

Helps to study the Bible

(Presented here not necessarily in the order of importance)

In General

The Almighty Sovereign Creator Power of all things has provided us with at (2) two diverse references (or records) to use for revealing Himself to His wonderful Creation. Both of these records are of equal importance, and must be in complete harmony with each other.

The First record (the natural record), is also called a "General Revelation" and it deals with the physical, the laws of physics and of nature, which govern the universe, the globe, and all of creation; in the ground, on the ground, in the air, in the waters, and in the heavens, and beyond. It is also in the record of the secular writings or historical evidence as recorded by man in general, apart from the religious writings.

The Second record (the written word), is also called a "Special Revelation" and it deals with the written account of creation as found in the Hebrew Bible. It includes the Universe, the creation of man, the formation of Adam, and then almost exclusively with particular persons, families and people groups, and their descendants the ancient Biblical Israelites. The written record deals with the callings, the Contracts, and the Covenant the Creator made with them, and their descendants, followed by the promises for the keeping of the Covenant and the penalties for violating them. These apply only to the descendants of those under the original contract. The writing of this record is commonly called the Tan'akh (Hebrew Bible).

These two records, the "General Revelation" and the "Special Revelation" must be in harmony with each other for they both originate from the same Almighty Sovereign Creator Power being and Life-force Essence, who is called YHWH (Yahweh) is not an Almighty of confusion.

The Foundation for proper Scriptural understanding

Our Bible studies are based upon the foundational writings of the Tan'akh (Hebrew Bible), omitting the Book of Esther and Job, Ruth, and like Folk-Tales. These are fictional writings without historical basis and void of any Yahweh inspired words. We also accept and include in our foundational writings, the historical Greek manuscripts (the ones most likely to have originally been penned in Hebrew), commonly referred to as the New Testament. Included as foundational writings are the historical events and the teachings of the First Century Prophet to Israel who is named Yahshua HaMashiach (the Messiah) commonly, known as Jesus the Christ. We also include some subsequent writings that may have been authored by his appointed and taught Apostles. We do not accept the writings of the Pharisee Paul/Saul of Tarsus as reliable or authoritative for formulating doctrine, and do not recognize him as having been numbered among the Apostles (Acts 1:21-26). We use Paul/Saul's writings as an example of First Century pagan influence and beliefs that misrepresent and color the historical Yahwistic beliefs originating from our paternal ancient forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel, as presented in the Tan'akh.

The statement that "All Scripture is inspired by G-d" is false, (II Tim, 3:16). The word "is" is an incorrect addition to this Greek text. All "Scripture" (Latin for writing) is NOT inspired by Yahweh. Scripture "records" words that were spoken by the inspiration of Yahweh, but also records words that were spoken by many that were clearly NOT inspired by Yahweh. Here discernment is critical in order to avoid complete confusion.

Yahweh (G-d) is Aloah (Power); Yahweh is the Almighty Sovereign Creator Power of heaven and earth and of all things (Gen. 1:1-31, 2:21-25). Yahweh is commonly referred to in error by the substitute word of G-d. Yahweh has declared Himself to be Echad (One), (Deut. 6:4). He has further revealed Himself to be Father and the Ruach HaKodesh (Set-apart Spirit); Father in Deut. 32:6; Ps. 2:7, 68:5, 89:26.

The Father and Spirit are one and the same being. We reject the Christian Trinity, or the belief of "three persons" in the one G-dhead as foreign to the Bible and of pagan origin. We reject the theory that Yahshua (J-sus) the son is Yahweh the Son in another physical form, or that Yahweh the Almighty Creator has ever appeared on earth in any physical form.

Yahweh is the Almighty Sovereign Creator Power is Ruler of all that has existed, exists, and will ever exist. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, unchangeable, all-knowing, is above all, and to whom only we owe our reverence and worship (Deut. 6:14-15). He is in full and absolute control of His creation at all times (Isa. 46:10), the Originator of both good and evil(bad), Isa. 45:7, 54:16; Prov.16: 4.

The Ruach HaKodesh (set-apart Spirit) is the mighty power and influence of the Almighty Sovereign Creator Power Spirit Yahweh. Our Father Yahweh IS Spirit, and has no physical body (Gen. 1:1). There are not two Spirits in the heavens called Yahweh, there is just one.

The Prophet Yahshua is an anointed one, as confirmed by the Greek writings, as attested by his appointed Apostles, by his followers, and by the many witnesses recorded in the Greek writings. He came to preach and announce to Israel the Kingdom (whole counsel) of Yahweh/of heaven, i.e., Kingdom of Yahweh, (Mark 1:14,15), how to seek it and how to enter into it (Matt. 4:16-17,6:33), to teach Torah (Commandments) as revealed to him by the indwelling power of Yahweh's Ruach HaKodesh, and to condemn the Traditions, laws, and doctrines added by men – "Think not that I am come to destroy the Torah, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.[Greek "pleroo" play-ro'-o] i.e. cause to abound (Matt. 5:17-19).

Principles for the proper study of the Bible

1. Face Value system of study:

- a. We must discover what the original words and phrases meant to the original audience, and their intended meaning, then determine what the passage means to us today, or if has any application for us today.
- b. We must discover the intended meaning by the Author, author(s) at face value, the settings, circumstances, and the context of the original writing.
- c. Face value does not mean wooded literalism, and it doesn't mean the building of an understanding based upon a Theological presupposition, or a school(s) of thought, or on acceptable man made understandings developed through time. We must allow the Author, or author(s) of the original or the ancient text to determine the meaning of what was written. Sometimes correct understanding may require reading several passages before and several passages after to get to the answer of a question, or passage.

2. The English Translation:

- a. Every translation of the oldest document in Greek, the Hebrew, or the Aramaic, reflects the biases of the translators. There is no such thing as an existing accurate or correct translation of the manuscripts, or even an original. However, some translations are clearly better than others, (use them all carefully as a reference), to determine complete truth, but never, never take a translation as an authority over a document written in the original language of the Hebrew, Aramaic or the Greek.
- b. One must review word choice, punctuation, word order, terms and terminology, past usage of words, present usage of words, and correct understanding of basic Scriptural words and terms. Most documents written in the original host language do not have punctuation or word structure like the English language does.
- c. The items listed under b, are not clearly and unambiguously indicated in the available Greek or Hebrew. 'Face Value' (and root word meanings) recognizes this fact, and keeps it in mind at all times. This is very important.

3. There are no contradictions in the Bible:

- a. There are no contradictions in the Bible, only the appearance of contradictions through our misunderstanding or by acts of translation. The Bible and nature are always in complete harmony. The Bible must never be pitted against the Bible. Instead, *the Bible must always be harmonized with the Bible.*
- b. Truth is found when all passages dealing with a particular subject fit together. The best and the most accurate understanding accommodate all the passages of a subject. When all passages fit perfectly into one common denominator, and are in harmony with the Physical, you have been revealed truth. If we want to

seek the truth on any subject in the Bible, we must do an exhaustive study of the passages pertaining to the subject in question. Yahweh denounces "smorgasbord style" Bible Study. (Isaiah 28:13).

c. In other words, we are not to go through the Bible randomly collecting parts that by themselves appear to support a particular position, or authenticate a favorite doctrine or belief. Instead, everything the Bible states on a particular subject must be considered and harmonized in order to determine the complete picture, and therefore determine the complete truth. Remember that one passage never trumps or negates the other.

4. To discover meanings:

a. Generally, let The Bible interpret the Bible, let the clear passages translate or interpret the less clear passages when dealing with the same subject.

b. Internal evidence (evidence within the document) is much more valuable than external evidence (outside resources, or a man made commentary).

c. Know "figures of speech" when you see them, determine 'similes' or words conveying a similar meaning.

d. The Allegory, in the Bible makes an actual, historical occurrence represent truth in another realm. i.e., Two women stand for two covenants (Gal. 4:22-23). Actual persons in their everyday lives set fourth truth in the spiritual sphere, for example, in the Bible, trees can represent people.

5. Understand Metaphors, from Greek, "metaphora" (meta 'with' + pherein 'to carry'):

a. Metaphors are used to 'paint word pictures' or an implied comparison, of what the Author has in mind. They are used to enhance his thought(s). Metaphors are frequently used in the Bible especially in Old Covenant prophetic language. Sometimes different metaphors are used to describe the same person, the same thing, or the same event.

b. Different authors may sometime use different words, or different metaphors to describe the same event.

c. When plain sense doesn't make sense, the Bible must be compared with the Bible. The Bibles are always the best dictionary when determining the meanings of a metaphor, or an understanding of a metaphor.

6. Understanding Idioms, from Greek, "idioma" (one's manner of speaking):

a. Idioms are an expression in mannerism, peculiar to a language, which does not always convey the proper sense when literally translated. Most are merely "figures of speech, or unusual expressions, or are phrases or expressions where the meaning cannot be understood from the ordinary meanings of the words in it: For example, "Give in" is an English idiom meaning, "to yield." The Bible as well as all languages is full of idioms and expressions, which are idiomatic.

b. Idioms in the Bible must be recognized, and the meaning identified for proper study and understanding of the verse or passage involved.

7. Figures of Speech

a. Much of the Bible is not true as to "literal fact." Many are not literally true. Some words simply cannot be taken as they stand. "God (Yahweh) is light" is not an actual fact. Literally stated, He is, in the spiritual sphere, as Spirit, and, in some ways like light in the physical realm. But, even though not strictly correct, it is forceful and beautiful to condense into. It is just one way for finite Adamic man to portray an infinite Creator.

b. Figures of speech are of extreme importance in interpretation. In the Reformation a single metaphor, "this is my body," has led to conflicts and divisions which would never have arisen if there had been an elementary knowledge of figurative language. Sometimes the Bible seems to contradict them, because "figures of speech" are taken for facts. These differences disappear when the "figure" is recognized.

c. In seeking to fix the exact significance of a word, only its literal (root word) usage should be consulted. Only in this way the actual meaning appears. The figurative is a departure from the actual meaning. The literal meaning of a word is "one and is constant"; the figurative usage is "diverse and is variable."

8. Political Correctness

- a. There is no such thing as political correctness; Yahweh's word is Yahweh's word. We must never let political correctness determine the truth as outlined in the Bible. Truth is truth, and Yahweh's word is absolute truth.
- b. We must not compromise the truth when dealing with the Bible, or take the liberty to water down a plain understanding in order to please, or not to offend. However, we must always teach, correct, reprove in love and with respect.
- c. Many times we may not find a complete answer to our search, but that is all right. We must be prepared to say, "I don't know," Sometimes there is not one, or any single passage of the Bible that clearly provides an answer to our question, and sometimes the answer may come years later. Is it wrong to formulate an opinion on inconclusive evidence from the Bible? We do not think so, if we have done our best to harmonize with what we have been provided, but such an opinion must never be presented or taught as fact. Yahweh has given us a questioning character; we do not believe it is harmful to formulate opinions, but we should not use opinions as a foundation for doctrine.

9. The Better English Translations:

Although we have discovered that some translations are clearly better than others. All have errors, some deliberate, some with good intent; some errors are made when the meanings of common words (when the translation was first made) changes with time. A good translation must accurately convey the meaning of the original in the 'New' language.

For Translations See: <http://aoycascade.com/Documents/Bible-Translations.pdf>

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