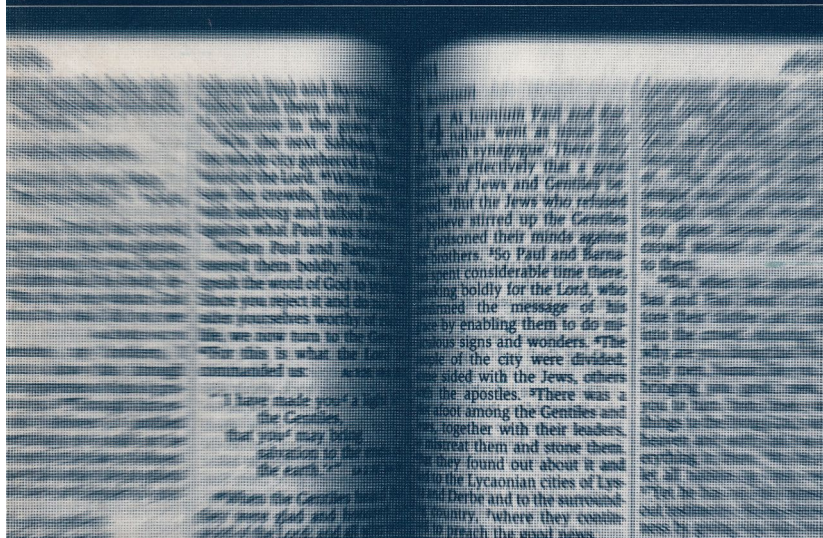


INTERPRETING THE SCRIPTURES SELF STUDY GUIDE



KEVIN J. CONNER

Interpreting the Scriptures

Self Study Guide

Kevin J. Conner



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WEB: kevinconner.org
Email: kevin.conner321@gmail.com

Visit www.amazon.com/author/kevinjconner for a list of other books by Kevin Conner.

About the Author

Born in Melbourne, Australia in 1927 and saved at the age of 14, Kevin Conner served the Lord in the Salvation Army until the age of 21. At this time he entered into pastoral ministry for a number of years. After that, he was involved in teaching ministry in Australia, New Zealand and for many years at Bible Temple in Portland, Oregon. After serving as Senior Minister of Waverley Christian Fellowship for eight years (1987-1994), he continued to serve the church locally as well as ministering at various conferences and the continued writing of textbooks.

Kevin is recognized internationally as a teaching-apostle after his many years in both church and Bible College ministry. His textbooks have been used by ministers and students throughout the world. He has been in great demand as a teacher and has travelled extensively. Kevin lives in Melbourne, Australia with his wife Rene.

Interpreting the Scriptures

Section One (A Self-pace Program)

Foreword

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 - I. The Definition of Hermeneutics
 - II. The Science of Hermeneutics
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 - IV. Hermeneutics and Church Divisions
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 - II. Qualifications
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 - I. The Allegorical Method
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Chapter

6. The Context Principle *
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 - II. Amplification
 - III. Qualification
 - IV. Demonstration
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8. The Comparative Mention Principle
9. The Progressive Mention Principle
10. The Complete Mention Principle
11. The Election Principle
12. The Covenantal Principle
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14. The Chronometrical Principle
15. The Dispensations Redefined
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 - II. Classification
 - III. Conclusion
16. The Breach Principle
17. The Christo-Centric Principle
18. The Moral Principle
19. The Symbolic Principle

* All the principles have the same four divisions.

Chapter

20. The Numerical Principle

21. The Typical Principle

22. The Parabolic Principle

23. The Allegorical Principle

24. The Interpretation Of Prophecy

- I. The Definition Of Prophecy
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- IV. The Classification Of Written Prophecy
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- VI. A Demonstration Of The Application Of The Principles

Conclusion

Foreword — Interpreting the Scriptures

1. What is one of the root causes of theological differences and divisions in the body of christ?

2. Fill in the answers:

The problem is not over _____ and _____ so much as it is over _____ and _____.

3. The burning desire in this text book is to rediscover“ _____.”

4. What is the foundational proposition upon which this textbook is built?
“ _____

_____.”

5. Fill in parallel arguments:

“The way a thing is _____,” _____ is the way it can be _____.”

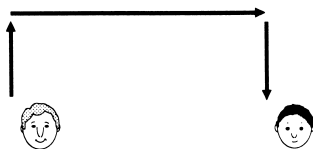
“The way the Bible _____,” _____ indicates the way it _____.”

6. Answer in your own words:

What is the analogy between universal laws and Biblical hermeneutical laws?

Chapter One — An Introduction to Hermeneutics

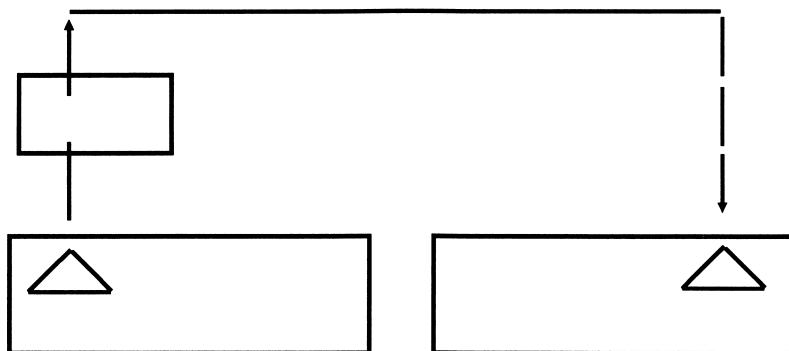
1. What is the definition of “hermeneutics” according to:
 - A. Webster -
 - B. Classical Greek -
 - C. Hebrew - (from a summary of Hebrew words) -
 - D. Greek - (from a summary of Greek words) -
2. Modern theologians define hermeneutics as both “a science and an art” of Biblical interpretation.
 - A. A science because _____.
 - B. An art because _____.
3. Fill in the five words necessary to general hermeneutics.



4. Because the sender and receiver may have different frames of reference, what has to be bridged?
Fill in the appropriate answer from the diagram:

5. What is “Biblical Hermeneutics?”

6. Fill in the details of the following chart which applies the principles of the communication of scripture:



7. Why is it important to interpret Scripture?

8. List the twenty ways which God has spoken to man.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| A. _____ | K. _____ |
| B. _____ | L. _____ |
| C. _____ | M. _____ |
| D. _____ | N. _____ |
| E. _____ | O. _____ |
| F. _____ | P. _____ |
| G. _____ | Q. _____ |
| H. _____ | R. _____ |
| I. _____ | S. _____ |
| J. _____ | T. _____ |

9. Give a brief definition of the Biblical sciences related to hermeneutics.

A. Canonology -

B. Historical Criticism -

C. Textual Criticism -

D. Hermeneutics -

E. Exegesis -

F. Biblical Theology -

10. Divide these six sciences into their two groupings.

A. The Infallible Materials

B. The Use of the Materials

(1) _____

(1) _____

(2) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(3) _____

11. What is the threefold result of A plus B as above?

12. Write in your own words a summary statement of the relationship of hermeneutics to Church divisions.

Chapter Two — The Qualifications of an Interpreter

1. The relationship between the *science* and the *art* of hermeneutics is seen in the fact that:
 - A. The _____ has to do with the rules of interpretation.
 - B. The _____ has to do with the skill of the interpreter.
2. Does a knowledge of hermeneutical rules make one a good interpreter?
Why?
3. Give a brief summary statement concerning each of the three categories of interpreters.
 - A. Legal Interpreters -
 - B. False Interpreters -
 - C. True Interpreters -
4. List the sixteen qualifications of an interpreter of Scripture.
 - A. The Interpreter _____

 - B. The Interpreter _____

 - C. The Interpreter _____

 - D. The Interpreter _____

 - E. The Interpreter _____

 - F. The Interpreter _____

 - G. The Interpreter _____

H. The Interpreter _____

I. The Interpreter _____

J. The Interpreter _____

K. The Interpreter _____

L. The Interpreter _____

M. The Interpreter _____

N. The Interpreter _____

O. The Interpreter _____

P. The Interpreter _____

5. What is the balance between depending on the Holy Spirit's illumination and the applying of one's intellect to study resources?

6. Fill in the words:
"A delicate balance must be constantly maintained between the _____ and the _____."

7. Define the following words:

A. Revelation -

B. Inspiration -

C. Illumination -

Chapter Three — The Methods of Interpretation

1. What is a “method” of interpretation?
2. Write a brief summary statement of each of the five most prominent methods as to their origin, definition, and evaluation.

A. The Allegorical Method

- 1) Origin -
- 2) Definition -
- 3) Evaluation -

B. The Mystical Method

- 1) Origin -
- 2) Definition -
- 3) Evaluation -

C. The Devotional Method

- 1) Origin -
- 2) Definition -
- 3) Evaluation -

D. The Rationalistic Method

- 1) Origin -
- 2) Definition -
- 3) Evaluation -

E. The Literal Method

- 1) Origin -
- 2) Definition -
- 3) Evaluation -

3. Fill in the appropriate words:

- A. The literal sense does not _____.
- B. The literal sense does not _____.
- C. The literal sense does not _____.
- D. The literal sense does not _____.

4. Why is the literal method the only sound, safe, and sensible approach to the interpretation of Scripture?

Chapter Four — A Brief History of Hermeneutics

1. In your own words, write out what is the major benefit one can receive by studying the history of Biblical hermeneutics.

I. Jewish Hermeneutics

1. Who is called “the Father of Hermeneutics?”
2. What was the problem faced by the remnant of the Jews returning from the Babylonian captivity, and how was it solved?
3. In relation to the synagogue, answer the following:
 - A. What was a synagogue?
 - B. What was the purpose of it’s existence?
 - C. Of what did “the Great Synagogue” consist?
 - (1) _____
 - (2) _____
 - (3) _____
 - (4) _____
4. Fill in the answer:

“The danger of centralized ecclesiastical authority is that the same walls that _____ in may also _____ out.”
5. Why did Christ denounce the scribes of his day?
6. What was “the good example of Ezra” that the Palestinian Jews followed?
7. What great mistake did the Palestinian Jews make?

8. Explain and evaluate the two kinds of interpretation in the Mishna.
- A. Halakah -
- B. Hagadah -
9. Explain in your own words the accompanying chart on these above commentaries.
10. Define the following:
- A. Letterism -
- B. What is wrong with it?
11. What was the Qumran community's basic problem that so greatly affected their hermeneutics?
12. Fill in the words:
- "The Palestinian Jews are to be commended for their acceptance of the _____ and _____ of the Scriptures and their development of sound _____ in relation to _____. However, a failure to produce _____ was caused by their yielding to _____, and _____."

13. How did the Alexandrian Jews originate the Allegorical School of Interpretation?
14. Fill in the words:
- “Alexandrian Jews were ‘sons of _____’ in _____, but became ‘sons of _____’ in _____.”
15. Under what two points can Philo’s principles of interpretation be summarized?
- A. _____
- B. _____
16. What is the major problem with allegorization?
17. What did the Karaites contribute to the science of hermeneutics?
18. What was the error of the Cabalists?
19. What rule of interpretation is Aben Ezra famous for?
20. List four points which show why modern Jewry will never be able to interpret their scriptures properly.
- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

II. Apostolic Hermeneutics

1. What "method" prevailed in apostolic times?
2. Who is (A) the only perfect and infallible interpreter of Scripture, and (B) why could he be that?
 - A.
 - B.
3. What did false hermeneutics cause the religious leaders of Christ's time to do?
4. How did the apostles become the infallible interpreters of the Old Testament writings?
5. Respond and reply to the following statement:

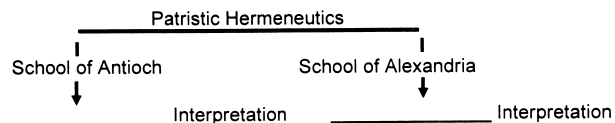
"If we can discover the principles of apostolic hermeneutics given to them by Christ, and accept them and use them, then this would help to bring about 'the unity of the faith' that was once delivered to the saints."

III. Patristic Hermeneutics

1. What methods were used in this period of history?
2. What was the main concern of the Fathers during the second century A.D.?
3. Give a brief summary statement of the "strengths" and/or the "weaknesses" of the following Fathers:
 - A. Clement of Rome -
 - B. Ignatius -
 - C. Barnabas -

- D. Marcion -
 - E. Justin Martyr -
 - F. Irenaeus -
4. Where did the School of Alexandria get their methods of interpretation?
 5. What were Clement's five meanings of scripture?
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.
 - E.
 6. Explain Origen's threefold sense of scripture.
 7. How did the School of Antioch differ from the School of Alexandria?
 8. Give a brief summary statement of the "strengths" and/or the "weaknesses" of the following Fathers of this period:
 - A. Diodorus of Tarus -
 - B. Theodore of Mopsuestia -
 - C. Chrysostom -

9. What was the great concern that brought about the great division of the Churches into eastern and western divisions?
10. In the Eastern Division several Fathers are noted. Name the appropriate one with the following statement
- Name**
- A. He held to a threefold sense of scripture. _____
- B. He was called “The Father of Orthodoxy.” _____
- C. He embraced asceticism and monasticism but was basically a sound interpreter. _____
- D. He followed the literal method. _____
11. In the Western Division several notable Fathers are mentioned. Name the appropriate one with the following statement:
- Name**
- A. He held Church tradition and Church authority above reason and conscience _____
- B. He treated the historical sense of scripture as being irrelevant and exalted the mystical sense of Scripture. _____
- C. He started the heretical trend of exalting the authority of the Church in interpreting the Scriptures. _____
- D. He emphasized the literal and grammatical sense of Scripture but in practice often followed the allegorical. _____
- E. He was one of the greatest theologians of his time. _____
12. In summarizing the Patristic Period of Hermeneutics, two major streams are seen. What method of interpretation characterized them?



IV. Medieval Hermeneutics

1. Explain the four senses attributed to scripture during this period.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.
2. List four things that were the major hindrances to progress in the field of hermeneutics during this period.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.
3. Place the appropriate name alongside the following statements:

	Name
A. He helped to "seed" the reformation.	_____
B. He was a mystical allegorizer.	_____
C. He accepted the fourfold sense of scripture.	_____
D. He assumed a sevenfold sense of scripture.	_____
E. He was known as "the Morning Star" of the Reformation.	_____
4. Evaluate the great problems seen in Catholic hermeneutics.
5. What caused the chains of ignorance, superstition, and tradition to be snapped near the close of this period?

V. Reformation Hermeneutics

1. What method was re-discovered in this period?
2. Why was “sola scriptura” the battle cry of the Reformation?
3. Write fully the seven rules of interpretation that the Reformers contended for.
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
 - F. _____
 - G. _____
4. Comment briefly on Martin Luther’s hermeneutical principles.
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
 - F. _____
5. Comment briefly upon John Calvin’s hermeneutical principles.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____

6. What did the “battle lines” between Catholicism and Protestantism cause the scholars to do?

7. What happened in this “battle” to the field of hermeneutics?

VI. Post-Reformation Hermeneutics

1. What was the major method of interpretation during this period?
2. What other method rose to prominence in this period?
3. How did the Reformation “go sour”?
4. Explain the role of Pietism during this period.
5. Was Phillip Spener’s belief that “purity of heart was more important than purity of doctrine” correct?

If not, why not?
6. What is the main danger and weakness to be found in the devotional method of interpretation?
7. How did Biblical criticism begin to develop?
8. What important element did John Ernesti bring to Biblical hermeneutics?
9. What was the fatal error of Rationalism?
10. Write a brief statement of something that you have personally learned from these four groupings of interpreters.
 - A. Dogmatism -
 - B. Pietism -
 - C. Criticism -
 - D. Rationalism -

VII. Modern Hermeneutics

1. Fill in the words:

"The _____ of the Post-Reformation prepared the way for the _____ of the Modern Era."

"On the other hand, the _____ of the Post-Reformation laid the ground for the _____ of the Modern Age."

2. Write in your own words the sevenfold problem of "liberalism" in interpreting the scriptures.

- A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
D. _____
E. _____
F. _____
G. _____

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3. Why is Karl Barth's theology faulty?
4. What is meant by "conservatism" as used here?
5. List out the sevenfold approach of conservatives to interpreting scripture.
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
 - F. _____
 - G. _____
6. What are the three charts endeavoring to convey? Write a summary statement concerning each.
 - A. The Progress of Hermeneutics -
 - B. History of Hermeneutics -
 - C. Jewish Hermeneutics -

Chapter Five — Foundations for Interpretation

1. What is the **goal** of hermeneutics?
2. What is the foundational **means** for reaching this goal?
3. Answer the questions relative to the basic fourfold gap that has to be bridged.

A. The Linguistic Gap

- 1) In what three languages was the Bible written?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

- 2) How do we bridge the linguistic gap?

- 3) Vocabulary — what is meant by the following:

a) The etymological study of a word?

b) The comparative study of a word?

c) The cultural study of a word?

d) The study of a word in cognate languages?

- 4) Grammar — what is meant by the following:

a) The study of grammar?

b) Analytic languages?

c) Synthetic languages?

- 5) Why is it important that both vocabulary and grammar be studied together?
- 6) Genre — what is meant by the following:
 - a) Genre?
 - b) Literary style?
 - c) Literary expression?
 - d) Figures of speech?

B. The Cultural Gap

- 1) What is the problem that has to be bridged by this gap?
- 2) How can it be bridged?
- 3) What is meant by the following:
 - a) Material culture?
 - b) Social culture?

C. The Geographical Gap

- 1) What is the problem that necessitates the bridging of this gap?
- 2) How may it be bridged?
- 3) What is meant by the following:
 - a) Political geography?
 - b) Geological geography?
 - c) Botanical and zoological geography?

D. The Historical Gap

- 1) What is the problem here that necessitates the bridging of this gap?
- 2) How may it be bridged?
- 3) What is meant by the following:
 - a) The political background?
 - b) The economic background?
 - c) The religious background?

Chapter Five — Foundations for Interpretation

Assignments

Take the following scriptures, bridge the foundational gaps, and then briefly interpret them. Use separate sheets of paper.

The format must be as follows:

1. The scripture reference _____.
2. The _____ gap.
3. The brief interpretation of the scripture _____.

Jeremiah 2:13

I Peter 5:4

I Corinthians 16:22 (K.J.V., "Anathema" AND Maranatha").

I Kings 18:42-46

2 Kings 5:10-12

Proverbs 30:19-31

Song of Solomon 2:1-3

Hosea 12:1

2 Thessalonians 2:7 (K.J.V., "Letteth")

Acts 11:27-29

Acts 19:28, 34

I Corinthians 11:5

Ezekiel 21:21

Proverbs 23:5

Isaiah 10:28-32

I Samuel 13:12 (K.J.V., "Forced").