

# Seven ideas for enriching Scriptural understanding



---

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

# Modern Biblical Scholarship

---

- ✓ Seeks to answer a few questions about biblical texts
  - Who would have written this and why?
  - Who benefits from such a text?
  - What was its historical background?
  - Out of what cultural context did it arise?
  - Why was it preserved?
  - How was it shaped (edited) over time?

# Modern Biblical Scholarship

---

- ✓ Modern Biblical scholarship involves 'critical study' of the Bible, its sources, forms, historical contexts, and the ways it is read and interpreted.
- ✓ Many aspects of the Bible have an impact on how it came to be written in the shape we have it today.
- ✓ Studying these aspects can aid our understanding of the Bible and the way we apply it to our life and faith.

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

---

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

-- Gordon Fee

**How**

do we do that? It is not always an easy task.

TIP

A Bible passage will not mean what it never meant.

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

---

1. The historical gap between Bible times and today.

We do not live in 800 B.C.

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



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

---

1. The historical gap

2. Social, Economic, Political and  
Cultural gaps

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



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

---

1. The historical gap
2. Social and cultural gaps

### 3. Language differences

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

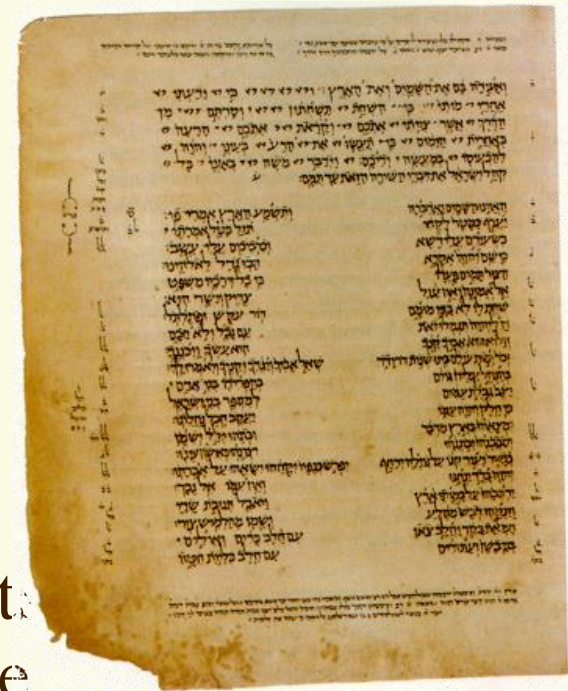
**קבוצת צבר בע"מ**

τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λελάληκα ὑμῖν πνεῦμά ἐστίν καὶ ζωὴ ἐστίν.

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

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

None of the *original* manuscripts written by Paul or some of the Gospel writers or Isaiah have been found.

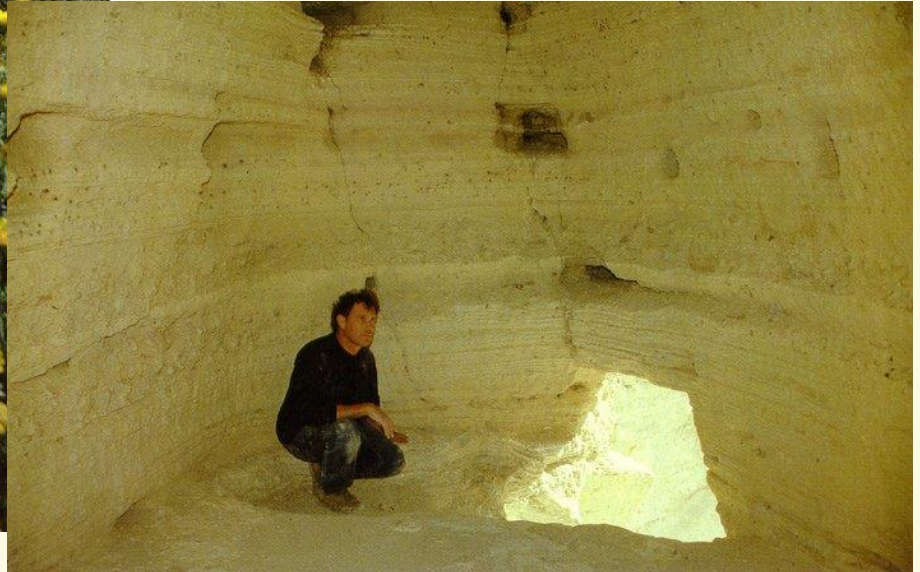




## Qumran Wadi with series of caves



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



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

---

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

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

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

---

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

# Bible literary types (genre)

---

✓ History

✓ Laws

✓ Biography

✓ Riddles

✓ Drama

✓ Poetry

✓ Letters

✓ Parables

✓ Wisdom

✓ Apocalypses

✓ Sermons

✓ Songs

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

---

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

## 7. Its divine inspiration

**The Bible is divinely inspired. It is the human hand and mind that wrote the Scriptures. God did not put pen to paper.**

Interpretation of the Bible is shaped by the tension between:

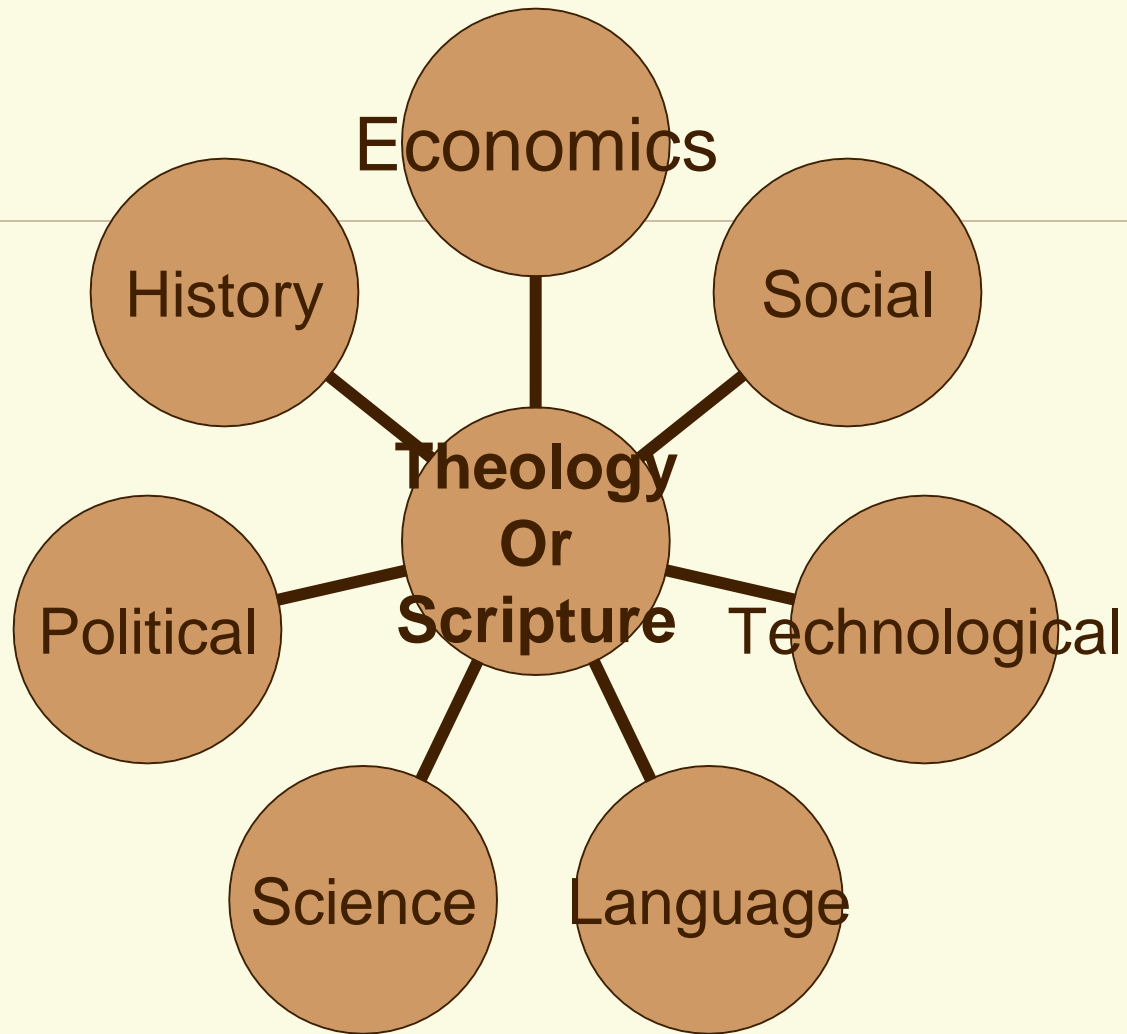
---

✓ 1. Eternal relevance

(“God’s Word never changes!”)

✓ 2. Historical particularity

(anchored in time)



# 7 ideas for enriching Bible understanding (End)



---

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