

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 1: Understanding Bible Translations

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1. Why do we need Bible translations?

- The Old Testament was written mostly in ancient **Hebrew**. A few sections were written in a similar, related language, called **Aramaic** (Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Dan 2:4-7:28). In Old Testament times Aramaic was the international language of the world, and the Jews used Hebrew in religious contexts.

- The New Testament was written in ancient **Greek**, which had become the international language of the world through the conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BCE.

- As the early Christians spread the good news of Jesus, the Bible began to be **translated** into other languages (e.g. Syriac, Latin, Coptic) as early as the second century CE.

- Key early translations into English include John **Wycliffe's** Bible (1384), William **Tyndale's** New Testament (1525), Miles **Coverdale's** Bible (1535), the **Geneva** Bible (1560), and the **King James** Version (1611).

- Translations of the Bible into Italian go back at least as far as 1471. Among Roman Catholics, the CEI (*Conferenza Episcopale Italiana*) Bible (1971) and *La Bibbia de Gerusalemme* (2009) are prominent. Protestant translations include *La Nuova Diodati* (1991), which is the latest revision of a translation originally done by Giovanni Diodati in 1607. The Diodati translations, similar to the King James Version in English, are based on the *Textus Receptus* which goes back to Desiderius Erasmus' Greek NT in 1516. The *Nuova Riveduta* (2006), based on more ancient Greek manuscripts, goes back to the translation of Giovanni Luzzi in 1924. Another recent translation is *La Parola è Vita* (1997).

2. Why are the translations different?

- **Two approaches** to translation

- Some translations (e.g. KJV, NASB, ESV) match up an English **word** to each ancient Hebrew and Greek **word**. These are called **formal correspondence** translations. Such *word-for-word* translations are usually marketed on their **accuracy**.

- Other translations (e.g. NIV, NLT) transfer the **ideas** conveyed by the original languages into English. These are called **functional equivalence** translations. Such *phrase-by-phrase* translations are usually marketed on their **readability**.

- **Linguistics**: how do words convey meaning?

- Which came first, the ~~chicken~~ idea or the ~~egg~~ word? We think before we speak or write, so *how* we "word" meaning is the issue, not *what* words mean.

- Languages are systems of *conventional*/signs (words) that mark ideas or concepts.

- Why do we look *down* if someone says "Look at this beautiful *floor*"?

- How do we know what a "butterfly" is?

- Words mark ideas or concepts in connection with associated words in phrases, clauses, and sentences. Individual words, in isolation from other words, do not convey meaning clearly. The context rules the meaning, not *vice versa*!

- What is the meaning of the word "battery"?

- **Theology:** God guided the writing of every word in the Bible (verbal inspiration), but he also guided the arrangement of the words in phrases, clauses, sentences, and larger discourses. God's revelation in the Bible is verbal and propositional. Here is the teaching of Veritas Evangelical Church on this matter:

(http://www.chiesaveritas.it/risorse_documenti/Chiesa%20Veritas%20-%20Cosa%20crediamo.pdf)

Ciò che distingue la Chiesa Evangelica è la sua affermazione che la Scrittura, composta dai 66 libri ispirati dallo Spirito Santo, è la sola autorità suprema per il credente. La confessione sottoscritta è soltanto un riassunto di ciò che la Bibbia insegna.

Confessione del New Hampshire, 1833

1. Riguardo alle Sacre Scritture Noi crediamo che la Bibbia sia stata scritta da persone ispirate da Dio, ed è un tesoro perfetto di istruzione celeste;¹ che ha Dio quale suo autore, con la nostra salvezza quale suo fine;² ed è la verità senza possibilità di confusione riguardo a questa materia;³ che rivela i principi per cui Dio ci giudicherà;⁴ e quindi è e deve restare fino alla fine del mondo, il vero centro dell'unione cristiana;⁵ e la norma suprema in base alla quale tutti i comportamenti umani, credenze e opinioni dovrebbero essere provati.⁶

1.2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pie 1:21; 1 Sam. 23:2; Atti 1:16; 3:21; Gio 10:35; Lu 16:29-31; Sal 119:11; Rom 3:1-2

2. 2 Tim 3:15; 1 Pie 1:10-12; Atti 11:14; Rom 1:16; Ma 16:16; Gio 5:38-39

3. Prov 30:5-6; Gio 17:17; Apo 22:18-19; Rom 3:4

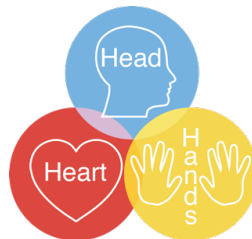
4. Rom 2:12; Gio 12:47-48; 1 Cor 4:3-4; Lu 10:10-16; 12:47-48

5. Fil 3:16; Efe 4:3-6; Fil 2:1-2; 1 Cor 1:10; 1 Pie 4:11

6. 1 Gio 4:1; Isa 8:20; 1 Tes 5:21; 2 Cor 8:5; Atti 17:11; 1 Gio 4:6; Juda 3:5; Efe 6:17; Sal 119:59-60; Fil 1:9-11

3. So, why do Bible translations matter?

- Many biblical texts underline the power of God's word when accurately understood, including Neh 8:1-12; Ps 1; 119:105, 130; Isa 55:8-11; 2 Tim 2:15; 3:16-17
- The "still small voice" of conscience and the "impressions" we *think* we receive from Jesus and the Spirit are not a reliable foundation for our beliefs or a clear guide for our lives.
- If Adam and Eve needed God's words even before they sinned in the garden of Eden, *how much more* today do we need an *accurate* word from God!
- *Sola Scriptura*! 500 years ago our spiritual ancestors, the "protestants" whose views led to the reformation, affirmed that the Bible alone was sufficient for our faith and practice.
- Let's thank God for good Bible translations and rededicate ourselves to understanding and obeying the Bible! To whom much is given, much will be required (Luke 12:48).



Sanctify them through your truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)

Comparing Three Italian Translations of Matthew 1:18-25

La Nuovo Diodati (LND 1991) https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+1&version=LND	Nuova Riveduta (NR 2006) https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?quicksearch=Matthew&version=NR2006	La Parola è Vita (PEV 1997) https://www.biblica.com/bible/pev/matteo/1/
<p>¹⁸ Or la nascita di Gesù Cristo avvenne in questo modo. Maria, sua madre, era stata promessa in matrimonio a Giuseppe, ma prima che iniziassero a stare insieme, si trovò incinta per opera dello Spirito Santo.</p> <p>¹⁹ Allora Giuseppe, suo sposo, che era uomo giusto e non voleva esporla ad infamia, deliberò di lasciarla segretamente.</p> <p>²⁰ Ma, mentre rifletteva su queste cose, ecco che un angelo del Signore gli apparve in sogno, dicendo: «Giuseppe, figlio di Davide, non temere di prendere con te Maria come tua moglie, perché ciò che è stato concepito in lei è opera dello Spirito Santo.</p> <p>²¹ Ed ella partorirà un figlio e tu gli porrai nome Gesù, perché egli salverà il suo popolo dai loro peccati».</p>	<p>¹⁸ La nascita di Gesù Cristo avvenne in questo modo. Maria, sua madre, era stata promessa sposa a Giuseppe e, prima che fossero venuti a stare insieme, si trovò incinta per opera dello Spirito Santo.</p> <p>¹⁹ Giuseppe, suo marito, che era uomo giusto e non voleva esporla a infamia, si propose di lasciarla segretamente.</p> <p>²⁰ Ma mentre aveva queste cose nell'animo, un angelo del Signore gli apparve in sogno, dicendo: «Giuseppe, figlio di Davide, non temere di prendere con te Maria, tua moglie; perché ciò che in lei è generato, viene dallo Spirito Santo.</p> <p>²¹ Ella partorirà un figlio, e tu gli porrai nome Gesù, perché è lui che salverà il suo popolo dai loro peccati».</p>	<p>Ecco i fatti riguardanti la nascita di Gesù Cristo. Sua madre, Maria, era fidanzata con Giuseppe, ma, mentre era ancora vergine, si trovò incinta per opera dello Spirito Santo.</p> <p>Giuseppe, il suo fidanzato, da uomo di giusti principi, decise di rompere il fidanzamento, di nascosto però, perché non voleva esporla a critiche infamanti.</p> <p>Ma, mentre faceva questi progetti, gli apparve in sogno un angelo del Signore. «Giuseppe, discendente di Davide», disse l'angelo, «non esitare a sposare Maria, perché il bambino che è dentro di lei è stato concepito dallo Spirito Santo.</p> <p>Maria avrà un figlio al quale metterai nome Gesù (che significa Salvatore), perché è lui che salverà il suo popolo dai suoi peccati.</p>

<p>²² Or tutto ciò avvenne affinché si adempisse quello che era stato detto dal Signore, per mezzo del profeta che dice:</p> <p>²³ «Ecco, la vergine sarà incinta e partorirà un figlio, il quale sarà chiamato Emmanuele che, interpretato, vuol dire: "Dio con noi".</p> <p>²⁴ E Giuseppe, destatosi dal sonno, fece come l'angelo del Signore gli aveva comandato e prese con sé sua moglie;</p> <p>²⁵ ma egli non la conobbe, finché ella ebbe partorito il suo figlio primogenito, al quale pose nome Gesù.</p>	<p>²² Tutto ciò avvenne, affinché si adempisse quello che era stato detto dal Signore per mezzo del profeta:</p> <p>²³ «<i>La vergine sarà incinta e partorirà un figlio, al quale sarà posto nome Emmanuele</i>», che tradotto vuol dire: «Dio con noi».</p> <p>²⁴ Giuseppe, destatosi dal sonno, fece come l'angelo del Signore gli aveva comandato e prese con sé sua moglie;</p> <p>²⁵ e non ebbe con lei rapporti coniugali finché ella non ebbe partorito un figlio; e gli pose nome Gesù.</p>	<p>Questo accadrà, affinché si realizzi ciò che Dio ha detto tramite il suo profeta:</p> <p>“Ascoltate! La vergine sarà incinta! Partorirà un figlio che sarà chiamato Emmanuele (che significa Dio è con noi)”».</p> <p>Quando Giuseppe si svegliò, fece come l'angelo gli aveva comandato e portò Maria a casa sua per sposarla.</p> <p>Maria, vergine, partorì il bambino, a cui Giuseppe mise nome Gesù.</p>
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UBS⁵ Greek New Testament with Greek-Italian Interlinear of Matthew 1:18-25

UBS⁵ Greek New Testament (https://www.academic-bible.com/en/online-bibles/greek-new-testament-ubs5/read-the-bible-text/)	Greek-Italian Interlinear of Matthew 1:18-25 (http://www.famigliedellavisitazione.it/wp/wp-content/uploads/Lectio/Archivi/NT%20INTERLINEARE%20ITALIANO-GRECO.pdf)
<p>1:18 Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γένεσις οὕτως ἦν. μνηστευθείσης τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὐρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου.</p> <p>1:19 Ἰωσήφ δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς, δίκαιος ὢν καὶ μὴ θέλων αὐτὴν δειγματίσαι, ἐβουλήθη λάθρα ἀπολῦσαι αὐτήν.</p> <p>1:20 ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐνθυμηθέντος ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου κατ' ὄναρ ἐφάνη αὐτῷ λέγων, Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ, μὴ φοβηθῇς παραλαβεῖν Μαρίαν τὴν γυναικὰ σου· τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματος ἑστίν ἅγιον.</p> <p>1:21 τέξεται δὲ υἱόν, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν· αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν.</p> <p>1:22 οὗτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος,</p> <p>1:23 Ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστίν μεθερμηνευόμενον Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.</p> <p>1:24 ἐγερθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου ἐποίησεν ὡς προέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου καὶ παρέλαβεν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ,</p> <p>1:25 καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτήν ἕως οὗ ἔτεκεν υἱόν καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν.</p>	<p>1:18 La {ἡ ho} nascita {γένεσις genesis} di {τοῦ ho} Gesù {ἰησοῦ Ἰῆsous} Cristo {χριστοῦ Christos} avvenne {ἦν eimi} in questo modo {οὕτως houtōs}. Maria {μαρίας Maria}, sua {τῆς ho αὐτοῦ autos} madre {μητρὸς mêtêr}, era stata promessa sposa {μνηστευθείσης mnêsteuomai} a {τῷ ho} Giuseppe {ἰωσήφ Ἰὸsêf} e {-}, prima {πρὶν prin} che {ἡ ἐ} fossero venuti a stare insieme {συνελθεῖν sunerchomai}, si trovò {εὐρέθη heuriskô} incinta {ἐν en γαστρὶ gastêr ἔχουσα echô} per opera dello {ἐκ ek} Spirito {πνεύματος pneuma} Santo {ἁγίου hagios}. I {δὲ de αὐτοὺς autos}</p> <p>1:19 Giuseppe {ἰωσήφ Ἰὸsêf}, suo {αὐτῆς autos} marito {ὁ ho ἀνὴρ anêr}, che {-} era {ὢν eimi} uomo giusto {δίκαιος dikaios} e {καὶ kai} non {μὴ mē} voleva {θέλων thelô} esporla {αὐτὴν autos} a infamia {δειγματίσαι deigmatizô}, si propose di {ἐβουλήθη boulomai} lasciarla {ἀπολῦσαι apoluô αὐτήν autos} segretamente {λάθρα lathrai}. I {δὲ de}</p> <p>1:20 Ma {δὲ de} mentre {-} aveva queste cose {ταῦτα houtos} nell'animo {ἐνθυμηθέντος enthumeomai}, un angelo {ἄγγελος aggelos} del Signore {κυρίου kurios} gli {αὐτῷ autos} apparve {ἐφάνη fainô} in {κατ' kata} sogno {ὄναρ onar}, dicendo {λέγων legô}: «Giuseppe {ἰωσήφ Ἰὸsêf}, figlio {υἱὸς huios} di Davide {δαυὶδ Daudid}, non {μὴ mē} temere di {φοβηθῇς fobeomai} prendere {παραλαβεῖν paralambanô} con {-} te {-} Maria {μαρίαν Maria}, tua {σου su} moglie {τὴν ho γυναικὰ gunê}; perché {γὰρ gar} ciò che {τὸ ho} in {ἐν en} lei {αὐτῇ autos} è generato {γεννηθὲν gennaô}, viene {ἐστίν eimi} dallo {ἐκ ek} Spirito {πνεύματος pneuma} Santo {ἁγίου hagios}. I {αὐτοῦ autos ἰδοὺ idou}</p> <p>1:21 Ella partorirà {τέξεται tiktô} un figlio {υἱὸν huios}, e {καὶ kai} tu gli {αὐτοῦ autos} porrai {καλέσεις kaleô} nome {τὸ ho ὄνομα onoma} Gesù {ἰησοῦν Ἰῆsous}, perché {γὰρ gar} è {-} lui {αὐτὸς autos} che {-} salverà {σώσει sôizô} il {τὸν ho} suo {αὐτοῦ autos} popolo {λαὸν laos} dai {ἀπὸ apo τῶν ho} loro {αὐτῶν autos} peccati {ἁμαρτιῶν hamartia}». I {δὲ de}</p> <p>1:22 Tutto {ὅλον holos} ciò {τοῦτο houtos} avvenne {γέγονεν ginomai}, affinché {ἵνα hina} si adempisse {πληρωθῇ plêroê} quello che {τὸ ho} era stato detto {ῥηθὲν legô} dal {ὑπὸ hupo} Signore {κυρίου kurios} per mezzo {διὰ dia} del {τοῦ ho} profeta {προφήτου profêtês}: I {δὲ de λέγοντος legô}</p> <p>1:23 La {ἡ ho} vergine {παρθένος parthenos} sarà {ἔξει echô} incinta {ἐν en γαστρὶ gastêr} e {καὶ kai} partorirà {τέξεται tiktô} un figlio {υἱὸν huios}, al {-} quale {-} sarà posto {καλέσουσιν kaleô} nome {τὸ ho ὄνομα onoma} Emmanuele {ἐμμανουήλ Emmanouêl}, che {ὁ hos} tradotto {μεθερμηνευόμενον methermêneud} vuol dire {ἐστίν eimi}: «Dio {ὁ ho θεός theos} con {μεθ' meta} noi {ἡμῶν egô}». I {ἰδοὺ idou καὶ kai αὐτοῦ autos}</p> <p>1:24 Giuseppe {ὁ ho ἰωσήφ Ἰὸsêf}, destatosi {ἐγερθεὶς egeirô} dal {ἀπὸ apo} sonno {τοῦ ho ὕπνου hypnos}, fece {ἐποίησεν poieô} come {ὡς hôs} I' {ὁ ho} angelo {ἄγγελος aggelos} del Signore {κυρίου kurios} gli {αὐτῷ autos} aveva comandato {προέταξεν prostassô} e {καὶ kai} prese {παρέλαβεν paralambanô} con {-} sé {-} sua {αὐτοῦ autos} moglie {τὴν ho γυναικὰ gunê}; I {δὲ de}</p> <p>1:25 e {καὶ kai} non {οὐκ ou} ebbe con lei {αὐτὴν autos} rapporti coniugali {ἐγίνωσκεν ginôskô} finché {ἕως heôs} ella non {οὐ hou} ebbe partorito {ἔτεκεν tiktô} un figlio {υἱὸν huios}; e {καὶ kai} gli {αὐτοῦ autos} pose {ἐκάλεσεν kaleô} nome {τὸ ho ὄνομα onoma} Gesù {ἰησοῦν Ἰῆsous}.</p>

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 2: Understanding the Big Story:
The Bible from Genesis to Revelation

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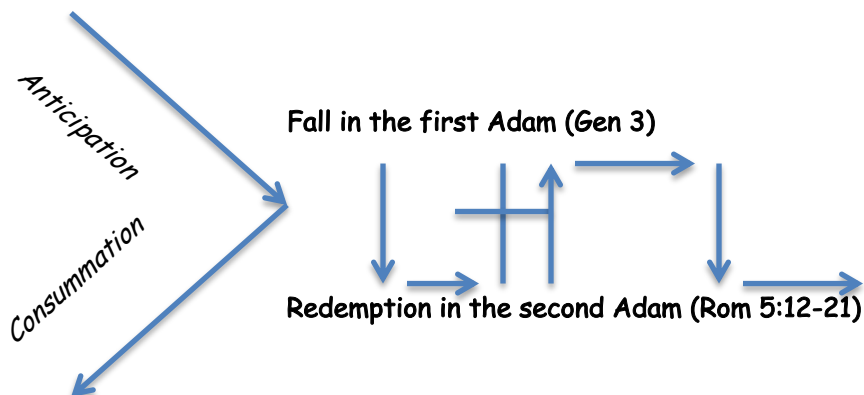
1. Getting a Handle on the Books of the Bible (Analysis)

- In one sense the Bible is a book, but historically this "book" is an *anthology* of authoritative books (a canon) collected by Israel and the church over a period of roughly 1500 years.
- Two Testaments, one Bible (39+27=66 books)
 - Old and New Testaments (but "old" may imply worn out or antiquated)
 - Alternatives: First and Second, Former and Latter, or Promise and Fulfillment Testaments?
- Chronology: a *precise* timeline for the writing of the Bible is not possible, but a general idea of the incremental process may be found [here](#).
 - the books of the OT were written over a period of around 1000 years, from roughly 1400-400 BCE.
 - the books of the NT were written over a period of only about 50 years, from roughly 50-100 CE.
- Christians commonly think of the books of the Bible under the following categories:
 - **Historical** (narrative) Books
 - Old Testament: Pentateuch (*Gen, Exod, Lev, Num, Deut*), *Josh, Jdg, Ruth, 1-2 Sam, 1-2 Kgs, 1-2 Chron, Ezra, Neh, Esth*
 - New Testament: *Matt, Mark, Luke, John, Acts*
 - **Poetic** Books
 - *Pss, Lam*
 - **Wisdom** Books
 - *Job, Prov, Eccl, Song*
 - **Letters** (epistles)
 - *Rom, 1-2 Cor, Gal, Eph, Phil, Col, 1-2 Thess, 1-2 Tim, Tit, Phile, Heb, Jas, 1-2 Pet; 1-2-3 John, Jude*
 - **Prophetic** Books
 - Old Testament
 - Major Prophets: *Isa, Jer, Ezek, Dan*
 - Minor prophets: *Hos, Joel, Amos, Obad, Jon, Mic, Nah, Hab, Zeph, Hag, Zech, Mal*
 - New Testament
 - Rev*
- In Jewish tradition the Bible (Old Testament) is divided into three sections, the *Torah* (law), *Nebiim* (prophets), and *Ketuvim* (writings, cf. Luke 24:27, 44). The acronym *Tanakh* is commonly used for the Bible as a whole in Jewish circles.
- The 66 books above constitute the protestant **canon**, which resulted from a process in which the churches considered *content*, *authorship*, and early *attestation* by the churches. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox canons include several other ancient books regarded by protestants as non-canonical, although worthy of study and respect. Such books are called the *Apocrypha* ("hidden"). Other ancient books not regarded as canonical by any major branch of the church are called the *Pseudepigrapha* ("falsely attributed"). See further *ESVSB* 2577-83).

2. Getting a Handle on the Message of the Bible (Synthesis)

- God's plan to redeem a people for himself is central to the Bible. The messiah and the cross are at the heart of the biblical message, **promised** in the Old Testament and **fulfilled** in the New.
- The Jewish people are central to this plan according to *Genesis 12*; *John 4*, *Romans 11*, and *Ephesians 2*.
- The biblical message of salvation through Jesus the Messiah can be visualized as follows:

Creation (*Gen 1-2*; *Ps 8*; *Heb 11:3*)



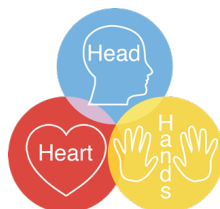
New Creation (*John 1:1-5*; *2 Cor 4:3-6*; *5:17*; *Rev 21-22*)

3. So What?

- How these facts impact our heads, hearts, and hands?

Information ↔ *Transformation* ↔ *Action*

- We are richly blessed to *understand* how God graciously summons us to participate in his plan to renew his fallen creation through the Lord Messiah Jesus.
- Our feeble, frustrating, personal stories take on meaning as they are integrated into God's mega-story. *We need something bigger than us*, something that transcends our myopia, to empower us to take on life's complexities.
- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit invite us to join their mission of world renewal through the gospel. *We need to allow this information to transform our minds so that it can transform our families, our careers, and our churches.*



Sanctify them through your truth; your word is truth. (*John 17:17*)

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

The following is a common way of organizing the books of the Bible. The categories are flexible and overlap in some cases. Some books could be categorized differently. For example, much of the prophetic and wisdom books are written in poetry. 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings are about the ministry of prophets. The OT wisdom books are very different from each other but focus in common on skillful living. In the NT, Hebrews and 1 John are probably sermons or homilies, not letters.

	Narrative (history, biography)	Prophecy (preaching and promises)	Poetry	Wisdom	Letter
Old Testament	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings 1-2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	Psalms Lamentations	Job Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs	
New Testament	Matthew Mark Luke John Acts	Revelation			Romans 1-2 Corinthians Galatians Epesians Philippians Colossians Philemon 1-2 Thessalonian 1-2 Timothy Titus Hebrews James 1-2 Peter 1-2-3 John Jude

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Session 3: Understanding the Chapters of the Story:
the Different Kinds of Books in the Biblical Library

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1. Understanding the Chapters: the Different Kinds of Books in the Bible

- Understanding *how* the Bible means is the basis of understanding *what* the Bible means.
- Review the previous page's Overview of the Books of the Bible
- Note how each of the following make meaning:
 - **Narrative** (historical) Books
 - Episodes, heroes and villains, tests and consequences (The moral of the story: 1 Cor 10:1-13)
 - **Poetic** Books
 - Parallel ideas (not rhyming sounds) and beautiful images that *evoke* rather than *command* a response (Psalm 1:3-4)
 - **Wisdom** Books
 - Looking at life in a fallen world realistically. Take off the rose-colored glasses. (Job, Eccl).
 - **Letters** (epistles)
 - Logical arguments addressed to specific ancient church situations. Match 'em up with today.
 - **Prophetic** Books
 - Oracles from God about judgment and blessing. Preaching against sin and calling for repentance, with promises of blessing and warnings of judgment.

2. Understanding how the Chapters Interrelate

- *The Bible is full of itself!* Later authors refer to and build on earlier authors.
 - Inner-biblical exegesis
 - *Quotations* (LOUD AND CLEAR, introduced, several words; cf. Matt 2:5-6 → Mic 5:2)
 - *Allusions* (softer, less clear, no introduction, fewer words; cf. Jude 7 → Gen 18-19)
 - *Echoes* (faint, maybe only a single word, debatable; cf. Jude 23 → Amos 4:11)
- Read through Jude and notice where it refers to other books of the Bible.
 - Jude 4 → condemnation written about long ago
 - Reference to OT prophecies of judgment or to the examples that follow?
 - Jude 5 → the exodus and wandering in the wilderness
 - Exod; Num; 1 Cor 10:5-10; Heb 3-4; Ps 95
 - Jude 6 → Angels who abandoned their proper abode (?!)
 - Genesis 6; 2 Pet 2:4
 - Jude 7 → Sodom and Gomorrah, sexual immorality
 - Gen 18:16-19:38; Deut 29:23; 32:32; Isa 1:9-10; Jer 23:14; Lam 4:6; Ezek 16:46-59; Matt 10:15; 11:23; Rom 9:29; 2 Pet 2:6; Rev 11:8 etc.!
 - Jude 9 → Michael's dispute with the devil over Moses' body (say what?!)
 - OT references to Michael: Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1; Rev 12:7
 - "The Lord rebuke you": Zech 3:1-2 (God rebukes the devil for trying to accuse the high priest. Cf. Rev 12:10).
 - Moses' burial: Deut 34:1-8
 - Dispute with the devil: According to Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-215 CE), Jude refers to an apocryphal book, the Assumption of Moses. But the reference is not found in current versions of this obscure book.

- Jude 11 → the way of Cain
 - Gen 4; Heb 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Jude 11
- Jude 11 → the error of Balaam
 - Num 22-24; 31:16; Deut 23:4; Josh 13:22; 24:9-10; Neh 13:2; Mic 6:5; 2 Pet 2:15; Rev 2:14
- Jude 11 → the rebellion of Korah
 - Gen 36; Exod 6; Num 16; 26:9-11; 27:3
- Jude 14-15 → Enoch's prophecy
 - References to Enoch: Gen 5:18, 21-24; 1 Chron 1:3; Luke 3:37; Heb 11:5
 - Enoch's prophecy: 1 Enoch 1:9, alluding to Deut 33:2 (God coming with myriads of angels)

• What part of the Bible is Jude most interested in?

• Does Jude directly *quote* the OT, *allude* to its events/people, or *echo* it more subtly?

• Jude also alludes to the NT, at least in general, in Jude 17-18.

• Notice how much of Jude is similar to 2 Peter 2

3. So What?

• How does all this impact our heads, hearts, and hands?

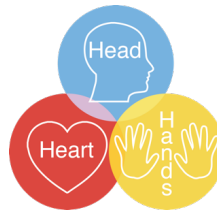


• We are richly blessed to have the Bible in our language, along with the freedom and opportunity to study and teach it. Are we using this opportunity? (Eph 5:16)

• Jude saw his church(es) in continuity with Israel as the ongoing one people of God. Israel's history is instructive for the church. Do we read the OT like Jude did?

• Jude speaks frankly and clearly about dangerous teaching and its judgment. Do we have the mental alertness and courage to follow Jude's example?

• The protestant reformers spoke of the clarity or *perspicuity* of the Bible, but they did not mean that the whole Bible was *equally* clear. All that we need to understand for salvation and life in Christ is clear (cf. 2 Pet 1:2-11), but occasionally we encounter difficult passages like Jude 6, 9, 14.




Sanctify them through your truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 4: Understanding Four Basic Steps of Bible Study:
Observation, Interpretation, Correlation, and Application

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1. Aspects of Inductive Bible Study

- Set aside some time when you will be less likely to be interrupted.
- Pray that God will guide your study and help you receive the truth of his word.
- Choose a passage for study based on the natural flow of the book you are studying.
- *Don't study merely to confirm what you already think.*
- Taking notes and marking your Bible may be helpful.
- Ask who-what-where-when-why-how-questions.
- Use a study Bible and/or basic Bible study tools to answer your questions.
- The following ideas and worksheet are helpful, not as sequential steps but as interrelated aspects of the method:

- 
- **Observation:** *What does it say?*
 - Your comments on the basic facts, features, or point of the passage
 - **Interpretation:** *What does it mean?*
 - Your questions that arise from observing the passage
 - **Correlation:** *How does it fit into the whole Bible?*
 - Related passages that come to your mind.
 - **Application:** *What does it mean to me? How should I live?*
 - Specific responses you need to make to the passage's teaching

2. Additional Information on Inductive Bible Study:

<https://www.seedbed.com/inductive-bible-study/>
<https://www.navigators.org/resource/inductive-bible-study/>
<https://www.precept.org/know-gods-word/>
<https://www.crossway.org/articles/10-tips-for-getting-started-with-inductive-bible-study/>
<https://unlockingthebible.org/2017/12/10-steps-of-inductive-bible-study/>

Worksheet: An Inductive Approach to Bible Study

Passage	Observations <i>What does it say?</i>	Interpretative Questions <i>What does it mean?</i>	Correlation <i>How does it fit?</i>	Application <i>What does it mean to me?</i>

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 5: Understanding the New Testament Letters

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1. Examples of ancient letters

- Numerous everyday letters (papyri) have been discovered in Egypt.
- Acts 9:2; 15:23-29; 23:26-30
- Paul (13 letters)
- Peter (2 letters)
- James
- John (2 letters by "the elder")
- Jude
- Hebrews, 1 John, and the "letters" to the seven churches (Rev 2-3) are not really letters.

2. Characteristics of ancient letters

- "*Ad hoc*": Situational/occasional
- Prose language with occasional sections that are poetic, prophetic, etc.
- Logical flow: propositional linear argument containing instruction and exhortation.
- The chunks are typically presented as paragraphs in Bible translations
- The NT letters contain direct apostolic teaching for the Church.

3. Conventional Structure: how were letters written?

- Opening
 - Author, Recipients, Greeting
 - Preliminaries
 - Personal comments, well wishes, prayer
 - Body
 - Opening, middle, closing are sometimes noticeable
 - Closing (Postscript/benediction)
- How does Jude match up to this typical structure?

Opening: _____

Preliminaries: _____

Body: _____

Closing: _____

4. What is the argument of Jude? How does it develop?

- Find the body of the letter . . .
- Read through it several times . . .
- Take note of the argument (logical flow of thought) . . .
- Note the paragraph divisions as indicators of the main ideas . . .
- Pay attention to the conjunctions . . .

- (*and, also, as, but, yet, if, because, for, although, . . .*)

- Summarize the main ideas and how they fit together:

- State Jude's argument in one sentence:

- This process becomes more difficult with the longer New Testament letters, but it can be done by discovering the main sections and how they fit together.

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 5: Understanding Biblical Narratives: How the Stories Unfold
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1. How We Got Biblical Narratives

- God acted in history and his people responded.
- Believers told of God's acts *orally* and in *writing* for the faithful community (Luke 1:1-4).
- Those who told of God's acts interpreted their *significance* for the community.
- Narratives *faithfully* represent *what* actually happened.
- These records *creatively* portray the *so what?* of what happened.

2. Literary Narrative vs. Historical Chronicle

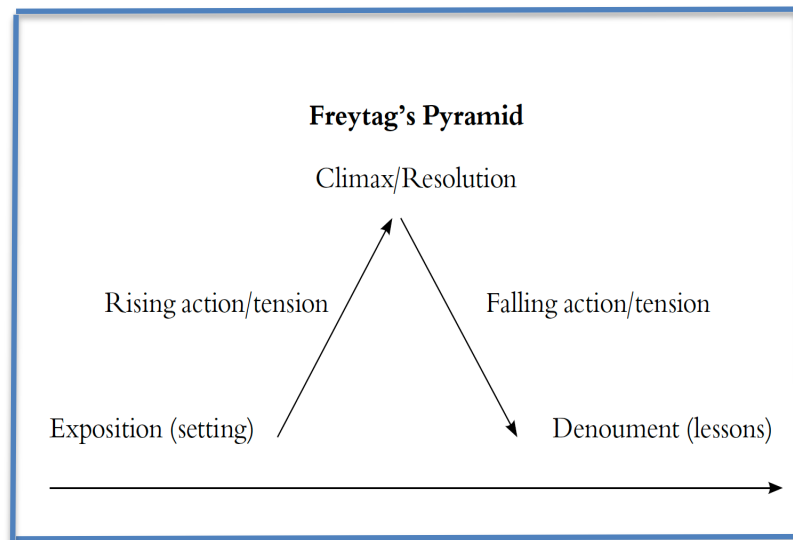
- *Selective* not comprehensive (relevance for audience)
- *How* it happened not just *that* it happened (information designed for transformation)
- Readers should be actively engaged *participants* in the event, not a passive *observers* standing apart from the story.
- *Empathy*: Hebrews 12:1 and "so great a cloud of witnesses"

3. Characteristics of Literary Narratives

- *Point of View*
 - The author tells the story from his/her worldview and purposes.
- *Characterization*
 - Major characters are portrayed as *protagonist(s)* and *antagonist(s)*.
- *Plot*
 - Episodes tend to portray rising *suspense*, a key moment, and the *resolution* of the issue.

4. "The Plot Thickens": A Common Pattern of Narrative

- Story-plots typically build suspense until the protagonist comes to a *test*.
 - In a *comedy*, the protagonist passes the test ("and they all lived happily ever after"?)
 - In a *tragedy*, the protagonist fails the test (but there is always another test tomorrow).



5. Examples

- The Bible taken as a whole

- Ruth

- Esther

- The calming of the storm (Matt 8/Mark 4/Luke 8)*

- The parable of the Sower/Seed/Soil (Matt 13/Mark 4/Luke 8)

* For details go to <http://mathaytes.blogspot.com/2011/08/bible-study-tips-use-plot-diagrams.html>

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 7: Understanding Biblical Poetry:
It's about Parallel Ideas not Rhyme
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1. What is the difference between prose and poetry?

- Prose is simple, straightforward, ordinary, unimaginative language.
 - *The Edmund Fitzgerald was loaded with 26,000 tons of iron ore when she sank in a bad storm on November 10, 1975.*
- Poetry is imaginative, creative, evocative language.
 - *With a load of iron ore 26,000 tons more than the Edmund Fitzgerald weighed empty,
That good ship and true was a bone to be chewed when the gales of November came early.* (Lightfoot)
- Without occasional poetic expressions (figures of speech), prose becomes tedious and boring.
- Poetry's main characteristic is its pervasive use **metaphor**, comparing abstract ideas to concrete items.
- Although some types of poetry uses **rhyme** as a structural device, this is not a major feature of biblical poetry, which is characterized by **parallelism** of lines/ideas.
 - A . . . **what's more** . . . B.
 - "What's more" in line B may restate A more emphatically ("and"), state a contrast to line A ("but"), or describe a purpose ("so that"), reason ("because") condition ("if"), or concession ("although") of line A.
 - Two very common types of parallelism:
 - Synonymous:** the two lines say roughly the same thing, although the second expands the first:
Oh how I love your instruction!
I think about them all day long. (Ps 119:97 NLT)
 - Antithetical:** the two lines express contrasting or opposing ideas:
I hate and abhor all falsehood,
But I love your instructions. (Ps 119:163)

2. Where do we find poetry in the Bible?

- Psalms (duh . . .)
- Embedded in other books, especially prophecy and wisdom, but even in narrative, as in Genesis 1:27; 2:23; 4:23; Luke 1:46-55; 68-79; 2:14; 29-32.
- Where do we find poetic elements in Jude?

4. Worksheet: Psalm 1 (observations, interpretive questions, correlated Scriptures, and application)

Read through the Psalm. Can you identify its literary flow and main sections? Note the use of parallelism and metaphor. What's the main point?

La Nuova Diodati (1991)	Nuova Riveduta (2006)	Traduzione Interconfessionale in Lingua Corrente (2014)
<p>1 Beato l'uomo che non cammina nel consiglio degli empi, non si ferma nella via dei peccatori e non si siede in compagnia degli schernitori,</p> <p>² ma il cui diletto è nella legge dell'Eterno, e sulla sua legge medita giorno e notte.</p> <p>³ Egli sarà come un albero piantato lungo i rivi d'acqua, che dà il suo frutto nella sua stagione e le cui foglie non appassiscono; e tutto quello che fa prospererà,</p> <p>⁴ Non così sono gli empi; ma sono come pula che il vento disperde.</p> <p>⁵ Perciò gli empi non reggeranno nel giudizio, né i peccatori nell'assemblea dei giusti.</p> <p>⁶ Poiché l'Eterno conosce la via dei giusti, ma la via degli empi porta alla rovina.</p>	<p>1 Beato l'uomo che non cammina secondo il consiglio degli empi, che non si ferma nella via dei peccatori, né si siede in compagnia degli schernitori,</p> <p>² ma il cui diletto è nella legge del SIGNORE e su quella legge medita giorno e notte.</p> <p>³ Egli sarà come un albero piantato vicino a ruscelli, il quale dà il suo frutto nella sua stagione e il cui fogliame non appassisce; e tutto quello che fa prospererà.</p> <p>⁴ Non così gli empi, anzi sono come pula che il vento disperde.</p> <p>⁵ Perciò gli empi non reggeranno davanti al giudizio, né i peccatori nell'assemblea dei giusti.</p> <p>⁶ Poiché il SIGNORE conosce la via dei giusti, ma la via degli empi conduce alla rovina.</p>	<p>1 Felice l'uomo giusto: non segue i consigli dei malvagi, non va insieme ai peccatori, non sta con chi bestemmia Dio;</p> <p>2 ma sua gioia è la parola del Signore, la ripete notte e giorno.</p> <p>3 Come albero piantato lungo il fiume egli darà frutto a suo tempo, le sue foglie non appassiranno: riuscirà in tutti i suoi progetti.</p> <p>4 Non è questa la sorte dei malvagi: sono come paglia portata via dal vento!</p> <p>5 Saranno condannati in giudizio ed esclusi dal popolo dei giusti.</p> <p>6 Il Signore protegge il cammino dei giusti; la via dei malvagi finisce nel nulla.</p>

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Understanding Jesus' Parables: "God's kingdom is like . . ."

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1. What is a parable?

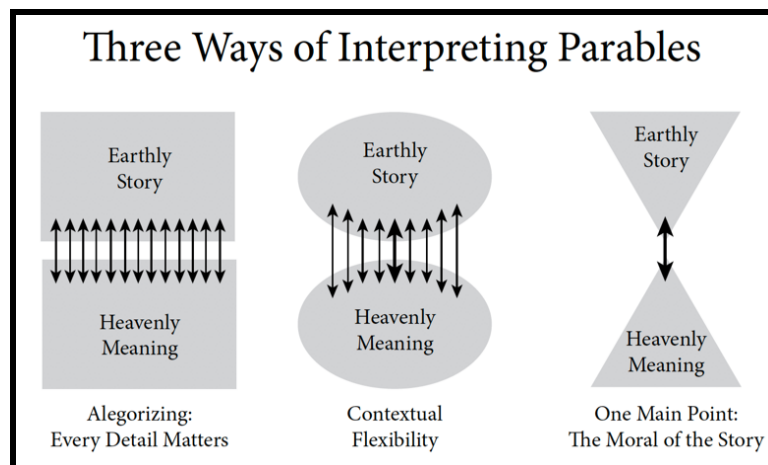
- A parable is an extended or narrative simile
 - "The kingdom of heaven is like . . ." (Matt 13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47, 52; 20:1; 25:1 etc.)
- A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.
- Jesus' parables are drawn from the real world of first century Palestine, but with occasional hyperbolic elements.

2. Where do we find parables in the Bible?

- Matthew, Mark, Luke [<https://www.jesuschristssavior.net/Parable.html>]
 - There are about 30 different parables in Matthew, Mark, and Luke
- Are John's "figures of speech" (John 10:6; 16:25) parables? (cf. John 10:1-5; 15:1-4)
- Occasionally in the Old Testament (Jdg 9:7-15; 2 Sam 12:1-4; Isa 5:1-7; Ezek 17)

3. How do we interpret parables?

- Historical context: ancient culture and customs
- Literary context: how does the parable contribute to the episode in which it occurs?
 - Parables have their own plot, characters, point of view, suspense, crisis, resolution
- To what extent do we press the details?



• Should we try to re-tell Jesus' parables in our own contemporary language and culture (Luke 15:11-32)?

A young girl grows up on a cherry orchard just above Traverse City, Michigan. Her parents, a bit old-fashioned, tend to overreact to her nose ring, the music she listens to, and the length of her skirts. They ground her a few times, and she seethes inside. "I hate you!" she screams at her father when he knocks on the door of her room after an argument, and that night she acts on a plan she has mentally rehearsed scores of times. She runs away. She has visited Detroit only once before, on a bus trip with her church youth group to watch the Tigers play. Because newspapers in Traverse City report in lurid detail the gangs, the drugs, and the violence in downtown Detroit, she concludes that is probably the last place her parents will look for her. California, maybe, or Florida, but not Detroit.

Her second day there she meets a man who drives the biggest car she's ever seen. He offers her a ride, buys her lunch, arranges a place for her to stay. He gives her some pills that make her better than she's ever felt before. She was right all along, she decides: her parents were keeping her from all the fun. The good life continues for a month, two months, a year. The man with the big car—she calls him "Boss"—teaches her a few things that men like. Since she's underage, men pay a premium for her. She lives in a penthouse, and orders room service whenever she wants. Occasionally she thinks about the folks back home, but their lives seem so boring and provincial that she can hardly believe she grew up there. She has a brief scare when she sees her picture printed on the back of a milk carton with the headline "Have you seen this child?" But by now she has blond hair, and with all the makeup and body-piercing jewelry she wears, nobody would mistake her for a child. Besides, most of her friends are runaways, and nobody squeals in Detroit.

After a year the first sallow signs of illness appear, and it amazes her how fast the boss turns mean. "These days, we can't mess around," he growls, and before she knows it she's out on the street without a penny to her name. She still turns a couple of tricks a night, but they don't pay much, and all the money goes to support her habit. When winter blows in, she finds herself sleeping on metal grates outside the big department stores. "Sleeping" is the wrong word— a teenage girl at night in downtown Detroit can never relax her guard. Dark bands circle her eyes. Her cough worsens. One night as she lies awake listening for footsteps, all of a sudden everything about her life looks different. She no longer feels like a woman of the world. She feels like a little girl, lost in a cold and frightening city. She begins to whimper. Her pockets are empty and she's hungry. She needs a fix. She pulls her legs tight underneath her and shivers under the newspapers she's piled atop her cloak. Something jolts a synapse of memory and a single memory and a single image fills her mind: of May in Traverse City, when a million cherry trees bloom at once, with her golden retriever dashing through the rows and rows of blossomy trees in chase of a tennis ball. God, why did I leave, she says to herself, and pain stabs at her heart. My dog back home eats better than I do now. She's sobbing and she knows in a flash that more than anything else in the world she wants to go home.

Three straight phone calls, three straight connections with the answering machine. She hangs up without leaving a message the first two times, but the third time she says, "Dad, Mom, it's me. I was wondering about maybe coming home. I'm catching a bus up your way, and it'll get there about midnight tomorrow. If you're not there, well, I guess I'll just stay on the bus until it hits Canada." It takes about seven hours for a bus to make all the stops between Detroit and Traverse City, and during that time, she realizes the flaws in her plan. What if her parents are out of town and miss the message? Shouldn't she have waited another day or so until she could talk to them? And even if they are home, they probably wrote her off as dead long ago. She should have given them some time to overcome the shock. Her thoughts bounce back and forth between those worries and the speech she is preparing for her father. "Dad, I'm sorry. I know I was wrong. It's not your fault; it's all mine. Dad can you forgive me?" she says the words over and over. Her throat tightening even as she rehearses them. She hasn't apologized to anyone in years. The bus has been driving with lights on since Bay City. Tiny snowflakes hit the pavement rubbed worn by thousands of tires and the asphalt steams. She's forgotten how dark it gets at night out here. A deer darts across the road and the bus swerves. Every so often, a sign posting the mileage to Traverse City. Oh, God. When the bus finally rolls into the station, its air brakes hissing in protest, the driver announces in a crackly voice over the microphone, "fifteen minutes, folks. That's all we have here." Fifteen minutes to decide her life. She checks herself in a compact mirror, smooths her hair, and licks the lipstick off her teeth. She looks at the tobacco stains on her fingertips, and wonders if her parents will notice. If they're there.

She walks into the terminal not knowing what to expect. Not one of the thousand scenes that have played out in her mind prepare her for what she sees. There, in the concrete-wall-and-plastic-chairs bus terminal in Traverse City, Michigan, stands a group of forty brothers and sisters and great-aunts and uncles and cousins and a grandmother to boot. They're all wearing goofy party hats and blowing noise-makers, and taped across the entire wall of the terminal is a computer-generated banner that reads "Welcome home!" Out of the crowd of well-wishers breaks her Dad. She stares out through the tears quivering in her eyes like hot mercury and begins the memorized speech, "Dad, I'm sorry. I know ..." He interrupts her. "Hush, child. We've got no time for that. No time for apologies. You'll be late for the party. A banquet's waiting for you at home."

[*"Lovesick Father," Philip Yancey, What's So Amazing about Grace? (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), pp. 49-51.*]

6. Worksheet: Luke 18:9-14 (observations, interpretive questions, correlated Scriptures, and application)

Read the parable a few times. Think about its literary context, cultural setting, plot, characters, and development of tension. Correlate the parable with Luke 3:12; 5:27-30; 7:29; 34; 15:1; 19:2 on tax collectors, and with 1 Sam 2:7; Ezek 21:26; Matt 23:12; Luke 14:11; Jas 4:10; 1 Pet 5:6 on pride and humility. What's the main point of the parable?

La Nuova Diodati	Nuova Riveduta	La Parola è Vita
<p>⁹ Disse ancora questa parabola per certuni che presumevano di essere giusti e disprezzavano gli altri.</p> <p>¹⁰ «Due uomini salirono al tempio per pregare; uno era fariseo e l'altro pubblicano</p> <p>¹¹ Il fariseo, stando in piedi, dentro di sé pregava così: "O Dio, ti ringrazio che non sono come gli altri uomini, rapaci, ingiusti, adulteri, e neppure come quel pubblicano.</p> <p>¹² Io digiuno due volte la settimana e pago la decima di tutto ciò che possiedo".</p> <p>¹³ Il pubblicano invece, stando lontano, non ardiva neppure alzare gli occhi al cielo; ma si batteva il petto, dicendo: "O Dio, sii placato verso me peccatore",</p> <p>¹⁴ Io vi dico che questi, e non l'altro, ritornò a casa sua giustificato, perché chiunque si innalza sarà abbassato e chi si abbassa sarà innalzato».</p>	<p>⁹ Disse ancora questa parabola per certuni che erano persuasi di essere giusti e disprezzavano gli altri:</p> <p>¹⁰ «Due uomini salirono al tempio per pregare; uno era fariseo e l'altro pubblicano.</p> <p>¹¹ Il fariseo, stando in piedi, pregava così dentro di sé: "O Dio, ti ringrazio che io non sono come gli altri uomini, ladri, ingiusti, adulteri; neppure come questo pubblicano.</p> <p>¹² Io digiuno due volte la settimana, pago la decima su tutto quello che possiedo".</p> <p>¹³ Ma il pubblicano se ne stava a distanza e non osava neppure alzare gli occhi al cielo; ma si batteva il petto, dicendo: "O Dio, abbi pietà di me, peccatore!"</p> <p>¹⁴ Io vi dico che questo tornò a casa sua giustificato, piuttosto che quello; perché chiunque s'innalza sarà abbassato, ma chi si abbassa sarà innalzato».</p>	<p>9 Poi raccontò questa storia, diretta a certuni che in cuor loro sono convinti di essere giusti e disprezzano gli altri:</p> <p>10 «Due uomini andarono al tempio a pregare. Uno era un Fariseo ipocrita e pieno di sé, l'altro un esattore delle tasse disonesto.</p> <p>11 L'orgoglioso Fariseo se ne stava in piedi e pregava così: "Grazie Dio, perché non sono un peccatore come tutti gli altri, specialmente come quell'esattore delle tasse là in fondo! Perché non imbroglio la gente, non commetto adulterio,</p> <p>12 digiuno due volte la settimana e offro al tempio la decima parte di tutto ciò che guadagno".</p> <p>13 L'esattore, intanto, se ne stava a distanza e non osava neppure alzare gli occhi al cielo, mentre pregava, ma, battendosi il petto per il dolore, diceva: "O Dio, abbi pietà di me, peccatore!"</p> <p>14 Ebbene, ve lo dico io: fu questo peccatore, e non il Fariseo, a ritornare a casa perdonato! Perché l'orgoglioso sarà umiliato, ma l'umile sarà onorato!».</p>

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 9: Understanding the Wisdom Books:
Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes

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1. What is wisdom and wisdom literature?

- Wisdom amounts to skillfully applying biblical knowledge and truth to life's complexities.
- *Information is not insight*; many "smart" people are not wise people.
- Wisdom is not law to be obeyed or doctrine to be believed but guidelines and insights to be applied as needed.
- Wisdom books do not share the same form or genre like letters, poems, or narratives do.
- Wisdom books share the **purpose** of teaching their audience how to live a godly and therefore a successful life in a broken world.
- Wisdom books don't give us simplistic rules or guarantees for life but general principles and guidelines that we apply prayerfully and skillfully.

2. Where do we find wisdom literature in the Bible?

- Job
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Some Psalms (e.g. 1, 37, 119)
- Embedded in other books, especially James
- Apocryphal books like Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus) and Wisdom of Solomon

3. How do we interpret wisdom literature?

- Historical and literary context remain important: we need to understand the ancient situation external to these books and the internal flow of thought in these books.

• Job

- Job conveys wisdom through a narrative meant for our reflection.
- Job's narrative is framed by third person "omniscient" narrator who supplies a prologue (1-2) and an epilogue (42:7-17). The bulk of the book is tedious dialogue between Job and his three friends (3-31) and Elihu (32-37), leading up to God speaking from the whirlwind (38:1-41:34) and Job's reply (42:1-6).
- Job is a *theodicy*: it vindicates God from blame when the righteous suffer.
- Notice how the gritty, *realistic* story of Job balances the potential simplistic and *triumphalistic* interpretation of Proverbs. For example, see Prov 22:6; 37:25 and the discussion of Proverbs below.
- Notice how Job is mentioned in Ezekiel 14:14, 20 and James 5:11
- Notice how Paul uses Job 5:13 in 1 Corinthians 3:19 and Job 41:11 in Romans 11:35.

• Proverbs

- A Proverb is a pithy saying, an adage or maxim derived from extensive observation of human experience: "A stitch in time saves nine," "you don't miss your water 'til your well runs dry," etc.
- Biblical proverbs are often expressed through parallelism/pairs/couplets.

Il pane frodato è dolce all'uomo,
ma, dopo, avrà la bocca piena di ghiaia. (Prov 20:17 Nuova Riveduta)
- Proverbs are not promises or guarantees; they are reasonable principles or guidelines.

- Occasionally a short story occurs, as in **Proverbs 24:30-34**:

La Nuova Diodati	Nuova Riveduta	Traduzione Interconfessionale in Lingua Corrente
<p>³⁰ Son passato presso il campo del pigro e presso la vigna dell'uomo privo di senno;</p> <p>³¹ ed ecco, dovunque crescevano le spine, i rovi ne coprivano il suolo e il muro di pietre era crollato.</p> <p>³² Osservando ciò, riflettei attentamente; da quel che vidi ne ricavai una lezione:</p> <p>³³ dormire un po' sonnacchiare un po' incrociare un po' le braccia per riposare;</p> <p>³⁴ così la tua povertà verrà come un ladro e la tua indigenza come un uomo armato.</p>	<p>³⁰ Passai presso il campo del pigro e presso la vigna dell'uomo privo di senno;</p> <p>³¹ ed ecco, le spine vi crescevano dappertutto, i rovi ne coprivano il suolo e il muro di cinta era in rovina.</p> <p>³² Considerai la cosa e mi posi a riflettere; e da quel che vidi trassi una lezione:</p> <p>³³ dormire un po', sonnacchiare un po', incrociare un po' le mani per riposare...</p> <p>³⁴ e la tua povertà verrà come un ladro e la tua miseria, come un uomo armato.</p>	<p>³⁰ Sono passato attraverso i campi di un fannullone, e attraverso la vigna di uno stolto:</p> <p>³¹ non c'erano che cespugli di rovi e spine; il muretto di pietre era caduto.</p> <p>³² Ho osservato tutto questo con molta attenzione e ho imparato questa lezione:</p> <p>³³ un po' dormire, un po' sonnacchiare, un po' riposare con le mani in mano,</p> <p>³⁴ e intanto, come un vagabondo ti arriva addosso la povertà, e come un mendicante, la miseria.</p>

• Ecclesiastes

- Ecclesiastes conveys wisdom through observing the ambiguities and inconsistencies of life "under the sun" (every chapter except 7, 11).
- A third person prologue (1:1-11) and epilogue (12:8-14) frame the first person narrative of the preacher/teacher's observations that form most of the book (1:12-12:7)
- The emphasis on life as "meaningless" (NIV, NLT) or "vanity" (KJV, NIV) in chapters 1-8, 11-12, leads many to take the book as **cynicism** or bad advice (Eccl)
- A better option is to take the book as **realism** about life in a broken world where, in spite of all the ambiguity, we must still acknowledge and obey God who is the judge of all humanity (1:13; 2:24-26; 3:10-22; 5:1-7; 5:18-6:2; 7:13-14, 18, 26, 29; 8:12-13, 15; 9:1, 7, 9; 11:5, 9; 12:1, 6-7, 13-14).
- Along with Job, Ecclesiastes cautions us from reading Proverbs naively and simplistically.
- Fun Fact: The oldest lyric of any number one song ever recorded is found in Ecclesiastes. Do you know what it is? If not, it's *time* you knew.

4. Conclusion: Two Kinds of Wisdom in James 3:13-18

La Nuova Diodati	Nuova Riveduta	Traduzione Interconfessionale in Lingua Corrente
<p>¹³ Chi è savio e intelligente fra voi? Mostri con la buona condotta le sue opere fatte con mansuetudine di sapienza.</p> <p>¹⁴ Ma se nel vostro cuore avete amara gelosia e spirito di contesa, non vantatevi e non mentite contro la verità.</p> <p>¹⁵ Questa non è la sapienza che discende dall'alto, ma è terrena, animale e diabolica.</p> <p>¹⁶ Dove infatti c'è invidia e contesa, lì c'è turbamento ed ogni sorta di opere malvagie.</p> <p>¹⁷ Ma la sapienza che viene dall'alto prima di tutto è pura, poi pacifica, mite, docile, piena di misericordia e di frutti buoni, senza parzialità e senza ipocrisia.</p> <p>¹⁸ Or il frutto della giustizia si semina nella pace per quelli che si adoperano alla pace.</p>	<p>¹³ Chi fra voi è saggio e intelligente? Mostri con la buona condotta le sue opere compiute con mansuetudine e saggezza.</p> <p>¹⁴ Ma se avete nel vostro cuore amara gelosia e spirito di contesa, non vi vantate e non mentite contro la verità.</p> <p>¹⁵ Questa non è la saggezza che scende dall'alto; ma è terrena, naturale^[e] e diabolica.</p> <p>¹⁶ Infatti, dove c'è invidia e contesa, c'è disordine e ogni cattiva azione.</p> <p>¹⁷ La saggezza che viene dall'alto anzitutto è pura; poi pacifica, mite, conciliante, piena di misericordia e di buoni frutti, imparziale, senza ipocrisia.</p> <p>¹⁸ Il frutto della giustizia si semina nella pace per coloro che si adoperano per la pace.</p>	<p>¹³ Qualcuno, tra voi, pensa di essere saggio e intelligente? Bene! Lo faccia vedere con i fatti, comportandosi bene; mostri insieme gentilezza e saggezza.</p> <p>¹⁴ Se invece il vostro cuore è pieno di amara gelosia e di voglia di litigare, fate a meno di vantarvi e non dite menzogne che offendono la verità.</p> <p>¹⁵ Una saggezza di questo genere non viene da Dio: è sapienza di questo mondo, materiale, diabolica.</p> <p>¹⁶ Infatti dove regnano la gelosia e la voglia di litigare, ci sono disordini e cattiverie di ogni genere.</p> <p>¹⁷ Invece la saggezza che viene da Dio è assolutamente pura; è pacifica, comprensiva, docile, ricca di bontà e di opere buone; è senza ingiuste preferenze e senza alcuna ipocrisia.</p> <p>¹⁸ Le persone che creano la pace attorno a sé sono come seminatori che raccolgono nella pace il loro frutto: una vita giusta.</p>

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 10: Understanding Biblical Prophecy:
Preaching and Promising

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1. What is biblical prophecy?

- Prophecy is not soothsaying or prognosticating.
- Prophecy is not "history written beforehand."
- Prophecy is speaking in the name of the Lord as his mouthpiece about his covenant with his people (Deut 18:15-19; Acts 3:18-25).
- Prophecy is preaching (ethics).
 - Addresses current issues (orthodoxy and orthopraxy)
 - "Remember Moses? What he said!"
- Prophecy is promising (consequences).
 - Addresses the future
 - "Disobey and you will pay." (oracles of judgment)
 - "Listen and you will be blessed (oracles of salvation/blessing)
- Prophecy comes in oracles and visions (Isa 1:1; 6:1; Jer 1:4; 11:1; Ezek 1:1; 3:16; Hos 1:1).
- Prophecy is expressed poetically.

2. Where do we find prophecy in the Bible?

- Old Testament books about the *lives* of the prophets
 - 1-2 Samuel; 1-2 Kings; 1-2 Chronicles (e.g. Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Nathan)
- Old Testament books about the *messages* (oracles) of the prophets
 - Isaiah to Malachi
 - Anthologies or collections: "Jeremiah's greatest hits"
- New Testament prophecy is embedded in other books
 - Gospels: "The Olivet Discourse:" Matthew 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 24
 - Acts 11:27; 13:1; 15:32; 21:10
 - Letters: 1 Cor 12:10, 29; 13:2, 9; 14; 1 Thes 4:15-18; 1 Tim 4:1-5; 2 Tim 3:1-9; 2 Pet 1:19-21; 3:1-13
- The Book of Revelation (The Apocalypse)

3. How do we interpret biblical prophecy?

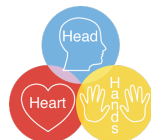
- Historical and literary context remain important: we need to understand the **ancient situation** external to these books and the internal **flow of thought** in these books.
- Determine the limits of the oracle/vision/passage under consideration.
- Try to understand the poetic/figurative language
- If there is a promise, think about the question of near and far fulfillment.
 - 1 Pet 1:10-12

- If an OT passage, determine whether the NT refers to it.
- Case study: Jesus' "Olivet Discourse" (Matt 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 21)

Brief Synopsis of the Olivet Discourse			
Content	Matthew	Mark	Luke
1. Setting	24:1–3	13:1–4	21:5–7
2. Beginning of birth pains	24:4–14	13:5–13	21:8–19
3. Abomination of desolation	24:15–28	13:14–23	21:20–24
4. Coming of the Son of Man	24:29–31	13:24–27	21:25–27
5. Lesson of the fig tree	24:32–41	13:28–32	21:28–33
6. Necessity of alertness	24:42–44	13:33–37	21:34–36
7. Parable of the servant	24:45–51		
8. Parable of ten virgins	25:1–13		
9. Parable of the talents	25:14–30		
10. Judgment of the nations	25:31–46		

5. Conclusion: Why Prophecy?

- Prophecy does not merely inform; it transforms.
 - Prophecy shows God's care for his people.
 - Prophecy calls God's people to faithfulness.
 - Prophecy gives God's people hope, and hope gives them strength.
 - *The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy* (Rev 19:10).
 - *Those who hope in Jesus purify themselves even as Jesus is pure* (1 John 3:3)



Sanctify them through your truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)

La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 11: Understanding Biblical Apocalyptic:
Visions of the End-times

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1. What is biblical apocalyptic?

- The origin of the word *apocalyptic* concerns unveiling what is hidden, but the word is used to describe worldviews, events, and literature related to end-time catastrophes.
- **Biblical apocalyptic is visionary prophecy** that shows the *judgment* and *blessing* that come at the end of the present age and the arrival of God's kingdom on earth.
- Ancient apocalyptic literature portrays catastrophic judgment as the only solution to the sinfulness that pervades the earth and the persecution of God's people.
- Realism and Surrealism
 - Most biblical books are *realistic*: they portray the events and realities of everyday life.
 - Apocalyptic is *surrealistic*: it portrays an alternate reality envisioned by a Spirit-enabled prophet.
 - The prophet's account of the vision necessarily uses this-worldly imagery to portray other-worldly reality (e.g. Dan 2, 7; Rev 21-22).

3. Where do we find apocalyptic in the Bible?

- Old Testament: Isaiah 24-27; Ezekiel 38-39; Daniel 7-12, Joel 2:28-3:21; Zechariah 9-14
- New Testament: Matthew 24; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Thessalonians 2; 2 Peter 3; Revelation

4. How do we interpret biblical apocalyptic?

- Historical and literary context: the **ancient situation** external to these books and the internal **flow of thought** in these books.
- Find where the vision begins and ends (*form*).
- Understand the visionary imagery (*freedom*)
 - *Symbols/metaphors/similes* portray real events, persons, and places.
 - Symbols are not *blueprints* or exact representations of those realities.
 - Use your imagination with the text to picture the surreal, transcendent world seen by the prophet.

5. Case Study: the Book of Revelation

- Although other books have apocalyptic *sections*, Revelation (aka The Apocalypse) is the only apocalyptic *book* in the Bible.

- Although the very first word of the book (its title?) is "Apocalypse," afterward it describes itself as "prophecy" (1:3; 22:7, 10, 18-19).

How do you understand the Book of Revelation?

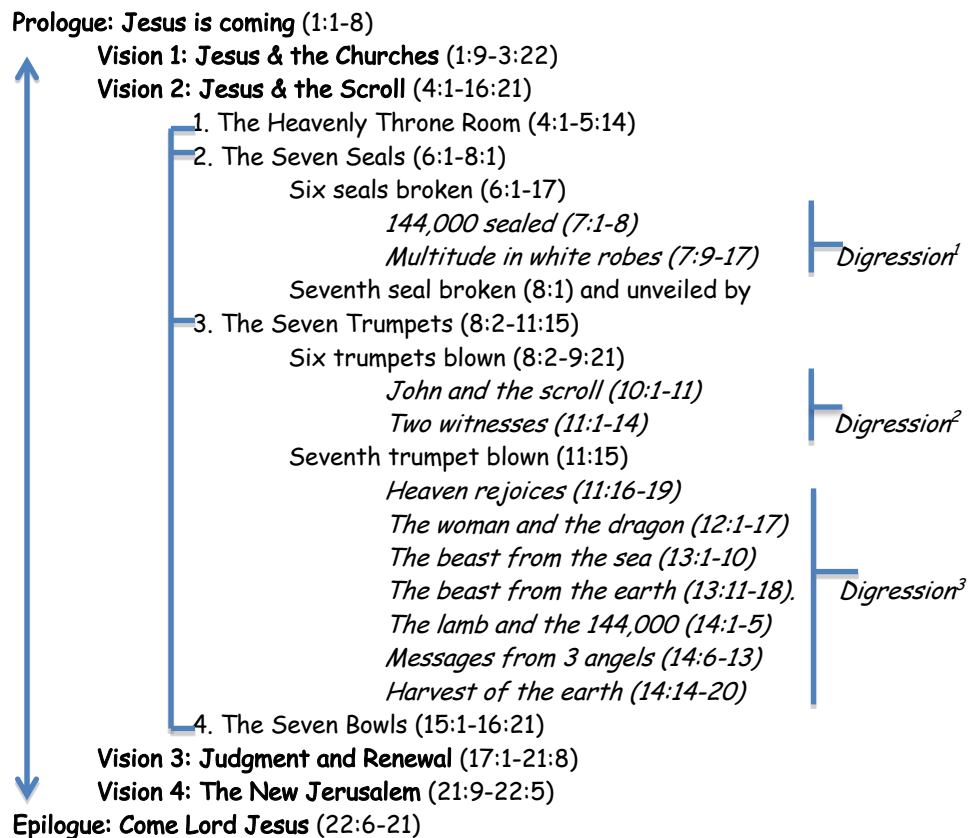
The book of Revelation

- addresses the situation of first century churches.
- portrays the victory of Jesus through symbols.
- describes key events in the history of civilization.
- predicts events which will occur in the future.
- All of the above are true.

Major views of Revelation:

Preterism
Idealism
Historicism
Futurism
Eclecticism

- Key features of the Book of Revelation
 - Major sections (visions) marked by "in the Spirit" (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10)
 - Transitions within visions marked by "and I saw" (e.g. 5:1, 6, 11; 6:1)
 - Repeated reminders of the "One sitting on the throne" (4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18)
 - Several series of "sevens" (churches, seals, trumpets, bowls, etc.)
- How Revelation fits together:

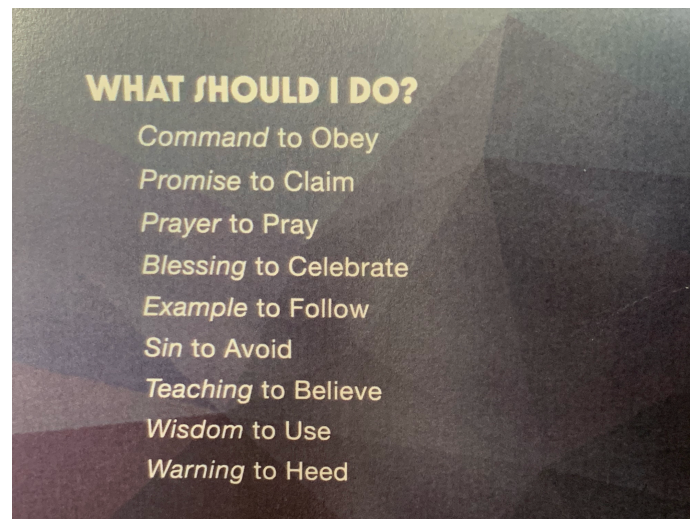


La Chiesa Evangelica Veritas
Corso di Formazione Intensiva: Come Interpretare la Bibbia
Session 12: Understanding How to Apply the Bible

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1. What does it mean to "apply" the Bible?

- The Bible was written *for us*, but it was not written *directly to us*.
- To apply the Bible is to move from what it *meant to its ancient audience* to *what it means to its contemporary audience*.
 - Our tendency is to move immediately to what it *means*, ignoring the historical, cultural, situational, and theological **distance** between us and the original biblical audience.
- We tend to apply the Bible *spontaneously* "as the spirit leads."
 - What "spirit" are we listening to? What is the source of that "still small voice"?
 - What kind of day are we having? Our Bible reading is influenced by our momentary emotional state.
 - *Confirmation bias* is real: we tend to find what we are looking for in the Bible.
- We need to apply the Bible *thoughtfully and intentionally* as a check on our tendency to see what we want to see in the Bible.
- How does the **Head, Heart, Hands** logo guide us in applying the Bible?
- Here are some specific questions to ask as we seek to apply the Bible to ourselves today:

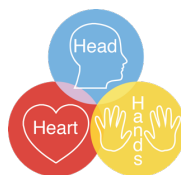


2. Principles of biblical application:

- *Submission*: applying the Bible begins with *humility* before God and prayerful *dependence* on the Holy Spirit.

- *Study*: applying the Bible requires *understanding* of the Bible. Genuine transformation comes from accurate information.
- *Start here*: What was the *original* application intended by the biblical author? Is the *current* application identical to the *original* application? Read on to see why it might not be . . .
- *Narrative and norms*: Events or practices found in biblical narratives do not automatically transfer to us as normative patterns or precedents that must be obeyed today.
 - Acts: Casting lots, Pentecost, community of goods, Antioch sending Barnabas and Saul on a mission.
- *Cultural relativity*: Certain practices from the ancient near-eastern cultures of the Bible do not have the same significance in current western cultures. For example,
 - "kinsman redeemer" (levirate marriage: Lev 25:23-25; Deut 25:5-6; Ruth; Matt 22:24)
 - Slavery (Eph 6:5-9; Col 3:22-4:1; Philemon)
 - Holy war (Exodus, Joshua)
 - Eating meat sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:20, 29; Rom 14; 1 Cor 8)
 - "Greet one another with a holy kiss" (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26)
 - Head coverings (1 Cor 11:4-16)
- *Comparable particulars*: To what extent is our situation comparable to the situation of the biblical text we are studying?
 - Often it's best to deduce a principle for wise living rather than a command or pattern.

3. Case Study: How should we apply the message of Jude to our personal lives, to our family and social relationships, and to our churches?



Sanctify them through your truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)

