

# Hermeneutics 101: The Art of Interpreting Scripture (Part 2)

Homework Review: (see notes at end of Part 1)

How to Proceed: L.I.G.H.T

- A. **Look**
- B. **Inquire** (of God)
- C. **Geography & Genre:** The where is it, and what culture does it speak in.
- D. **Hallelujah:** How does this effect my worship?
  - i. Scripture is first about God
  - ii. This is the “How do I love God more?” question.
- E. **Transformation:** What is the transforming effect in my life? [Mark 1]
  - i. How am I to think God's thoughts? (renew the mind)
  - ii. How am I to have Christ formed in me?
  - iii. How do I love my neighbor? In light of this.
  - iv. How do I live the Gospel?

**Introduction: Geography: *Interpret a text in light of its context.***

- A. Geography: not the technical definition, but simply “Where is this on the map?” “What's the elevation?” “What is it next to?” “What is the culture of that region?” “What is the climate?”
  - i. What is its context?
    - Context literally means *that which is “with” the text.*
  - ii. Context safeguards us from eisegesis and helps us do exegesis.
    - a) Exegesis: to bring meaning out of a text.
  
    - b) Eisegesis: to import meaning into a text.
  - iii. In order to find the context we will have to do some work.
    - a) Poverbs 2:4-5 “...if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.”

b) Context and integrity to the text help tether us to the truth.

- There is an original meaning and intention.
- The present day meaning and intention is never divorced from that originally intended meaning.

B. Three Primary Levels of Context we should consider.

## I. Historical Context

A. Who wrote this? To whom was he writing?

B. When was it written?

C. Historical-cultural Background

D. Classroom Discussion: What is the historical context of Genesis? Mark?

## II. Redemptive Context

A. aka: Biblical Context (Canonical)—Where does this fall in the storyline of the Bible?  
Where is this on the road map of salvation's story?

i. "Salvation history": The chain of biblical, historical events through which God progressively reveals and accomplishes his redemptive plan – "redemptive history".

ii. Luke 24:44-45: *He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.*

B. Good questions to ask:

- i. How does this passage / book fit into the storyline of the Bible, God's salvation story?
- ii. What do I need to understand about this time period in redemptive history in order to interpret this passage?
- iii. What redemptive themes emerge in this passage and this book of the Bible?

C. The story line of the Bible is a progressive revelation.

D. According to Plan, Graham Goldsworthy; God's Big Picture, Vaughan Roberts

### III. Literary Context: Three levels

A. **Immediate**—this is the “stuff” just before or after the passage that is being studied. This would include paragraphs before and after the passage, as well as particular words.

- i. Normally a word's meaning can only be understood within a sentence or paragraph. This is the context of the word.
- ii. Poetry in which one half a couplet is the context of the other half. Contrasting lines in a proverb or wisdom saying can only be understood together.
  - a) Psalm 46:4 *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.*
  - b) Proverbs 27:5-6 *<sup>5</sup>Better is open rebuke than hidden love. <sup>6</sup>Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.*

B. **Remote** (Distant)—this is the preceding or subsequent chapters, or even some other part of the same book.

- i. Meaning works from the outside in.
  - a) What is the larger argument of the author?

b) What is the theme of the book? What is the purpose of the book?

c) Where else in this book has this idea come up? How have these words been used elsewhere in the book?

d) Setting / Structure

ii. It is better not to start with a verse, or a word and work out; Rather to start with a section. Identify a section and its purpose; then work in.

iii. What is the big idea of this section?

C. Next week we are going to look at Genre: Literary Form