

DOWNLOAD PDF THE HISTORICAL AND THE SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE F. C. PORTER

Chapter 1 : Biblical Exegesis: Methods of Interpretation

Examine the Historical, Cultural, and Literary Background Biblical exegesis is the process by which one comes to understand a Biblical text. One begins by identifying key passages, terms, and concepts and uses specialized library resources during the research process.

The other two books were written by Mark and Luke, close associates of the apostles. These writers had direct access to the facts they were recording. At the time of their writing, there were still people alive who had heard Jesus speak, watched him heal people and perform miracles. Each of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, read like news reports, a factual accounting of the days events, each from their own perspective. The descriptions are unique to each writer, but the facts are in agreement. For a sample from one of the Gospels, [click here](#). Sample of what is presented in one of the Gospels The Gospels are presented as matter-of-fact, "this is how it was. One typical example is the account in Luke, chapter 8, where Jesus brings a little girl back to life. Notice the details and clarity in its reporting: As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. But he took her by the hand and said, "My child, get up! Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened. If it were fiction, there are portions of it that would have been written differently. And in writing fiction, would Jesus have ordered the parents to be quiet about it? You would expect the healing to make a grand point. People do react oddly. And Jesus had his own reasons for not wanting the parents to broadcast this. The best test of the Gospels authenticity is to read it for yourself. Does it read like a report of real events, or like fiction? If it is real, then God has revealed himself to us. Jesus came, lived, taught, inspired, and brought life to millions who read his words and life today. What Jesus stated in the gospels, many have found reliably true: Those living in the Jerusalem region were witnesses of Jesus and well aware of his ministry. If you would like to know more about Jesus, this article will give you a good summary of his life: [How the books of the New Testament were determined](#). The early church accepted the New Testament books almost as soon as they were written. The other New Testament writers had immediate access to Jesus as well: James and Jude were half-brothers of Jesus who initially did not believe in him. Peter was one of the 12 apostles. Paul started out as a violent opponent of Christianity and a member of the religious ruling class, but he became an ardent follower of Jesus, convinced that Jesus rose from the dead. The reports in the New Testament books lined up with what thousands of eyewitnesses had seen for themselves. For example, the Gospel of Judas was written by the Gnostic sect, around A. The Gospel of Thomas, written around A. These and other Gnostic gospels conflicted with the known teachings of Jesus and the Old Testament, and often contained numerous historical and geographical errors. Soon after, Jerome and Augustine circulated this same list. These lists, however, were not necessary for the majority of Christians. By and large the whole church had recognized and used the same list of books since the first century after Christ. As the church grew beyond the Greek-speaking lands and needed to translate the Scriptures, and as splinter sects continued to pop up with their own competing holy books, it became more important to have a definitive list. Historians confirm what the Bible says about Jesus. Not only do we have well-preserved copies of the original manuscripts, we also have testimony from both Jewish and Roman historians. The gospels report that Jesus of Nazareth performed many miracles, was executed by the Romans, and rose from the dead. Christus [Christ], from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus From Josephus, "we learn that Jesus was a wise man who did surprising feats, taught many, won over followers from among Jews

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and Greeks, was believed to be the Messiah, was accused by the Jewish leaders, was condemned to be crucified by Pilate, and was considered to be resurrected. Even the Jewish Talmud, certainly not biased toward Jesus, concurs about the major events of his life. From the Talmud, "we learn that Jesus was conceived out of wedlock, gathered disciples, made blasphemous claims about himself, and worked miracles, but these miracles are attributed to sorcery and not to God. Yet ancient historians Jews, Greeks and Romans confirm the major events that are presented in the New Testament, even though they were not believers themselves. Does it matter if Jesus really did and said what is in the Gospels? For faith to really be of any value, it must be based on facts, on reality. If you were taking a flight to London, you would probably have faith that the jet is fueled and mechanically reliable, the pilot trained, and no terrorists on board. Your faith, however, is not what gets you to London. Your faith is useful in that it got you on the plane. But what actually gets you to London is the integrity of the plane, pilot, etc. You could rely on your positive experience of past flights. But your positive experience would not be enough to get that plane to London. What matters is the object of your faith -- is it reliable? Is the New Testament an accurate, reliable presentation of Jesus? We can trust the New Testament because there is enormous factual support for it. This article touched on the following points: All of this gives a solid foundation for believing that what we read today is what the original writers wrote and experienced in real life, in real places. John, one of the writers sums it up well, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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Chapter 2 : Understanding and Experiencing the Historical Geography of Israel | calendrierdelascience.com

Teaching the Bible begins with studying and understanding the Bible. And within this discipline, evangelicals strongly believe in interpreting a passage in its context—a discipline that also includes its historical and geographical context.

Understanding and Experiencing the Historical Geography of Israel Introduction to Historical Geography

Beside the place where water gushes from the ground, there a man drives his tent stake—and so lays the foundation of a city. The rains run through immovable ravines, and beside those rivers people cultivate their fields and water their livestock. Where the easiest ground to travel lies, there a wayfarer walks—and so a highway begins. Be it a strategic military position, an abundant water supply, or a convenient traveling route, geography determines, to a great extent, where historical events occur. While the usual means of overland travel in the biblical world were walking or riding a donkey, horse, or camel, 1 today we live in an age where getting around obstacles, traveling across great distances, and finding something to drink no longer prove a challenge. With a transportation system that requires little more than a basic understanding of road signs and airline gates, our culture gives little attention to the importance of geography. In addition, America finds itself land-locked between two oceans with friendly countries to our north and south; we have become an island of culture. Consequently, we feel very little need to know historical geography. Teaching the Bible begins with studying and understanding the Bible. And within this discipline, evangelicals strongly believe in interpreting a passage in its context—a discipline that also includes its historical and geographical context. Ministering in an age of images and sound-bytes, evangelicals often find themselves following a marketing approach to the Great Commission. With an emphasis on communication over content—on methods over message—the church can succumb to expediency and miss many essentials needed for proper understanding and teaching of the Bible. Historical geography provides a wonderful contribution to our careful understanding of Scripture. The more someone understands the land of the Bible, the more one understands the Bible itself. Because the land of Israel serves as the basic canvas unto which the message of the Bible can be painted in vivid reality, I have sought to incorporate historical geography into my teaching whenever possible; this helps the passage come alive to an audience in a way they can see, feel, hear, and thus, more properly understand and apply. An even greater benefit can occur when one uses his or her understanding of historical geography to experience the land of the Bible first-hand through a trip to Israel. The findings of this research provide helpful insights to those who want to study the Bible in context, teach historical geography classes, and prepare groups to go to Israel. It should also prove instructive to those who may not recognize these advantages. The results will show the benefits of actually traveling to the land itself beyond classroom study. The conclusions are available to travel agencies and interested organizations so that they may encourage people to enjoy the benefits of going to Israel. In short, the research revealed the advantages believers can gain by incorporating historical geography into their personal Bible study and public ministries. In seeking to learn how to study the Bible itself, one may begin by looking to masters on the subject. Many good books exist today in order to teach believers how to study and apply the Bible for themselves, and many of them mention geography as part of a thorough study. But beyond the token reference to the subject, few authors emphasize or illustrate the clarity historical geography brings to a passage. Most of what has been written in texts, atlases, and tour books provides information on the land of Israel but does not reveal the transformation of those who study it. When one reads the Bible, it becomes clear how geography is the stage on which the redemptive narrative takes place. The land God chose was not arbitrary, for He designed even the land itself to develop the spiritual lives of His people. God told the Hebrews who were about to enter the land: For the land, into which you are entering to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt from which you came, where you used to sow your seed and water it with your foot like a vegetable garden. But the land into which you are about to cross to possess it, a land of hills and valleys, drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning even to the end of the year. And it shall

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come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. And He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you shall eat and be satisfied Deut Procedure and Research Method Administer a test and you can assess how much knowledge a student has of historical geography. But how can the more difficult emphasis on a changed life be measured? What difference has historical geography made to the hearts as well as the heads of modern students and travelers? Studying historical geography, in my own experience, has permanently marked my life and changed the way I understand the Bible. Walking the land of Israel has provided me with a deeper appreciation of God as Lord of world history and of seemingly minor details—both of which bring comfort to my life. My experience is not unique. I have conducted and videotaped a number of interviews with those who have both studied geography and also been to Israel. Those interviewed include a Ph. I have integrated their testimonies into a video, filmed in Israel, which can be seen by clicking [here](#). This video visually demonstrates some of the benefits of experiencing Bible Lands. The purpose for this study project has been to survey the extent to which historical geography has impacted the spiritual lives and ministries of those who have taken historical geography courses and traveled to Israel. I distributed a survey to various students of historical geography the survey appears in Appendix A. Dallas Theological Seminary gave me access to the class rosters of past historical geography students. Anticipated Results The research revealed those who understand and experience historical geography enjoy a clearer comprehension of the text, a clearer direction to its application, and more effective communication. Those who study geography, coupled with a study-trip to Israel, experience an even greater benefit than those who simply study in class. The spiritual lives of those who study historical geography are enriched. Whether they limit their study to the classroom, or enlarge it by traveling to Israel, their experience adds a dimension of authenticity and confidence to their faith. Remembering what a location looks like enables one to picture the action, to remember the event, to imagine its occurrence in a way that enables retention. Also many events took place in the same location, which also helps to tie the Bible together better. Monson, an expert in the field of historical geography, taught the subject at Jerusalem University College formerly The Institute of Holy Land Studies for many years and lived in Jerusalem for over thirty years. His reply is worth repeating: The question you raise is a good one. I often questioned students when groups came over to our home in Jerusalem, and everyone was excited—but none could put into words exactly what had changed in their lives since studying in the land itself. I am not aware of anything formally written on the subject, but I have not really searched diligently. Again, the problem you will have is that most tourists have fuzzy answers. First, since there is no current literature expressly researching the benefits of understanding and experiencing historical geography, the project will help provide an evaluation of these benefits. Many have taught the subject—both in and out of the land—but there has been little evaluation of how historical geography benefits a believer. The project will give much-needed insight into a valuable tool for Bible study and communication. In discovering the areas where people tend to benefit the most, I will be better able to incorporate them into the class. The findings will also help me prepare the groups that I lead on trips to Israel throughout my ministry. And the results of this study will continue to enhance my pulpit ministry each week as I incorporate historical geography into the messages. Tour companies, pastors, seminaries, and other interested parties could use the findings to encourage believers to make the subject a worthy investment of their time for the glory of God. What once the believer neglected out of ignorance becomes instead a fresh source of familiarity, insight, and inspiration. Geography occurs on almost every page of Scripture. God used it to mold the lives of His people in the biblical narrative, and God uses it to shape the lives of believers today. Moody Press, , 8. Monson, *The Land Between: Young, The Bible Geography*, 6th ed. Bible Students League, , 3.

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Chapter 3 : Understanding the Bible tract - eBible Fellowship

Some historical information and literary clues may give the interpreter a general understanding of Paul's opposition, but specifics are difficult to nail down. Thus, these theories do not stand well alone, but are more helpful when joined with other explanations and proposals.

The King James Version is Scripture. Faith is necessary to know Scripture and truth. Human wisdom is a hindrance to Scripture and truth. Satan is at war against God, His Scripture, and truth. God will reward diligent seekers. Introduction It is possible to know the Bible well and yet not understand it, as Jesus told the Pharisees, Sadducees, lawyers, and scribes of His day. These religious leaders had great technical knowledge and fanatical adoration of the text of the Bible above all other men, but they did not understand its spirit or meaning. They had read these places many times, but they did not understand them. They knew the passages well, but they did not know their meaning. And so they had the Word of God, they read and studied it diligently, but they did not understand its message. It is this paradox we must avoid. Modern Christians are constantly learning from seminars, guest speakers, Bible studies, videoconferences, tape ministries, television specials, and radio programs; but they never come to the knowledge of the truth. And how should the sons of God oppose these effeminate preachers and their popular fables? Hold fast to the inspired Scriptures II Tim 3: It is a practice today in most religious circles to quote the Bible without truly knowing the meaning of what is quoted. The words are used as sound bites rather than sober statements of holy importance from God. Even conservative preachers will take an obscure phrase from the Old Testament, Charles Spurgeon was famous for it, and proceed to develop a pretty talk from the text, though there is little connection. Do you believe the Bible? What do you believe about it? How can you believe what you do not understand? Do you mean you believe it to be the Word of God? We want more than this. We want to understand exactly and fully what God has communicated to us in the Bible. Nothing else will do. So help us, Lord. Let us consider what Ezra did not do, and let us illustrate it by corrupting our text to reflect the current trend in using the Bible in seeker sensitive churches. And give God the glory! Consider the sense of these words, which is clearly obvious to all but the willfully ignorant. Perusing written matter to decipher marks of language into words and sentences. Reading carefully to separate and differentiate the individual words clearly. Interpreting and expressing to the hearers by clear verbal communication. The precise, singular meaning intended by the Author in the specific reading. Producing a desired effect by careful and calculated procedures to that end. To fully comprehend, apprehend, and grasp the meaning and import. Consider what we need to accomplish this process of understanding for ourselves and others. We need the written revelation of God in a language we can read. We need the ability to read written words or it must be read to us. We can do it! We need to read distinctly to identify all the words in a given passage. We need spiritual ability and the right process of finding the sense. We have them both! We need to explain the sense well enough to cause understanding. We will learn it! Consider what Ezra did not do and what we do not want to do in perverting this godly process. Ezra did not read and interpret Scripture without worshipping the Author Neh 8: Ezra did not read the law of God in another version with different and contrary words. Ezra did not read the law of God in a dead language neither he nor anyone else knew. Ezra did not follow loose spiritualizing for a mystical sense they had to take by faith. Ezra did not follow a literal hermeneutic by using every word in a strict, literal sense. Ezra did not read the law of God and then give primary definitions of the words he read. Primary definitions of a current language are those meanings known by all men. Even the illiterate know primary definitions, as they have heard them since birth. We will deal with this heresy at length later in the study, so think about truth. Ezra gave the interpretation that would not contradict any other Scripture II Pet 1: Ezra gave the spiritual sense that cannot be found comparing natural words I Cor 2: Ezra rightly divided the word of truth by giving words secondary senses II Tim 2: Ezra gave the relative sense whenever internal contradictions appeared II Chr Ezra interpreted the meaning that would have been lost by dark sayings Proverbs 1: Ezra opened up parables, which

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are unintelligible by their mere words Matt Ezra gave the spiritual sense the Pharisees could not see Matt 9: Ezra gave the spiritual application only a man of God can truly perceive I Cor 9: Ezra gave the interpretation that average readers might easily have missed II Pet 3: Is this question a joke? No; pitifully, it is not. Some think the Bible can be understood simply by reading it. Others think it can be easily understood with a dictionary. And yet others think that a dictionary and lexicon dictionary of a dead foreign language will easily get the job done. Reading is the action of perusing written material to recognize the marks of your language that indicate specific words and combinations of those words forming written communication. The full idea and import of the words and their combinations are dependent on interpretation, which is the action of determining the sense, or meaning, of a reading. We will consider interpretation separately. Reading is simply and only the means to identify the words used to convey meaning, while interpretation must determine the proper meaning of those words. Reading gives us the sound of words, but interpretation gives us the sense of words. Rules of interpretation should not be confused with reading. Proverbs need interpretation, just as the Holy Spirit told us when introducing the book Prov 1: Words are important, since they are the basis for communicating with language. In a current language, even the illiterate understand these meanings, for it is the common verbal and written use of words that establishes their primary definitions. We only move to secondary meanings of words when one or more of the following reasons exist: We are reading a work beyond the third-grade level where secondary senses add appeal. We are told or shown in the larger or smaller context that secondary meanings are needed. Primary definitions would create an internal contradiction with what is written elsewhere. Primary definitions would create an obvious absurdity, logically or naturally or factually. This matter of primary definitions is not a rule of interpretation, since it is a basic assumption of reading any writing in any language. Reading cannot be done with even elementary comprehension without starting from this beginning point, which we have all assumed since about the first grade. When we read that Spot was a "dog," we did not think hotdog, slow car, ugly girl, sodomite, or cat. Reading is the first step in understanding the Bible, as we see clearly in the wonderful example of Ezra Neh 8: Reading gives us the sound of words, but interpretation gives us the sense, or meaning, of words. The Pharisees and other Jews read the Bible, but they did not understand what they read. Reading is only the means to identify the words used to convey the sense. We read Scripture carefully with full identification of each word before we begin any interpretation. Some answers and explanations will be in the words carefully considered John 8: Trying to interpret words that have been confused is merely compounding a previous error. We reject as ridiculous and dangerous any trust in number schemes, hidden meanings, word patterns, and so forth, which deranged heretics use to prove anything from the Bible II Cor 1: And with the advent of the personal computer, there are such schemes proliferating as sound Bible interpretation. It is not enough to read the Bible. As children in elementary school, we learned that reading was not enough. We had to learn to read with comprehension, with understanding. Deciphering the letters and words on a page and reciting them to yourself or to another was not enough. We had to learn to gather and absorb the situation, actions, qualities, and ideas being conveyed by the letters and words. It is the same in reading the Bible.

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Chapter 4 : History of the Bible - Who Wrote the Bible - Why It's Reliable

A chart showing the basic timeline and storyline of the Bible with significant people and writings noted. Community and Testimony: Cultural Influence in Biblical Studies A contrast of ancient tribal cultures' concern with community and communal ways of thinking with modern individualism, and its implications for understanding Scripture.

Young children often think that milk comes in cartons from the grocery store. As they grow up they learn that milk comes from cows on the farm. Likewise many Christians have become so used to having Bibles that they have bought at a book store that they have almost no knowledge of where the present English translations of the Bible came from. Understanding how the Bible came to us gives us a confident foundation for our faith in the reliability the Bible. Evidence presented in a criminal case must be shown to have been protected by a proper chain of custody from being tampered with. We will be able to answer to critics when they claim that the New Testament contains , errors. Important terms to remember: Skeptics often claim that the Bible has been changed. However, it is important to define the terms that apply to the source of our English Bible. Until Gutenberg first printed the Latin Bible in , all Bibles were hand copied onto papyrus, parchment, and paper. When the Bible is translated into a different language it is usually translated from the original Hebrew and Greek. However some translations in the past were derived from an earlier translation. For example the first English translation by John Wycliffe in was prepared from the Latin Vulgate. The Old Testament was written primarily in Hebrew, with some books written in Aramaic. The following are brief snap shots of the beginning and ending of the Old Testament and the reasons for the first two translations of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Aramaic and Greek B. Abraham was called by God to the land of Canaan. The exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt. Autographs There are no known autographs of any books of the Old Testament. Below is a list of the languages in which the Old Testament books were written. Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. The Jews were taken into captivity to Babylon. The Book of Daniel Chapters. Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, was written in Hebrew. Manuscripts The following is a list of the oldest Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament that are still in existence. The Dead Sea Scrolls: The following are examples of the Hebrew Masoretic text-type. Unfortunately over one quarter of this Codex was destroyed in anti-Jewish riots in The Old Testament began to be translated into Aramaic. This translation is called the Aramaic Targums. This translation helped the Jewish people, who began to speak Aramaic from the time of their captivity in Babylon, to understand the Old Testament in the language that they commonly spoke. The Old Testament was translated into Greek. This translation is known as the Septuagint. It is sometimes designated "LXX" which is Roman numeral for "70" because it was believed that 70 to 72 translators worked to translate the Hebrew Old Testament in Greek. The New Testament Autographs 95 A. The New Testament was written in Greek. The Gospel of John and the Revelation may have been written as late as 95 A. Manuscripts There are over 5, early Greek Manuscripts of the New Testament that are still in existence. The oldest manuscripts were written on papyrus and the later manuscripts were written on leather called parchment. The New Testament manuscript which dates most closely to the original autograph was copied around A. D, within 35 years of the original. It is designated "p 52" and contains a small portion of John The "p" stands for papyrus. Bodmer p 66 a papyrus manuscript which contains a large part of the Gospel of John. Bodmer Papyrus p 75 contains the Gospels of Luke and John. Chester Beatty Biblical papyrus p 45 contains portions of the four Gospels and Acts. It was discovered by a German scholar Tisendorf in at an Orthodox monastery at Mt. It was cataloged as being in the Vatican Library since Translations Early translations of the New Testament can give important insight into the underlying Greek manuscripts from which they were translated. The name of the first translation of the Old and New Testaments into Latin was termed Old Latin, both Testaments having been translated from the Greek. Parts of the Old Latin were found in quotes by the church father Tertullian, who lived around A. Coptic was spoken in four dialects in Egypt. The Bible was translated into each of these four dialects. The Latin Vulgate was translated by St. It continues

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to be the authoritative translation of the Roman Catholic Church to this day. The Protestant Reformation saw an increase in translations of the Bible into the common languages of the people. The first English translation of the Bible was by John Wycliffe. He translated the Bible into English from the Latin Vulgate. This was a translation from a translation and not a translation from the original Hebrew and Greek. Wycliffe was forced to translate from the Latin Vulgate because he did not know Hebrew or Greek. The Advent of Printing greatly aided the transmission of the biblical texts. Gutenberg produced the first printed Bible in Latin. Printing revolutionized the way books were made. From now on books could be published in great numbers and at a lower cost. The Greek New Testament was printed for the first time by Erasmus. He based his Greek New Testament from only five Greek manuscripts, the oldest of which dated only as far back as the twelfth century. Polyglot Bible was published. Erasmus used the Polyglot to revise later editions of his New Testament. Tyndale made use of the Polyglot in his translation of the Old Testament into English which he did not complete because he was martyred in 1536. Its wording and sentence structure closely follow the Greek in more of a word for word style. It also made use of the oldest manuscript evidence. It is more of a "thought-for-thought" translation and reads more easily than the NASV. As an example of the contrast between word-for-word and thought-for-thought translations, notice below the translation of the Greek word "hagios-holy" NASV Hebrews 9: Note that the NASV simply says "holy place" reflecting the more literal translation of "hagios. Let us now look at what evidences we have for the integrity of the New Testament manuscripts. Let us look at the number of manuscripts and how close they date to the autographs of the Bible as compared with other ancient writings of similar age. Only one manuscript of his work remains. It was copied about A. There are nine manuscripts in Greek which date from A. It was as important to ancient Greeks as the Bible was to the Hebrews. There are over 1000 manuscripts remaining but they date from to A. The Old Testament autographs were written - B. The Dead Sea Scrolls date between B. D and date within years from when the last book of the Old Testament was written. The oldest complete Hebrew Old Testament dates about A. Genesis-Deuteronomy were written over years before the Dead Sea Scrolls. However since the five books of Moses were written about B. The New Testament autographs were written between A. There are 5, Greek manuscripts some dating as early as A. In addition, the complete New Testament could be reproduced from the quotes that were made from it by the early church fathers in their letters and sermons. Authorship and dating of the New Testament books Skeptics and liberal Christian scholars both seek to date the New Testament books as late first century or early second century writings. They contend that these books were not written by eyewitnesses but rather by second or third hand sources. This allowed for the development of what they view as myths concerning Jesus. For example, they would deny that Jesus actually foretold the destruction of Jerusalem. Rather they would contend that later Christian writers "put these words into his mouth. The Gospel of John claims to be written by the disciple of the Lord. Recent archeological research has confirmed both the existence of the Pool of Bethesda and that it had five porticoes as described in John 5: This correct reference to an incidental detail lends credibility to the claim that the Gospel of John was written by John who as an eyewitness knew Jerusalem before it was destroyed in 70 A. Paul signed his epistles with his own hand. He was writing to churches who knew him.

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Chapter 5 : Book of Daniel Explained

Definition of Views/Interpretations: Allegorical interpretation is an interpretive method (exegesis), which assumes that the Bible has various levels of meaning and tends to focus on the spiritual sense (which includes the allegorical sense), the moral (or topological, relating to, or involving biblical interpretation stressing moral metaphor.

If the claims of the book are taken at face value, it was written during the lifetime of Daniel at various periods between the time he was captured and the third year of Cyrus to B. The dates of the three kings mentioned in the book are well known: Nebuchadnezzar - B. The interpretation of the book can be determined only by understanding its historical background. Nabopolassar was succeeded by his son Nebuchadnezzar in B. The Babylonians were then the undisputed masters of the ancient Near East. In the first of three campaigns against Judah, Nebuchadnezzar took Daniel and his three friends, among others, captive to Babylon B. Later campaigns resulted in the taking of 10, captives, including Ezekiel B. Four successive Babylonian kings are not mentioned in Daniel: Amel-marduk the Evil-merodach of the Bible; - B. However, the final king of the Empire, Belshazzar B. Cyrus is the only Persian king mentioned in the book. Darius is clearly identified as a Mede and should not be confused with a later Persian king by the same name. The writing of this book has several purposes: The book begins in B. It continues to the eventual demise of Babylonian supremacy n B. After Daniel was transported to Babylon, the Babylonian victors conquered Jerusalem in two further stages B. In both takeovers, they deported more Jewish captives. Daniel passionately remembered his home, particularly the temple at Jerusalem, almost 70 years after having been taken away from it 6: Daniel is also mentioned by Ezekiel compare Earlier, Isaiah and other faithful prophets of God had also trumpeted the danger. When Assyrian power had ebbed by B. Israel of the northern kingdom had earlier fallen to Assyria in B. He then will defeat all foes and raise His covenant people to blessing in His glorious millennial kingdom. Historical â€” Theological Themes: The key verses are 2: Chapter 1 , but was providentially working His sure purposes toward an eventual full display of His King, the exalted Christ. He sovereignly allowed Gentiles to dominate Israel, i. These stages in Gentile power are set forth in chapters 2 and 7. He is like a stone in chapter 2 , and like a son of man in chapter 7. In addition, He is the Anointed One Messiah; in chapter 9:

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Chapter 6 : NPR Choice page

The Theological Necessity of an Historical Interpretation of the Bible Mickey Klink III â€” February 14, Because the biblical documents were written in ancient times, in different cultures, and to different peoples, an historical approach to the interpretation of the Bible is deemed necessary.

Books of the New Testament What is the Bible? The Bible is the sacred Book, or collection of books, accepted by the Christian Church as uniquely inspired by God, and thus authoritative, providing guidelines for belief and behavior. But the Bible was not simply dictated word-for-word by God; it is also the work of its many different human authors. The different writing skills, writing styles, personalities, world views, and cultural backgrounds of the human authors can be seen in their works. Many of the New Testament books were originally written as letters rather than as Scripture. The Old Testament contains the sacred writings of the Jews. It was written over the period of roughly B. The Old Testament was originally written in the Hebrew language with a few sections written in the Aramaic language. There was no "official" list of accepted books of Jewish scripture until around A. This revision accounts for the fact that Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians use slightly different versions of the Old Testament. Jesus Christ, the central figure of Christianity, was born a Jew and practiced Judaism all His earthly life. Christianity began as a sect of Judaism and only emerged as a separate religion after large numbers of Gentiles had been converted. The Jewish Scripture had predicted the coming of a savior, the Messiah, and Jesus fulfilled that role. So it is natural that Christians would retain the Jewish Scripture as part of their Bible. What is the difference between Protestant and Catholic Bibles? Sometime around B. The first few of these descendants migrated to Egypt to escape a famine in their own land. After many generations they had greatly increased their numbers but had become enslaved to the Egyptians. God sent a great leader and prophet, Moses, to lead the Hebrews out of captivity and into the Promised Land of Israel. During this time God gave Moses the Ten Commandments which are still considered the basis for a moral life by both Jews and Christians. In addition to the Ten Commandments, the Old Testament lists many other laws about circumcision, dietary restrictions, blood sacrifices, Sabbath observance, tithing, social welfare, crimes, social behavior, armies, qualifications of leaders, etc. These laws regulated almost every aspect of Hebrew life. God intended for the Israelites to live according to His commandments and to show the truth of God to all the world Genesis However, time and again, the Israelites lost sight of their mission and lapsed into idolatry, sin or narrow-minded nationalism. On these occasions, God called prophets, such as Elijah, Samuel, Jonah, Isaiah and many others, to lead them back to the right path. The Old Testament writings make no attempt to hide the fact that the Israelites and their leaders had many failings and flaws. Yet, through these flawed people, God was able to accomplish His purposes in the world. The later Hebrew prophets foresaw the coming of a Messiah meaning "anointed one" , a king who would usher in a golden era of peace and prosperity. All the New Testament books were written in the Greek language over the period of about 50 to A. None of the New Testament books were originally written as part of a Christian Bible, but they were read at church services for instruction in the faith. The collection of books we know as the New Testament emerged in the late second century, A. The church leaders accepted books they believed were based on eyewitness accounts of the events narrated, while rejecting many other early Christian writings. Eventually, the 27 books which form the present New Testament, along with the Old Testament books, became the Christian Bible as we know it today. Jesus was born sometime between 6 and 4 B. He lived an ordinary life for 30 years, and then He began His ministry among the Jews. Jesus traveled from town to town, healing the sick and preaching about the coming kingdom of God. He promised a wonderful eternal life after death for those who put their trust in God and obey His commandments. He taught the way to victory is not through force and violence, but through love, humility, and service to mankind. Jesus was not the type of "Messiah" the Jews had expected, and many of them rejected Jesus and His teachings. The religious establishment of Israel saw Jesus as a threat. His claims of divine authority and His refusal to follow

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some of their religious rules were usurping their authority over the people. At the end of 40 days, He ascended to heaven, returning to God, His Father. Throughout the New Testament, Jesus is portrayed as the Son of God, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah, and as the means of our personal salvation from the power of sin and death. Jesus taught that love of God and love of other people are the two "Greatest Commandments" that should totally guide our lives. He taught obedience to God and love for all people, both Jews and Gentiles, and even for enemies! Jesus did not abolish the moral and ethical laws that had been in effect from the time of Moses. He affirmed and expanded upon those principles, but He said obedience must be from the heart attitudes and intentions rather than just technical observance of the letter of the law. Jesus and His apostles gave us a radically new understanding of the true intent of the Old Testament Law; they brought a new era of the rule of love for all people and spiritual truth instead of rule by law. The young Christian communities suffered much persecution from the Jewish religious establishment and from the Roman Empire. Saul, a member of the Jewish religious establishment, was one of the fiercest persecutors of Christians. One day, while on the road to Damascus, Saul saw a blinding light and Jesus spoke to him saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? Now known as Paul, he became a zealous Christian missionary and extended Christianity outside Judaism, founding many Christian communities in the Gentile world. Paul wrote many letters to the people of the churches he had founded. He explained his beliefs about Jesus, instructed them in proper modes of worship, and sometimes chastised them for moral lapses. He taught that the way to salvation and eternal life is through faith in Jesus Christ and high moral standards, not through obedience to the Old Testament Law. The Jews of that time believed that holiness could be achieved by obeying about rules derived from the Old Testament Law. But the Gentile Christians did not share that tradition and disputes arose about whether or not it was necessary to follow those rules. Christian leaders, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, decided that the ceremonial and legal aspects of the Old Testament Law - circumcision, dietary restrictions, blood sacrifices, Sabbath observance and many other rules - are not binding on Christians.

Unity of the Bible

Despite the diversity of the Bible books and their separation in time, there are several unifying themes that run through both the Old and New Testaments: There is only one true God. He created all that is the universe and takes an active, ongoing and loving role in its maintenance. God loves His people of all races, nationalities and religions, and seeks their love in return. God created men and women with the power to choose between good and evil. We are called to do good by serving God and respecting our fellow human beings of the world. Evil is a constant temptation that we must do our best to resist. God seeks the salvation of all people, individually and collectively, from the power of sin and evil. God has intervened directly in human affairs and has also sent the prophets and, finally, His Son Jesus, the Messiah or Christ, to help us with that salvation.

Bible Interpretation

The Bible never tells the details of exactly how God inspired the human authors of the Bible, and this has led to much debate and differences of opinion about interpretation.

Traditional Interpretation

Throughout most of the Christian era, Bible reading and Bible interpretation were confined to religious professionals. Until the fifteenth century, the Bible was available only in Latin. Even when the Bible was translated into other languages, the scarcity and high cost of Bibles kept them out of the hands of ordinary people. During this era, the Bible was interpreted according to church beliefs and traditions. There was little or no attempt made to determine the original meanings of the Scripture. Difficult passages "were interpreted as having a figurative meaning, so that they convey, through a kind of code, deeper truths about God, the spiritual life, or the church. At the same time, the Bible was often being studied and critiqued as ordinary literature rather than as the Word of God. Some Christians felt their faith was threatened by these apparent challenges to the authority of the Bible. In reaction, the fundamentalist movement asserted the inerrancy of Scripture: Everything in the Bible must be absolutely, literally, scientifically and historically true. Anything less would be unworthy of God. Any apparent conflict between the Bible and another source science, history, etc.

Modern Interpretation

The mainstream of Bible interpretation today is based on hermeneutics [her meh NEWT icks], the science and art of Bible interpretation. Hermeneutics attempts to determine what message the author intended to convey and how it would have been understood in

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its original historical and cultural setting. This involves a lot of specialized knowledge of the original Bible languages, literary styles and figures of speech, as well as the history, culture, and current events and issues of the time and place where it was written. Rather than forcing Bible interpretation to fit into a particular theological framework, such as church doctrine or strict literalism, hermeneutics attempts to draw out the true meaning as it was originally intended. Once we know what a Bible passage originally meant, we can prayerfully apply that knowledge to our lives in the modern world. How to Study the Bible , Should the Bible be interpreted literally? Bible Translations During the first centuries A. In a Latin translation of the Old and New Testaments was completed. This version, known as the Vulgate, became the standard Bible of Christianity for many centuries. Several other English versions followed, and the beloved King James Version was published in 1611. None of the original manuscripts of the Old Testament or New Testament are known to exist; the best available sources are hand-made copies of copies. However, developments in archaeology and Biblical scholarship have made possible a number of modern, more accurate English translations of the scriptures. These newer versions are translated from the best available ancient Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, rather than from the King James Version or the Latin Vulgate. Books of the Old Testament The Pentateuch.

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Chapter 7 : History of the Bible: How The Bible Came To Us

The modern Bible is the product of translations and interpretations that span centuries. But a true understanding of its meaning should take into account its origins in Jewish culture, according.

Critique Of Interpretations of 1 Timothy 2: The following sections will delineate the disadvantages pointed out by the critics of each view as well as present any responses of supporters to such criticisms. Physical Salvation or Deliverance Physiological: The second problem concerns the sense of *swqhvsetai* assumed for this interpretation. The verb occurs six additional times in the Pastoral Epistles. Four of those occurrences unquestionably refer to spiritual salvation 1 Tim 1: The idea of physical safety in childbirth is then left unmotivated with the context pointing rather to the need for spiritual salvation. The same arguments mentioned above therefore also apply here: Though this interpretation recognizes deliverance from temptation to a specific sin, it underplays the spiritual and eschatological significance of the word as used elsewhere. Though it occurs only here in the New Testament, there is evidence that the term deals with the activity and fact of bearing children rather than to a single, specific childbirth. The related verb in 5: A fourth disadvantage involves the early patristic support for this interpretation, which is not as clear as it might seem and only surfaces in the Latin Fathers, not the Greek Fathers. Some type of figurative use of this word is almost necessary to make sense of the verse, so the suggestion by the Christological view must be taken seriously. *Diav* does not normally carry the proposed concessional meaning of "even though" or "in spite of," though the attendant circumstances use of the preposition under whose head the concessional use falls is more common. As was stated earlier, the context of verses does not exactly echo the curse language of Gen 3: Furthermore, even if the connection is implied, the curse of Gen 3 was in the accompanying pain of childbirth and did not indicate that the entire event of bearing children be viewed as a curse. With only four debatable parallel passages 1 Cor 3: Critics argue there is little grammatical support beyond these few verses for taking *diav* as having a sense of attendant circumstance, meaning "in the experience of," and find no grammatical support within the Pastoral Epistles. Secondly, the line between this usage and the instrumental usage of the preposition can be quite thin, and in the context of 1 Tim 2: A third critique concerns this understanding of *teknogoniva*" as covering a broad range of ideas including both childbirth and motherhood. Arguments exist for limiting the meaning of this term to the act of childbearing, and these will be considered more fully in the perseverance section. Many supporters would agree with Marshall that a good paraphrase of the verse would be, "She will be finally saved by fulfilling her domestic role the bearing and nurture of children. Porter agrees in the most part with the perseverance interpretation, but differs on one important issue. First, he suggests that the most reliable extra-biblical information on this term points to a specified meaning restricted to childbirth. Second, he points to the use of the verb form in 1 Tim 5: Third, in 1 Tim 5: Finally, in all of these passages, there is no moral, spiritual, or theological quality attributed to any of these actions, they are all merely listed as specific and definable duties of a woman. Porter concludes that the fundamental assumption of 1 Tim 2: The main clause of the verse, however, further equates the earthly function of bearing children with eschatological, salvific reward. *Swqhvsetai* is a passive verb, while this interpretation presents a distinct action on part of the subject. The "spiritual children" interpretation is greatly criticized and enjoys few supporters today. This proposal for 1 Tim 2: First, such an understanding only compounds the theological difficulties with this verse. The idea of connecting the salvation of a mother to the faithfulness of her children is simply incompatible with New Testament and Pauline teachings on salvation. Second, the switch from singular to plural verb forms in the verse does not necessitate a reference to the children in the conditional clause nor demand a change in subjects at all. Such a change in number as is found in this passage is characteristic of paraenetic style and does not here support a change in subject from the main clause to the conditional clause. The denial of Pauline authorship is considered by many to be unconvincing, though a full discussion of the issues is beyond the scope of this paper. Similar thoughts appear in 1 Cor Equally problematic is the idea of censoring this passage

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because its message does not conform to contemporary norms and ideas. This proposal seems to lead to the proverbial "slippery slope" and prompts one to question where the practice of purging unwanted passages from Scripture might end. It is also difficult to find evidence for the passage in 1 Timothy as a quotation from 1 Corinthians. There is significant word change and thus it seems implausible that the author of 1 Timothy would study the Corinthians passage so well without noting the further commentary on the ideas in Was he responding to Jewish teachings or some other false teachings circulating at Ephesus? Thus, these theories do not stand well alone, but are more helpful when joined with other explanations and proposals. Proverbial Statement The problem with the proverbial statement view is the difficulty in either proving or disproving its claims. Though it is certainly true that the Pastoral Epistles are especially replete with such statements, most are identified with a marker which seems to be absent in this case. Midrash Connection Theory Again, the major obstacle to the Proverbs Midrash theory is its highly speculative nature. Hendrickson Publishers, , 75; and William D. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Nelson, , Clark, , ; and Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, The Riddle of 1 Timothy 2: An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2: Augsburg, , See Kstenberger, "God-Ordained Roles," , for an overview of the history of interpretation of this verse. See chapter four under "The Sense of Teknogoniva" in 1 Tim 2: Clark, , A Review" under the subsection discussing the modal usage for more discussion of this use. Paul to Timothy and Titus, trans. Clark , , Frederick William Danker Chicago: University of Chicago Press, , University Press, , See also Huther, Handbook,

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Chapter 8 : Books of the Bible List Order - Complete New and Old Testament

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Who is the author of the work? Is the attributed author the actual author, or is the work pseudonymous? When, where, and under what circumstances was the work written? Who were the original recipients? Where did they live? Traditional Literary Criticism What words are used, and what range of meanings do they have? What images and symbols are used, and what do they signify? What characters appear in the story? What do we know about them? How are the characters related to one another in the story? Comparison of Translations Are there any significant differences between various modern translations? When were these translations done, using which translation philosophies? Which ancient Hebrew or Greek texts underlie the various translations? Has anything been lost or obscured in the process of translation? Textual Criticism Are there any variant readings in the ancient manuscripts? Are the variants negligible mere spelling or significant affecting meaning? Can the variants be explained as intentional changes, or as accidental ones? How do the literary or historical contexts help explain the variant readings? Source Criticism Does the text have any underlying source or sources? Which version of a source was used, in case there is more than one? What do the sources actually say and mean in their original contexts? How are the sources used quoted, paraphrased, adapted? Does the text follow or diverge from the usual expectations for this genre? In what social context would texts of this genre have been used? Redaction Criticism How has the author used the source s in shaping this text? What particular views or theological emphases does this author show? Socio-Historical Criticism If the story claims to be historical, what really happened? What social, historical, or cultural information can be gleaned from the text? What background information is necessary to better understand the text? What was life like for the common people, not just the ruling elites? What message is the author trying to convey? Is the author attempting to instruct, inspire, defend, or persuade the reader? What rhetorical techniques does he use to achieve his goals? Narrative Analysis Who are the characters in the story? What roles do they play? What is the plot sequence? What narrative time is covered? Semiotic Analysis What deeper patterns of meaning are conveyed by the words and symbols? Where does this text belong in the literary context of the entire Bible? How does its location in the Canon affect the meaning of this text? Using Jewish Interpretative Traditions How do traditional Jewish methods of interpretation read this text? Are there any parallel or similar stories in Rabbinic literature? Do Jewish and Christian interpretations of this text differ significantly? Is the text interpreted differently by various churches and denominations? How has the text been interpreted in art, music, liturgy, and popular culture? What insights from Sociology can help in the interpretation of the text? What patterns of human social behavior are evident in the text? Cultural Anthropology Approach What models from Cultural Anthropology can help us understand the text? How can the text be interpreted using various theories from Psychology? Can the text help us understand the human psyche better?

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Chapter 9 : Summary and History of the Bible

The Old Testament (also known as the Jewish Tanakh) is the first 39 books in most Christian Bibles. The name stands for the original promise with God (to the descendants of Abraham in particular) prior to the coming of Jesus Christ in the New Testament (or the new promise).

They start out with good intentions but stop reading before long because they just cannot understand what they are reading. Mercifully, God does show us how we are to interpret the Scriptures so that we might understand what He is saying to us. We will now examine what God Himself tells us about how the Bible is to be understood. The Bible alone, and in its entirety is the revealed Word of God: The Bible must be our only authority. We cannot use the vain thoughts from our own sin-tainted minds to develop the rules for interpreting Scripture. Every word of Scripture, every character of the original autographs, is perfect and true: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Thus, if we find passages that seem to contradict each other, we can know that we are not understanding one of those passages correctly. God often uses these apparent contradictions to call our attention to an important teaching of Scripture, forcing us to study more diligently. The Bible is the power of God unto salvation: God will not save anyone apart from the power of His Word. This is a matter of the greatest importance to all mankind. We can only understand the Bible if God the Holy Spirit opens our spiritual eyes and our minds and hearts to give us understanding of the infinite Words of God: The Bible explains that we are to compare Scripture with Scripture spiritual things with spiritual to understand the Bible: God tells us to compare Scripture with Scripture spiritual with spiritual. He does not tell us to compare historical with historical, or grammatical with grammatical as many theologians teach today. Even a child can understand the Bible, sufficient to salvation, if God gives the understanding: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. More examplesâ€”Jesus spoke almost entirely in parables to the general public: But without a parable spake he not unto them: The Bible testifies of itself that it is filled from beginning to end with the message of Jesus, the Gospel of Salvation, and that many Old Testament stories are actually historical parables which symbolically point us to Christ: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. As we begin to see Christ, we can know that we are coming to the true meaning of a verse. The entire Bible contains a deeper Spiritual meaning hidden as parables and allegories within verses that appear to be simple historical or moral statements. Every historical and moral statement of the Bible is still absolutely true, but we can learn even more by looking at the symbolic Spiritual message of these verses. Jesus had to rebuke His followers, and Pharisees alike for trying to take His words literally when He meant them symbolically with a deeper spiritual meaning. Just a few examples: And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: She mistook literal water for spiritual, living water. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? Jesus here says that the Old Testament Scriptures wrote that Christ had to be killed and resurrected the third day. However, that is not explicitly written anywhere in the Old Testamentâ€”this is only stated allegorically as in Jonah 1: Christ points to this Old Testament verse, showing that it is allegorically describing His resurrection in Matthew Thus, Christ shows us that to correctly understand the story of Jonah, we must see what it is telling us about the resurrection of Christ. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned

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back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? In this account we see one of the clearest indications of how we must understand the spiritual aspect of the Scriptures. Here, Christ commands the ten lepers to show themselves to the priest as the Old Testament law commanded. This was a reference to ceremonial laws in Leviticus He shall be brought unto the priest. Jesus rebuked the other nine lepers for following the literal command of God while ignoring the true spiritual intent of His command to go show themselves to Christ the High Priest and to give thanks. The Bible is a Spiritual book and is not to be read just as a book of moral teachings, or history, or poetry, or wisdom. So we can summarize the key teachings of God regarding how we are to study and understand the Bible: Always pray before studying the Bible, since it is only God the Holy Spirit who can open our eyes and give us any understanding of His infinite Word. Know that every statement in Scripture is written by God and is completely true; therefore, it will be in harmony with every other statement. If there is an apparent contradiction, we do not yet understand one of the statements correctly. We are to compare Scripture with Scripture. The Bible is its own dictionary and defines its own terms. This means that as we read the Bible, we should make a note when we see a verse or idea that seems related to other verses we have read. Studying these verses together can help us to understand them better, since each one may contain different clues to the overall meaning. Another implication is that we do not look to Greek or Hebrew dictionaries to find the meaning of a Biblical word; we must instead see how that Greek or Hebrew word is used by God elsewhere in the Bible. Many other free Bible languages can be downloaded from the Help menu of this software. These tools can help us find all of the verses where a particular Greek or Hebrew word is used, without requiring us to learn the original languages. Any symbolic or allegorical meaning must ultimately point to Christ and His Gospel, and must be consistent with everything else in Scripture. Parables and allegories must not be pressed too far—being symbols and shadows of the truth that they point us to, they sometimes are not applicable to every aspect of the underlying truth. This means that they teach some aspects of the substance they point to, but may be incomplete or imply some other aspect that cannot be applied. This is where the principle in item 2 must be applied—making sure that the conclusions reached are consistent with everything else in Scripture on that subject. It is my meditation all the day. Join us for live fellowship over the internet, or download free Bible studies and tracts — visit: Write to us at: