "[t]hat principle by which any parable is interpreted by discerning its moral and interpreting its elements insofar as they are meant to be interpreted."

2. Explain the two-fold purpose of parables.

The two-fold purpose:

- To reveal truth to those who were open and hungry-hearted; a
- To conceal truth from those who were closed and hard-hearted.

3. List the two (2) major sources from which Jesus took His parables.

Jesus took His parables from two major sources:

- The realm of Creation (seed, wheat and tares, fish, leaven, pearls, sheep, etc.);
- The realm of Human Relationships (father and son, servant and master, bride and bridegroom, friends, etc.)

4. What five (5) guidelines should be followed when using the Parabolic Principle.

a. The first step in using this principle is to make certain that the passage under consideration is a parable, whether designated or not. For example:

- 1) The account of the Rich Man and Lazarus is not a parable.
- 2) It is an actual history of two men who really lived.
- 3) In no parable did Jesus name specific people.

b. A parable is a comparison between the natural realm and the spiritual realm.

c. Every parable is designed to conceal and reveal one fundamental spiritual truth.

- 1) Do not attempt to make every detail of the parable represent something.
- 2) There is one basic purpose for the parable, and many of the supporting details are there for literary purposes only. For example:
 - a) The Parable of the Good Samaritan was given to show how we are to be a neighbor to those in need.
 - b) No meaning should be forced on the donkey, the oil, the two pence, the inn, etc.

d. Since parables are drawn from the cultural background of their authors, the interpreter should research the manners, customs, and material culture involved in the parable he is interpreting.

e. Doctrine should not be founded solely upon parabolic teaching.

Chapter 22

Final Hermeneutical Matters

What Have You Learned?

1. Define “revelation.”

Revelation—by revelation we mean a specific manner in which God communicates something about Himself to mankind.

2. Define “general revelation.”

General revelation has to do with those means by which God communicates knowledge about His existence and nature to the entire human race.

3. List the two (2) modes of general revelation.

- 1) External: creation (nature) (Psalm 19: 1-4; Acts 14: 17; Romans 1: 18-21); history (the out workings of God’s purposes in the world) (Daniel 4: 25-26, 32);

- 2) Internal: conscience and an awareness of deity (Romans 2: 14-15).
4. Define “special revelation.”
- Special revelation has to do with those means by which God communicates much more specific information about Himself and about His purposes, especially His redemptive purposes, to individuals, groups of people, nations, or to those with access to the Scriptures.
5. List the four (4) ways special revelation has occurred.
- 1) Miracles (whereby God intrudes on His previously established order or on “nature”) (John 2: 11);
 - 2) Through direct communication (whereby He spoke directly to a man or men by means of dreams, visions, voices, or theophanies) (Hebrews 1: 1; Numbers 12: 6-8; Genesis 32: 24-30; Acts 22: 17-21);
 - 3) Through the incarnation (whereby He took on the form of man for redemptive purposes) (John 1: 14; Philippians 2: 5-8; 1 Timothy 3: 16); and
 - 4) Through the Scriptures (whereby He moved Holy men to write His Word for purposes of teaching—doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteous living) (2 Timothy 3: 16).
6. Discuss the difference between revelation, inspiration and illumination.
- 1) Revelation communicates new truth;
 - 2) Inspiration makes provisions for its inerrant and infallible preservation;
 - 3) Illumination gives insight into the revealed and inspired Scriptures.
7. List the seven (7) general assumptions of Protestant hermeneutics.
- 1) The clarity of Scripture, or the idea that the external clarity of Holy Scripture is its grammatical clarity, and that the internal clarity is the work of the Holy Spirit;
 - 2) Revelation is accommodated to the human mind in a way that the human mind can assimilate it (revelation is anthropomorphic in character);
 - 3) Revelation is progressive, which means the initiative in revelation comes from God, not man, and that revelation progresses from a theological infancy in the Old Testament to maturity in the New Testament;
 - 4) Scripture interprets Scripture, demanding that obscure passages must give way to clear passages;
 - 5) The analogy of faith, which assumes that there is one system of truth or theology contained in Scripture, and that all doctrines must agree with each other;
 - 6) The unity of the meaning of Scripture, which opposes the idea of a plural meaning of Scripture, as seen in allegorisms, cults, and much of Protestant pietism; and
 - 7) Interpretation and Application, which remembers that the purpose of Scripture is not interpretation alone, but application to one's life.
8. Explain the Philological Principle.
- Philology has to do with the technical and comparative study of words.
But it reaches beyond that to include a study of history, culture, and literary criticism
The goal is exegesis, which discovers the original meaning and intention of the text.
9. Explain what is meant by “cultural.”
- By “cultural” is meant the total ways, methods, manners, tools, customs, buildings, institutions, and so forth, by means of which, and through which, a clan, tribe, or a nation carry on their existence.

10. List the three (3) areas of culture that must be researched in the interpretive process.

- Biblical geography—including mountains, rivers, plains, crops, flora, fauna, seasons, and climate.
- Biblical history
- Biblical culture (in the strict anthropological sense).
- Material culture—tools, objects, dwellings, weapons, garments, and so forth, that the given people use in the maintenance of its life.
- Social culture—all the customs, practices, rites, and so forth, that a society observes in the societal ongoing of the people.

11. Discuss the function of cultural awareness in biblical interpretation.

- A. The Scriptures do address specific cultural norms of the day, and they do not attempt to anticipate every cultural development of the future.
- B. But the fact that Jesus commanded His disciples to go into all the world, teaching all people everywhere to obey His commandments (Matthew 28: 19) does suggest that the gospel can be applied to any cultural setting.
- C. **The Bible interpreter must be thoroughly aware of the cultural norms of Bible history in order to accurately understand the meaning of Scripture in the cultural context in which it was given, and to apply the cross-cultural truth to another people, time, and place.**

11. List several guidelines for word studies in biblical interpretation.

- A. **Don't...**
 - 1) ...commit the root fallacy.
Don't suppose that every word actually has a meaning bound up with its shape or its components.
 - 2) ...fall prey to Semantic anachronism.
Don't read a later use of a word back into earlier literature.
 - 3) ...overlook Semantic obsolescence.
 - 4) ...use evidence selectively and prejudicially. (etc.)
- B. **Do...**
 - 1) ...study the etymology of words.
 - 2) ...study words comparatively.
 - 3) ...study the use of the words in their culture.
 - 4) ...study words in cognate languages and ancient translations.
 - 5) ...pay attention to grammar.
 - 6) ...consider the context.
 - 7) ...examine parallel passages or cross references.
 - 8) ...recognize conceptual cross-references.
 - 9) ...discover parallel cross-references.
 - 10) ...recognize literary mold or genre.

12. List several guidelines for the doctrinal use of the Bible.

- 1. The main burden of doctrinal teaching must rest on the literal interpretation of the Bible. This does not deny that the Bible uses figures of speech, but even these depend on the literal sense for their very existence and they are controlled by the literal.

2. The main burden of our theology should rest on the teaching of the New Testament. The doctrines of faith, sin, atonement, Christ, sanctification, resurrection, heaven, hell, and the new earth with its New Jerusalem are all most clearly developed in the New Testament.
 3. The theologian must not extend his doctrines beyond the Scriptural evidence.
 4. The theologian must use his proof texts with proper understanding of his procedure.
 5. What is not a matter of revelation cannot be made a matter of creed or faith.
 6. The theological interpreter must keep the practical nature of the Bible in mind.
 7. The theological interpreter must recognize his responsibility to the church.
 8. A theologian will not propose changes in doctrine lightly, but with a great deal of tentativeness and in submission to the larger circle of wise counsel.
13. List several concepts that must be kept in mind when interpreting the various types of biblical literature.
1. Look upon Biblical stories as an invitation to share an experience, as vividly and concretely as possible, with the characters in the story.
 2. Poetry is a language of images that the reader must experience as a series of imagined sensory situations.
 - This concept implies that divine inspiration could extend not only to the recording of
 - actual events that happened, but also to the expression of truth in imagery

Whenever you find a statement that compares one thing to another, first meditate on the literal or physical half of the comparison and then analyze how many correspondences can appropriately be drawn between that situation and the object of the poem.
 3. Proverbs usually have a single point of comparison or principle of truth to convey.
This concept limits the interpretation of a proverb and prevents fanciful speculation about inconsequential meanings.
 4. Prophecy
 - a. In visionary literature, be ready for the reversal of ordinary reality.
 - b. When reading visionary literature, be prepared to use your imagination to picture a world that transcends earthly reality.
 5. Many other explanations are written in the text to be studied and considered.
14. List several principles of application of the biblical text for the contemporary believer.
- A. All practical lessons, all applications of Scripture, all devotional material, must be governed by sound exegetical principles.
 - B. The Bible is more a book of principles than a catalogue of specific directions.
 - C. The Bible emphasizes the inner spirit rather than the outward religious cloak.
 - D. In some statements it is the spirit of the statement that is to be our guide.
 - E. Commands in terms of one culture must be translated into our culture.
 - F. Commands in terms of one culture must be translated into our culture.
 - B. We must make a distinction between what the Bible records and what it approves.
 - C. We may take direct application from all of those incidents that the Bible directly censures or approves.
 - D. Express commands to individuals are not the will of God for us.
 - E. In the lives of men in the Scriptures determine what the outstanding spiritual principle is.
 - F. In the application of examples to our lives we do not need a literal reproduction of the Biblical situation.
 - G. In considering promises...
 - Note whether the promise is universal in scope.
 - Note whether the promise is personal.
 - Note whether the promise is conditional.
 - Note whether the promise is for our time.