

HERMENEUTICS

SOLA SCRIPTURA

The Scriptures alone are the single source of Authority for all doctrines, beliefs, and deeds.

The Holy Bible, in its original language and form, is the Rule and Guide to faith and practice, to square our actions, structure our intentions, and shape our imaginations.

Afflatus (Divinely Inspired), accurate, and absolute, it is the inestimable gift of the Most High to Man.

If we are to be a "People of the Book", as our enemies accuse us, no other opinion is authorized apart from or against Scripture - no tradition, theory, or theology.

Nothing but the Book.

The Scriptures being those 66 books held common to all Christian denominations.

While not discounting
the Didache.

ANALOGY OF FAITH

Scripture interprets itself, and no one has the right to act as the authority over it (neither pastor nor church, neither denomination nor religion).

The Bible must be studied by drawing out the meaning it contains, instead of putting meaning into it. Exegesis as opposed to Eisegesis.

This Book must be read by the literary rules and linguistic patterns ordinarily applied to all other books, accepting such academic tools as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, and genre.

As the Bible does not contradict itself, we must use the meaning of the sure to explain the obscure, the explicit to reveal the implicit. No explanation is correct if it conflicts with the rest.

The later does not replace the former, nor the “new” overrule the “old”.

All Texts build upon
each other in ascending
patterns

TABULA RAZA (BLANK SLATE)

Being aware of our biased minds, we must forget everything we think we know already, before we can come to the Bible for accurate, unfiltered knowledge.

We must approach Scripture not to **read** but to **study**, our hearts and minds prepared to find things inside it's pages that very well might clash with our former ideas.

Lacking preconceptions of our culture, customs, and conditioning, we must decide to allow the Word of the Most High to tell us what to think rather than thinking we have the right to tell it what to allow for us.

Then we must be willing to change when challenged by the Scriptures, because we crave the Truth, not confirmation of our tradition.

First we study **without our bias, and then we study **against** our bias.**

**Finally we must
scrutinize our findings.**

LITERAL SENSE

Assuming that at all times the Bible means what it says literally, even if it seems improbable or impossible, allow almost always for Epistles to explain Gospels (though Gospels are usually self-defining). But allow for Gospels to supersede Epistles in Authority.

Proverbs, Prophecies, and Parables are always true for some occasions, but not always true for all occasions. - Be aware that most parts of Scripture mean what they say literally yet others are literally meant as expressions. - Do not go beyond what is written to find hidden meaning or secret knowledge which would run contrary to the literal meaning.

Chapters and verses being later additions should not be sought after or regarded during serious study.

Scripture must be studied in the sense in which it was written.

And not all that was meant was said.

HISTORICAL CRITICAL METHOD

Because context determines the meaning of a passage of Scripture, and no doctrine can ever define the message, all Scripture must be analyzed and understood through the grammatical, historical, and cultural context in which it was written. - The Holy Bible is a **Hebrew Book written by **Hebrew** prophets in the **Hebrew** language telling of the Elohim of the **Hebrews**, WHO promised the **Hebrew** Messiah Whose **Hebrew** Gospel was taught by **Hebrew** emissaries, therefore we must study it from the perspective of these ancient **Hebrews** of the first century and further back, not from our far off Greek viewpoint of the 21st century.**

Asking the hard questions; **who, what, when, where, and why, we then must be ready to adapt our lives to these facts and not the other way around.**

If read outside their setting and selectively applied, Bible verses can create false theology.

Thus we must study humbly and openly, acknowledging that our own ideas may be flawed.

TEXT IN CONTEXT

All doctrinal falsehoods stem from a failure to follow these methods, which create in their wake, many thousands of denominations all vying for dominion. For this reason, we affirm the age old saying, “A text without a context is a pretext,” without which four primary perversions of Bible study develop;

Proof texting - Looking for Bible verses (out of context) to prove a preexisting belief.

Soundbiting - Taking lone verses (out of context) to create doctrine devoid of original intent.

Grabbagging - Blindly trying to find in Scripture (out of context) meaning for every moment of modern life.

Lucky-dipping - Pointing to a random verse (out of context) and deciding the Holy Spirit sent us there for answers.

With a humble heart we must be willing to accept the condition of not knowing the answer until we acquire clear understanding, even if it never comes.

"PARDES"

FOUR BASIC MODES OF HEBRAIC INTERPRETATION

These four methods of studying a text are remembered by the Hebrew word "PaRDeS", an acronym formed from the initials of each and meaning "orchard" or "garden". A nod to Eden. Understanding this method makes many Bible texts clearer or deeper since there is usually more to the Text than merely the plain meaning.

P'shat ("simple")

Remez ("hint")

Drash or Midrash ("search")

Sod ("secret")

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Remez HaRemezim (Hint of Hints)

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The PaRDeS method required **extreme** caution and the **utmost** intention.

No level of interpretation can **ever** contradict the P'shat.

P'SHAT ("SIMPLE")

The plain, literal sense of a text, more or less what modern scholars mean by grammatical-historical exegesis, which examines the arrangement and meaning of words and phrases within the sentences and paragraphs, as well as the historical setting as background for deciding what a passage means. Without question grammatical-historical exegesis is the primary way to properly interpret a text.

The P'shat is the foundation for all Biblical interpretation and the benchmark for measuring accuracy of all other possible levels of study and understanding.

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REMEZ ("HINT")

Words, phrases, passages or other elements in the text which hint at earlier ones or which foreshadow those appearing later.

Underlying thoughts or ideas not always readily seen in the P'shat (simple or literal) interpretation.

Analogies and parallelisms are understood on this level of study.

The Remez is a suggestion of connectivity between characters and experiences throughout the text as well as reoccurring objects or scenarios.

Visions and prophecies should almost always be viewed through the Remez level unless otherwise declared plainly in the passage.

DRASH OR MIDRASH ("SEARCH")

This level is a homiletical or expository means of unfolding, explaining, or applying a text. On this level a sermon expanding on the principle or lesson of a text is expected and accepted.

Hiding a truth in a fanciful story is a common tactic. The intent being to relay the entirety of a point to anyone hearing the tale but allowing them to decide how much truth they want to gain from it. Those who want the whole truth will search it out in the story. Those who desire a simple morality tale get only that.

A Drash (Midrash) is almost always a fictional tale and is built upon common elements recycled in other tales to make a different point. For example how leaven can represent sin in one story and the Kingdom of Heaven in another.

SOD ("SECRET")

A mystical or hidden meaning, often arrived at by considering the numerical values of the Hebrew letters, noting unusual spellings in the text, considering the transposing of letters, seeing connections between similar words and numbers, and finding double meanings in passages which also apply elsewhere.

The most dangerous level of interpretation is Sod, and we must give more caution to this than any other because the evidence can very often lead in opposite directions or alternatively be understood in an antithetical manner.

Yet the Sod cannot be wholly abandoned as it is integral to the means of our Master's teaching about Himself, His and His disciples' claims that specific prophecies apply to Him, and Their collective explanation of His presence throughout Scripture.

REMEZ HA REMEZIM (HINT OF HINTS)

While the PaRDeS method is exclusively P'shat, Remez, Drash, and Sod, its proponents long foretold the immergance of a fifth level they called Remez HaRemezim (Hint of Hints) sometimes rendered as Secret of Secrets, referring to the interpretation of the Messiah Himself. Though most proponents of this system believe the Messiah has not yet arived, we who follow Yahshua as our Master and Messiah know that this level of interpretation has arived and we are currently living in it.

It was said that the Messiah would correct Israel's interpretation of the Torah and that He would write the Torah using the White Letters, that is: using the same shapes of the Letters to tell the more complete tale of Redemption and Sanctification.



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