

“Selected Studies in the Gospels”
Introduction, Part 3

PRESUPPOSITIONS OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

A. Supernatural in Character

1. Since God is the ultimate Author, the Bible is:

a. Authoritative

1) Joshua 8:31

2) Ezra 6:18

3) 1Ki. 2:3; 2Ki. 23:21; 2Chr. 23:18; 25:4; 31:3; 35:12; Ezra 3:2,4; Neh. 8:15; 10:34,36; Dan. 9:13; Mt. 26:24; Mk. 7:6; 14:21; Lk. 2:23; 3:4; Jn. 6:31; 12:14; Acts 7:42; 15:15; Rom. 1:17; 2:24; 3:4; 10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13; 33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 15:3,9,21; 1Cor. 1:31; 2:9; 10:7; 2Cor. 4:13; 8:15; 9:9).

4) John 7:38 (cf., Isaiah 44:3)

b. Trustworthy

1) 2Timothy 3:16-17

B. Natural in Character

1. "Since it is also a human communication, the Bible uses language in its common sense."

a. 2Peter 1:20-21

EXEGESIS/HERMENEUTICS

A. From *hermanuo*— "to translate," *i.e.*, the science of interpretation.

1. Exegesis: text → original author's meaning (*ex*— "out," + *hegeesthai* "lead, guide"), not isogesis (*i.e.*, reading into the text, from *iso*— "equal," a combining form).

2. Hermeneutics: original author's meaning → relevance today.

B. The Bible should be interpreted *normally*—not literally.

1. Literal parts—literally.

a. Genesis 12:1 w/ 12: 4,5

b. Genesis 12:2 w/ 15:1-5

c. Genesis 12:3a w/

1) Genesis 30:27,30

2) Genesis 39:5

3) Isaiah 10:12,13

4) Mt. 25:34,40,45

a) Who are Yeshua's "brothers?"

b) If they are believers, then who are the sheep?

d. Gen. 12:7 w/ Josh 21:43

2. Figurative parts—figuratively, *not* allegorically.

a. Gen. 12:3b w/

1) Acts 3:25,26

2) Gal. 3:6-8

a) "... *justify* the Gentiles"—the word *children* is used *figuratively*.

b. Psalms 85:10

c. Other Examples:

1) Idolatry—Spiritual adultery

2) Elijah the Prophet/John the Baptist

a) Matthew 11:14

3. Figurative/Allegorical ('Spiritualizing') Interpretation.

a. Genesis 24:1-67

—Eliezer's encounter with Rebekah.

b. Matthew 14:13-21

—Yeshua feeds the five-thousand with five (5) loaves of bread and two (2) fish.

c. Matthew 21:1-11

—The triumphal entry.

d. Joshua 5:13-6:27

—The fall of Jericho.

4. Interpretation vs. Application

a. Each text can *only mean one thing*, although it may have many applications.

b. Authorial intent

—What the *original author* meant when he wrote to the *original audience*.

c. "Hidden meanings"—Allegory

1) The author himself is the only one who can legitimately identify the hidden meaning.

2) Not just anyone who can "break the code" or find that hidden meaning.

3) Yeshua and/or the inspired writers are the only ones who could designate a secondary or fuller meaning.

4) To ascribe hidden meanings to Scripture, a person assumes an authority equivalent to or superseding that of the author.

5) But Scripture itself is to be the independent, final authority on what God says to His people.