



# UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE

CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER  
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Using the book, "Understanding Scripture, How Read and Study the Bible" by *A. Berkeley Mickelsen and Alvera M. Mickelsen*, we will learn basic principles to help guide our interpretation. As you read each chapter fill in the appropriate questions with more than one word answers (unless otherwise directed). We will then discuss the assignments in class. The QR code takes you to the online version.



## **CHAPTER 1 “What Can We Expect From Bible Study?”**

1. What does the author mean when he says the Bible is not a book of magic?
2. List nine things we can expect to gain from a conscientious study of the Bible?

  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.
  - 6.
  - 7.
  - 8.
  - 9.

3. What are five approaches to Bible study we should be aware of that work against our gaining all we can from Bible study? Give a brief definition of each.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

4. What is a result of Christians practicing “selective literalism?”

5. What occurs when we approach the Bible with a “fortress mentality?”

6. What two questions are asked of Bible passages in order to follow sound interpretation?

1.

2.

## **CHAPTER 2 “How Can We Know What the Bible Means?”**

7. List and define two categories that many of the Bible’s teachings fall into.

1.

2.

8. How can we distinguish between the highest norms and regulations?
9. What part of the Old Testament Law is relevant for us today?
10. Read 1 Timothy 5. Which aspects represent highest standards found in the Old and New Testament and which were regulations for the people of Paul's day?

### **CHAPTER 3 "What Makes the Bible Different?"**

11. How is the Bible similar to other books that have been written? How is it different?
12. From whom does the Bible claim its authority? Why?
13. Briefly define the basic Hebrew words or phrases which are used in the Old Testament to declare that God is speaking.
  1. Neum:
  2. Amar:
  3. Davar:
14. How would *you* account for the differences in detail about the account of the life of Christ?

15. Briefly explain the important basic themes which unify the books of the Bible.

1.

2.

3.

4.

16. What areas of diversity are there within the framework of the books of the Bible?

1.

2.

3.

4.

17. Why is the book of Esther, which does not mention the Name of God, included in the progressive revelation of God?

#### **CHAPTER 4 “What to Look For in Bible Translations”**

18. What must a good translator be the master of?

19. Name the three languages in which the Bible was written?

1.

2.

3.

20. How are Aramaic and Hebrew related to each other?
21. In what particular passages was the Aramaic language used?
22. What is relationship of the Aramaic language to Hebrew?
23. Biblical languages were more \_\_\_\_\_ than \_\_\_\_\_.
24. How were the ancient Hebrew and Aramaic written, and how was the exact word determined?
25. When were the divisions of the Bible into chapters and verses added?
26. What was the Septuagint and why was it so important?
27. What language did Jesus speak?
28. Name the two major types of Bible translations. Briefly explain their strengths and weaknesses and give examples of each.
  - 1.
  - 2.

## **CHAPTER 5 “How the Bible Was Written and Compiled”**

29. When were the books of the New Testament probably written?

30. When were the writings of the Apostle Paul collected as group?
31. What Church Father quotes the writings of Paul in his letters between A.D. 95 and 110? Why is this significant?
32. Who was Marcion? Describe what he believed, and what “positive” influence he had on the early church.
33. What factors influenced the early church to recognize a writing as canonical?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
34. What four Church Fathers were important in recognizing the New Testament writings as authoritative? Give dates.
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
35. Describe the society in which this process took place.
36. When was the list of New Testament books established? How do we know this?

37. Who were the Samaritans and what books of the Old Testament did they recognize as authoritative?

38. Define the following:

1. Canon

2. The Septuagint

3. The Talmud

4. The Apocrypha

## **CHAPTER 6 “The Life and Times of Bible People”**

39. How does the Christian view history?

40. What does the German expression, “Sitz im Leben,” mean and what does it include?

41. What does the German expression, “Sitz im Glauben,” mean and what does it include?

42. What does a good Bible atlas and a good commentary provide?

43. What six factors must be kept in mind when studying any passage of Scripture?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

## **CHAPTER 7 “What is This Passage Talking About?”**

44. True or false \_\_\_\_ Context determines the meaning of a Biblical word.

45. Name and describe the three *types* of context.

1.

2.

3.

46. What are the three *aspects* of context?

1.

2.

3.

47. What normally controls the exact meaning of a specific passage of Scripture?

1.

2.

48. What are the advantages of studying parallel writings in the Bible?
49. What sections of the Old Testament and New Testament give no context?
  - 1.
  - 2.

## **CHAPTER 8 “The Bible is Rich in Figurative Language”**

50. Define the terms “figurative” and “literal.”
  - 1.
  - 2.
51. Define the following and give Scriptural examples (try to give examples not given in the book).
  1. Similes
  2. Metaphors
  3. Anthropomorphism
  4. Anthropopathism
  5. Words of association
  6. Personification
  7. Euphemism
  8. Hyperbole

9. Irony

**CHAPTER 9 “Parables and Allegories”**

52. What is a parable?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

53. What is an allegory?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

54. What is allegorizing?

55. What did many of Jesus' parables focus on? Give examples.

56. Give examples of allegories from the Old Testament.

57. Give examples of allegories from the New Testament.

## **CHAPTER 10 “What Were the Prophets Saying?”**

58. Define “Prophets.”

59. What was the one basic aim the Biblical Prophet had in mind as he/she prophesied?

60. What was the purpose of predictive prophecy and what was it never intended to do?

61. Explain the two erroneous views of predictive prophecy.

- 1.
- 2.

62. Give three ways God revealed His message to His Prophets.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

63. What does the phrase, “The Prophets were not outsiders looking in.” mean?

64. What are three common methods interpreters use to handle prophetic language? Which is the view held by the authors?

1.

2.

3.

65. Briefly state the five principles in understanding prophecy.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

## **CHAPTER 11 “The Language of Genesis and Revelation”**

66. What type of descriptive language is deeply woven into the fabric of Jewish thought?

67. Why did God not allow the Bible to be written in the scientific language of our day?

68. What three issues affected the writers of Genesis or Revelation?

1.

2.

3.

69. What number signified fullness or totality to the Hebrew people?

70. What philosophical and theological errors does Genesis correct?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

71. Why is the use of anthropomorphisms effective in Revelation?

72. Why is figurative language used in the accounts of creation and climax?

## **CHAPTER 12 “Understanding the Poetry of the Bible”**

73. How many Old Testament books are all or nearly all poetry?

74. How does Hebrew poetry differ from Western poetry?

75. Define “synonymous parallelism.”

76. Define “acrostic” in Hebrew poetry and give an example.

77. What five guidelines are there to help us understand poetry in the Psalms?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

78. What four guidelines are there to help us understand poetry in the Proverbs?

1.

2.

3.

4.

79. Which book do the authors consider to contain the greatest poetry in the Old Testament?  
Why?

### **CHAPTER 13 “How Do We Build Doctrine and Theology”**

80. Define “doctrine” and “theology.”

1.

2.

81. What is the one main purpose of doctrine and theology?

82. What needs to be emphasized and reemphasized about doctrinal truth?

83. Describe the two basic differences between Biblical and systematic theology?

1.

2.

84. What are the three areas in which Biblical theologians center their study?

1.

2.

3.

85. What does proper “proof-texting” never do?

## **CHAPTER 14 “Bringing it All Together”**

86. Why is it important for a Christian to have a solid knowledge and understanding of the Bible and how to interpret it?
  
87. What two important principles do the authors leave the reader with? Briefly explain each one.
  - 1.
  
  - 2.
  
88. How has Understanding Scripture changed the way you read God's Word?