

▪ **Principles of Biblical Interpretation** (Louis Berkhof):

“Hermeneutics is the science that teaches us the principles, laws, and methods of interpretation. We must distinguish between general and special hermeneutics.

The former applies to interpretation of all kinds of writings; the latter to that of certain definite kinds of literature productions, such as laws, history, prophecy, poetry. ”

Hermeneutica Sacra has a very special character, because it deals with a book that is unique in the realm of literature, viz., with the Bible as the inspired Word of God. It is only when we recognize the principle of divine inspiration of the Bible that we can maintain the theological character of Hermeneutica Sacra.”

▪ **General Hermeneutics**

1. What Kind Of Passage Is This? (Type of literature – genre)

➤ ***Is It History?***

JUDGES 3:7-11
JUDGES 9:8-15

GENESIS
JONAH
MATTHEW

If *history*, then its purpose is:

Hence our question should be:

➤ ***Is It Poetry?***

JOB 38:8

PSALM 104:3

ISAIAH 40:12

PSALM 93:1
PSALM 96:10
PSALM 104:5

➤ ***Is It Prophecy?***

○ Forth-tell (**MICAH 3:9-12**)

○ Foretell (**MICAH 4:1-5**)

Refers to: (i)
(ii)
(iii)

Some questions to ask

** *What is the context? Who was the prophet?*

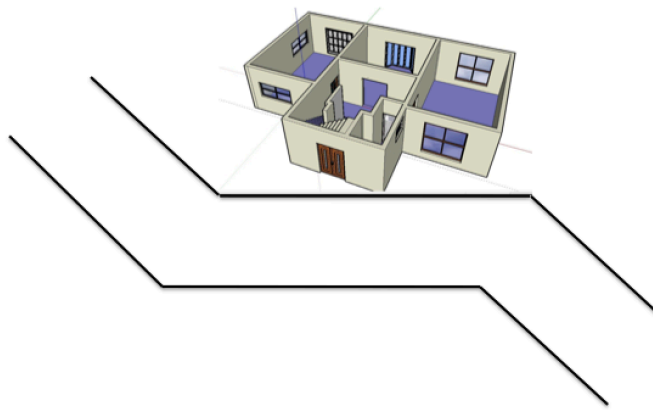
** *What was the relevance . . .*

** *Is the prophecy . . .*

** *Is the language . . .*

** *How is it understood . . .*

2. What Is The Context?



➤ ***The Room – the Biblical Context***

REVELATION 3:20

JOSHUA 24:15

➤ ***The House – the Historical Context***

ISAIAH 7

LUKE 2:1-3

PSALM 51

MATTHEW 5:41

➤ ***The Street – the Cultural Context***

3. What Is The Plain Meaning?

- *What is the grammatical sense?*

1 JOHN 3:9 (NKJV, ESV, NASB, NIV)

- *What is the normal meaning of the word?*

JOHN 21:15-17

Cf. 2 TIMOTHY 4:10, JOHN 15:9, JOHN 5:20

- *How are the words used in this passage and elsewhere by the same author?*

LUKE 14:26

ISAIAH 9:6

LUKE 16:13

ISAIAH 10:21

- *How are the words used outside the Bible?*

- *What does the rest of the Bible say about this matter?*

1 KINGS 17:1

JAMES 5:17

- *What do the commentaries say?*

4. Are We Dealing With Figures Of Speech?

- *Is it a simile?*

(An expression making a comparison between 2 things using words 'like' or 'as')

1 PETER 5:8

PSALM 92:12

➤ ***Is it a metaphor?***

(A phrase which describes one thing by stating another thing with which it can be compared, without using words 'like' or 'as')

LUKE 13:32

PSALM 18:2

**** SOME EXERCISES ****

Identify the simile:

Psalm 102:6,7 *I am like a pelican of the wilderness;
I am like an owl of the desert.
I lie awake, and am like a sparrow alone on the housetop.*

What is the message?

Psalm 127:4 *Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.*

What is the message?

Psalm 133 *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!*

*It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard,
The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.*

*It is like the dew of Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing-- life forevermore.*

What is the message?

Identify the metaphor:

Psalm 84:11 *For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
The LORD will give grace and glory;
No good thing will He withhold
From those who walk uprightly.*

What is the message?

Read **Psalm 93**.

Identify the metaphors used, and write down the message.

Identify the figures of speech and express it in literal language:

Psalm 18:33 *He makes my feet like the feet of deer,
And sets me on my high places.*

Identity:

Message:

Psalm 72:6 *He shall come down like rain upon the grass before
mowing, like showers that water the earth.*

Identity:

Message:

Psalm 89:36-37 *His seed shall endure forever,
And his throne as the sun before Me;
It shall be established forever like the moon,
Even like the faithful witness in the sky."*

Identity:

Message:

Psalm 114:4 *The mountains skipped like rams,
The little hills like lambs.*

Identity:

Message:

Psalm 59:7 *Indeed, they belch with their mouth;
Swords are in their lips;
For they say, "Who hears?"*

Identity:

Message:

Psalm 42:1 *As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So pants my soul for You, O God.*

Identity:

Message:

➤ ***Is it an allegory?***

(An allegory is an extended metaphor; words are used in a metaphorical sense)

PSALM 80:8-13

JOHN 10:1-16

➤ ***Is it an anthropomorphism?***

(Bodily members and physical activities attributed to God)

ISAIAH 59:1

PSALM 89:13

➤ ***Is it a hyperbole?***

(The use of a form of words to make something sound bigger than it is; exaggeration)

JUDGES 7:12

PSALM 6:6

➤ ***Is it a litotes?***

(A way of expressing a thought by its opposite; an understatement)

REVELATION 3:5

➤ ***Is it a metonymy***

(An expression where one thing is used to stand for another thing, the relations between them could be cause-effect, progenitor-posterity, subject-attribute, sign-thing signified)

ISAIAH 22:22

LUKE 16:29

➤ ***Is it a synecdoche***

(An expression where one thing is used to stand for another thing, whereby there is a certain identity between what is expressed and what is meant; the whole is put for the part or the part is put for the whole)

PSALM 44:6

➤ ***Is it apocalyptic language? (Symbol)***

REVELATION 13:1

**** SOME EXERCISES ****

Refer to the *allegory* in **PSALM 80**:

What is the vine / vineyard?

Who is the boar and wild beast?

What is the message?

Identify the figures of speech, and write down its message:

PSALM 107:26

PSALM 17:7

PSALM 118:10

PSALM 51:17

PSALM 32:8

PSALM 34:16

PSALM 5:9

PSALM 87:1-2

2 SAMUEL 7:16

1 CORINTHIANS 15:9

JUDGES 3:24 (KJV)

PSALM 122:2

PSALM 24:4

MATTHEW 16:17

MATTHEW 16:18

▪ **Special Hermeneutics**

1. The Bible Is *The Word Of God*

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

2 PETER 1:19-21

ACTS 4:24-25

2. The Bible Is The Word Of God, *Revealed Progressively*

HEBREWS 1:1-2 ~ ¹*In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,* ²*but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.*

GENESIS 1:26 ----- MATTHEW 28:19

LEVITICUS 16:29-31 ----- HEBREWS 10:4

3. The Bible Is *One Big Redemptive Story*

LUKE 24:26-27

LUKE 24:44-45

LUKE 4:16-21

JOHN 5:39, 45-47

Analogy of Scripture

Richard Muller: *"The interpretation of unclear, difficult, or ambiguous passages of Scripture by comparison with clear and unambiguous passages that refer to the same teaching or event."*

ISAIAH 53 ←→ 1 PETER 2:21-25

Analogy of Faith

Richard Muller: *"The use of a general sense of the meaning of Scripture constructed from the clear or unambiguous loci (i.e. places) as the basis for interpreting unclear or ambiguous texts."*

ACTS 20:28

Allusion

Bryan D. Estelle: *"An allusion is usually defined as a tacit or indirect reference to another text . . . Allusion in general merely makes indirect reference to known facts."*

1 KINGS 4:20 ----> GENESIS 22:17

PSALM 8:5-8 -----> GENESIS 1:28

HEBREWS 1:2 ----> PSALM 2:7-8

God is the Author of Scripture. As such, the Bible is one cohesive story and this enables the sharing of words, concepts and themes from earlier passages by later passages in the Bible.

Type/Typology

Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms: *"Differing from a symbol or an allegory, a typology is a representation of an actual, historical reference. According to Christian exegesis, biblical typology deals with the parallels between actual, historical (usually OT) figures or events in salvation history and their later, analogous fulfilment. Often NT events and figures are typologically understood and interpreted according to an OT pattern (e.g., creation and the new creation, Adam and Christ, the exodus and NT concepts of salvation). On this basis typology became one of the four prevalent ways (together with the literal, the analogical and the spiritual) of interpreting Scripture in the Middle Ages."*

James Hamilton: *"The two key features of biblical typology are historical correspondence and escalation. The historical correspondence has to do with the way that real people, events, or institutions match one other — Noah and Moses really were preserved through waters in which others died, for instance. The escalation has to do with the way that as we move from the initial instance, which we might call the archetype, through the instalments in the pattern that reinforce the significance of the archetype, we gather steam in the uphill climb until the type finds fulfilment in its ultimate expression. The import increases along the way from archetype to fulfilment."*

Richard Barcellos:

"First, a type is a historical person, place, institution, or event that was designed by God to point to a future historical person, place, institution, or event. An example would be the sacrificial system revealed to us in the Old Testament. That institution was designed by God to point to Christ's once for all sacrifice.

Second, that to which types point is always greater than the type itself. In other words, there is some sort of escalation in the anti-type. For example, “the blood of bulls and goats” could point to Christ but they could not and did not do what Christ’s sacrifice did—take away sins.

Third, types are both like and unlike their anti-types. There is both correspondence and escalation. The blood of animals was shed; the blood of Christ was shed. The blood of animals did not take away sins; the blood of Christ takes away sins.

Fourth, anti-types tell us more about how their types function as types. The blood of Christ takes away sins; the blood of animals pointed to that.”

➤ Adam and Christ

ROMANS 5:14 ~ *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*

Adam (type)

Christ (Anti-type)

➤ David and Christ

- **JOHN 2:13-17** ↔ **PSALM 69:7-9**
- **JOHN 15:25** ↔ **PSALM 35:19, 69:4**
- **JOHN 19:24, 28** ↔ **PSALM 22:18, 69:21**

➤ Exodus and Salvation

COLOSSIANS 1:12-14 ~ ¹² *Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.* ¹³ *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,* ¹⁴ *in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

“Paul interprets the redemption of sinners by Jesus as the anti-type of the redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage.

Just as the Israelites were in a dark and oppressive place, so sinners redeemed by Jesus were trapped in the domain of darkness. Just as God liberated Israel from bondage, so Christ liberates sinners from bondage. Just as God took the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them an inheritance—the Promised Land, so God takes sinners out of the bondage of sin and qualifies them for a future inheritance. Just as Israel was transferred from Egypt to Canaan, so sinners are transferred from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of God’s beloved Son. Just as God ruled over Israel, so God places believing sinners in the kingdom of his beloved Son to be ruled by him. We can extend the connections by noting that just as Israel was given a memorial meal to remember their deliverance from bondage—the Passover, so the church has been given a memorial meal—the Lord’s Supper. And just as Israel was given a memorial day—the Sabbath, so the church has been given a memorial day—the Lord’s Day. Paul sees what the Old Testament typified in Israel, finding its fulfilment in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The deliverance from Egyptian bondage illustrates God’s power to save against all human odds; the deliverance of sinners by Jesus Christ does the same though on a much greater level and with more at stake. Israel was delivered to a this-world land with sinners in it; believers in Christ are delivered to a that-world land (i.e., Emmanuel’s land, the new heavens and new earth) with no sinners in it.”

Richard Barcellos

4. The Bible Is *The Final Authority Concerning Its Interpretation*

GENESIS 21:9-11

GALATIANS 4:21-31

JOEL 2: 28-32

ACTS 2:16-21

AMOS 9:11-12

ACTS 15:15-17

JOHN 2:18-22