

V. How to Examine Historical and Cultural Background

What was the
situation?



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Version 1.2, November 2002

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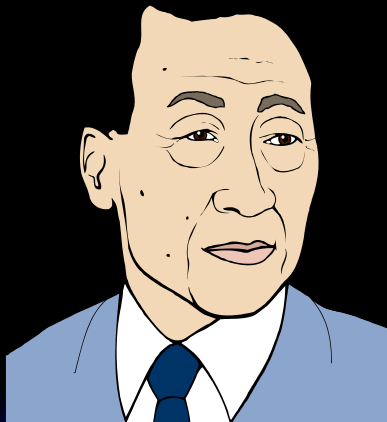
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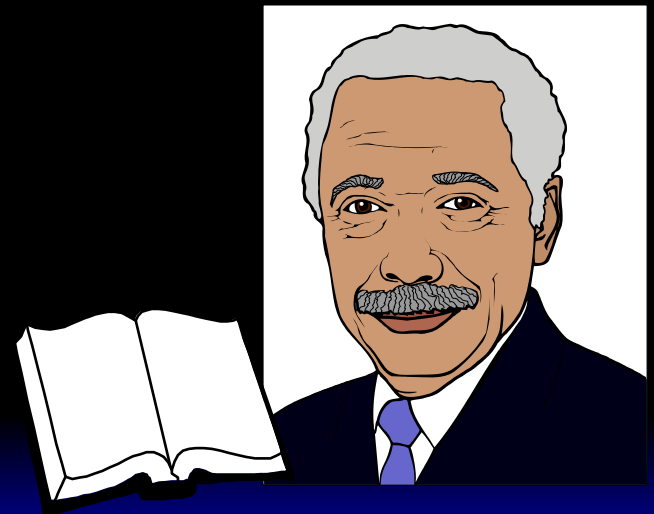
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The Challenge

Is all the Bible
directly about me?



God worked
with people
long ago in their
own circumstances.



Required Reading Assignments

- ◆ acquaint yourself with
 - Longman, *Old Testament Commentary Survey*
 - Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey*
 - www.bestcommentaries.com
 - Evans, *A Guide to Biblical Commentaries*
- ◆ Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation* 113-132.

Where Are We?

1. Preliminary acquaintance with the text
2. Exegesis in the original setting
 - a. **Learn about historical background**
3. Relations with other passages
4. Role in redemptive history
5. Application

◆ Application (IV) is illumined by historical circumstances.

Where Are We?

1. Preliminary acquaintance with the text
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 - a. **Learn about historical background**
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4. Role in redemptive history
5. Application

- ◆ Application (IV) is illumined when we see how real people lived within their historical circumstances.

Implications of *Lex Christi*

8C implies the pertinence of environment

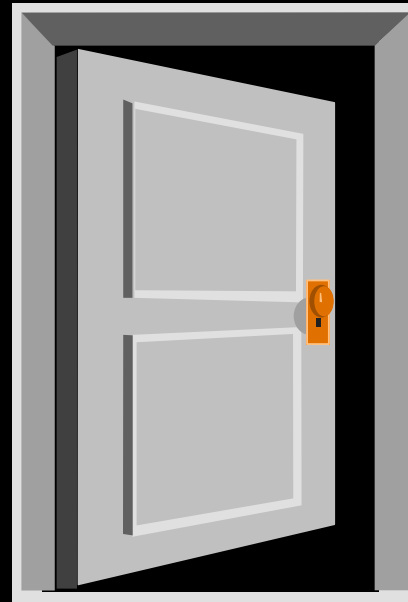


A. General Principles for Culture

Meaning Depends on Situation



The door
is open.



Situations and Meaning

“The door is open.”

- ◆ A fact.
- ◆ Someone was careless.
- ◆ Please close the door.
- ◆ Evidence that someone left in a hurry.
- ◆ Get out!



Context is
necessary.

Danger in Overhearing

- ◆ When you overhear, you may understand the words but not the point.

Behold, your king is
coming to you; righteous
and having salvation ...
(Zech. 9:9)

I will meet my
future husband.



Danger in Overhearing

- ◆ When you overhear someone else's conversation, you may understand the words but not the point.

Behold, your king is
coming to you; righteous
and having salvation ...
(Zech. 9:9)

I will meet my
future husband.





B. What to Look for

Aspects of Historical Situation

- ◆ Speaker: purpose, attitude, social position?
- ◆ Audience: attitude, social position? How affected?
- ◆ Environment: national situation, region, sites, time of year? Social customs?

Aspects of Historical Situation

- ◆ Speaker: what is the speaker's purpose, attitude, social position?
- ◆ Audience: what is the audiences' attitude, social position, religious standing? How might they change by hearing?
- ◆ Environment: what is the national situation, what region, sites, time of year? Are these significant? How do social customs differ from ours?



C. Bibliography

Old Testament Source Material

See attached bibliography

- a. Ancient Near East
- b. History and social customs
- c. Background of individual OT books

New Testament Source Material

See attached bibliography

- a. The Jewish world
- b. History and social customs
- c. Background for individual NT books

Other Sources

- ◆ Commentaries.

In introductory sections.

Other Sources

- ◆ Commentaries on individual books of the Bible.

In their introductory sections exegetical commentaries often provide much information about the setting of a particular book.