

7 ideas for enriching Bible understanding



The Bible is a rich library
to be savored
over a lifetime.

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Place yourself in the shoes of those who read those documents for the first time

“The aim of good Biblical interpretation is simple: to get at the *plain* meaning of the text.”

-- Gordon Fee

How
do we do that?

TIP

A Bible passage will
not mean what it
never meant.

As we approach the Bible we must deal with ...

1. The historical gap between Bible times and today.

We do not live in 800 B.C.

We don't even live in 33 A.D.



As we approach the Bible we must realize deal with . . .

1. The historical gap

2. Social and cultural gaps

We are not Jews,
nor do we live in
agrarian Mediterranean society



As we approach the Bible text, we must deal with . . .

1. The historical gap
2. Social and cultural gaps

3. Language differences

We aren't reading the Bible in the original languages in which Moses or Paul or others wrote.

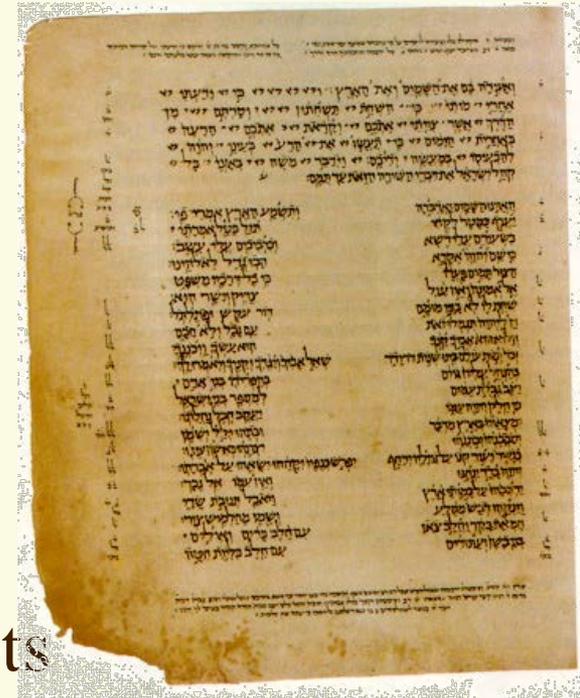
קבוצת צבר בע"מ

τὰ ρήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λελάληκα ὑμῖν πνεῦμά ἐστιν καὶ ζωὴ ἐστιν.

As we approach the Bible text, we must deal with . . .

1. A historical gap
2. Social and cultural gaps
3. Language differences
4. Hand copied manuscripts

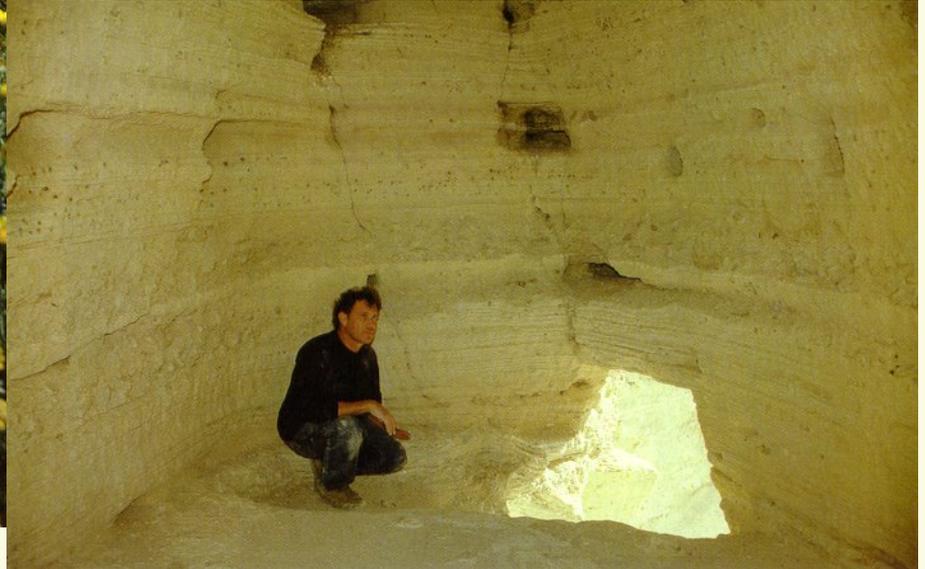
None of the *original* manuscripts written by Paul or Moses or Isaiah have been found.



Qumran Wadi with series of caves



Below: Cave 4 contained
15,000 fragments from 580
documents



As we approach the Bible text, we must deal with . . .

1. A historical gap
2. Social and cultural gaps
3. Language differences
4. Copied manuscripts
5. Incremental (or unfolding) divine revelation

We have the entire Bible; Joshua, for example, only had the material in the first five books.

As we approach the Bible text, we must deal with . . .

1. The historical gap
2. Social and cultural gaps
3. Language differences
4. Copied manuscripts
5. Incremental revelation and growth of human understanding
6. A variety of literary *genre* (types)

Bible literary types (genre)

4 History

4 Laws

4 Biography

4 Riddles

4 Drama

4 Poetry

4 Letters

4 Parables

4 Wisdom

4 Apocalypses

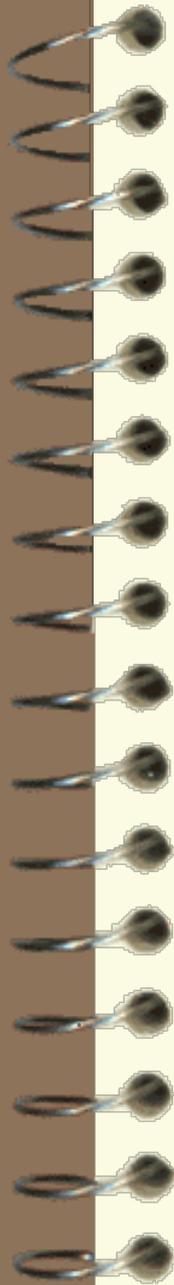
4 Sermons

As we approach the Bible text, we must deal with . .

1. The historical gap
2. Social and cultural gaps
3. Language differences
4. Copied manuscripts
5. Incremental revelation and growth of human understanding
6. A variety of literary *genre* or types

7. Its divine inspiration

The Bible is at the same time both human and divine.



Interpretation of the Bible is shaped by
the tension between:

4 1. Eternal relevance

(“God’s Word never changes!”)

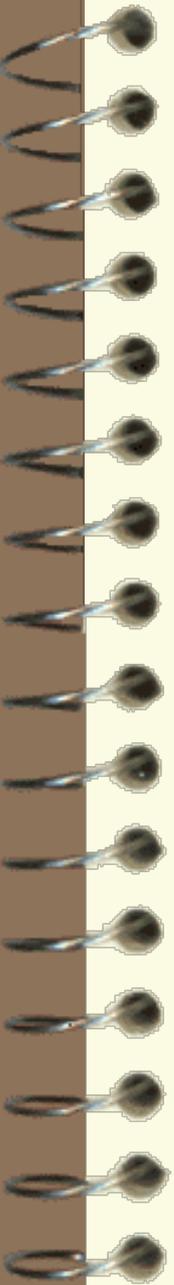
4 2. Historical particularity

(anchored in time)

7 ideas for
enriching Bible
understanding
(End)



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