

Bibliology: The Doctrine of Scripture

A. Terminology

1. "Bible" means a scroll or roll or book (Luke 4:17).
2. "Scripture" speaks of sacred books of the O. T. (II Tim 3:16) of the N. T. (II Pet 3:16).
3. "Word of God" (Matt 15:6 and John 10:35 and Heb 4:12) used in both the OT and NT.

B. Views towards the Scripture and sources of authority

1. Rationalism – denies Divine revelation (man becomes the authority).
2. Roman Catholic – teaches that the Bible came from the Church and that the Catholic Church is the final authority over the Bible. They also add the traditions of the church; the Pope is the final and ultimate authority.
3. Mysticism – teaches experiences are as authoritative as the written Scriptures.
4. Neo-orthodoxy – teaches that the Bible is a fallible (not totally reliable) witness to the revelation of God to the Word (Christ). Therefore the Bible can at times reveal God's Word to us but so can other things.
5. Cults – teach that the Bible may be authoritative but they add to the Bible the writings of their cult leader.
6. Orthodoxy – teaches that the Bible alone is authoritative. This includes:
 - a. The Bible is the infallible and inerrant Word of God.
 - b. The Bible is the only rule of faith and practice (rules out experience).
 - c. Human reason and knowledge must be subject to the Scriptures.
 - d. No Divine revelation beyond Scripture.

C. Uniqueness of the Bible

1. Its continuity – 66 books written by 40 authors over a period of 1500 years, yet it is one book without one contradiction. Its theme throughout is that man is sinful and in need of a Savior. God has therefore provided the means of redemption.

2. Its survival – the Bible has been attacked in every possible way, yet it stands. Voltaire who died in 1778 said that the Bible would be obsolete within 100 years; obviously he was wrong.
3. Its influence – the Bible has had more influence on culture and literature than any other book.
4. Its similarity to the Living Word – (1)"They are both supernatural as to their origin, presenting as an inscrutable and impeccable blending of that which is Divine and that which is human. (2) They both exercise a transforming power over those who believe. The unstained, undiminished Divine perfection are embodied in each. (3) The revelations which they disclose are at once as simple as the demands of a child, as complex as the infinite treasures of Divine wisdom and knowledge, and as enduring as the God whom they reveal." – Chafer

D. Comparison of terms

1. Revelation (God communicating to man what man otherwise would not know)
2. Inspiration (the accurate recording of God's truth).
3. Illumination (the ministry of the Holy Spirit making the truth of the Scriptures clear to men).
4. Interpretation (the individual's understanding).

I. REVELATION

- A. Definition of revelation: disclosed to others what was before unknown to them. Simply means "unveiling." – Ryrie
- B. Divisions of revelation
 1. General revelation – includes all means apart from Christ and the Bible. Some things God has made known to men and all they have to do is look to see it.
 - a. Nature (Rom 1:20; Ps 19:1,2)
 - b. Conscience (Rom 2:14,15)
 - c. Providence (Gen 50:20; I Sam 2:6-10; Acts 15:7 – God's dealing in history – He is in control of history.)
 - d. Preservation of the universe (Col 1:17)
 - e. Moral nature of mankind (Gen 1:26; Acts 17:29)

2. Special revelation – things God has made known to man which man would have never known through his own capacity.
 - a. Nation of Israel (God's people – the Jews)
 - b. Christ (the Living Word) –
 - i. A personal revelation from God (Heb 1:1,2)
 - ii. Christ gave a revelation of God (John 1:14)
 - c. The Church (God's people–Jews & Gentiles in one body) (Eph. 3:3-6)
 - d. Bible (the Written Word of God) – (Rom 15:4) We learn of the above three in this one –"General revelation is sufficient to alert a man to his need of God and to condemn him if he rejects what he can learn through nature but only faith in Christ is sufficient to save (Acts 4:12)." – Ryrie

II. INSPIRATION

A. Definition of inspiration

1. "God's superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs." – Ryrie
2. Note some special features of this definition:
 - a. God superintended but did not dictate the material.
 - b. God used human authors and their own individual styles.
 - c. Nevertheless, the product was, in its original manuscripts, without error.

B. Extent of inspiration

1. To the very words of Scripture.
2. To every part of the Scripture (Mt. 5:18).
3. To the original autographs primarily.
4. Doctrine of inerrancy: no error in the original.
5. Does not imply the infallibility in all they did and said but it guarantees the accuracy of their recorded message (cp Job 1:8-11).

C. Nature of inspiration

1. A dual authorship – God and human authors both involved.
2. The divine element must be in complete control. Yet the divine element must be unconscious to the human author, or human authorship would be violated.
3. Portions of the Scriptures, however, are obviously dictated by God (e.g. the Law).

D. Scriptural Evidence for verbal, plenary (complete) inspiration

1. Source of inspiration – God (II Tim 3:16). "Inspired" means "God breathed."
2. Method of inspiration – (II Pet 1:20-21).
 - a. Men were bore along by the Holy Spirit but men spoke.
 - b. God could have used a different means but did not.
3. Specific commands to write the Word of the Lord: (Ex 17:14; 34:27; Jer 30:2; 36:2, 28; I Cor 14:37; Rev 1:11)
4. Formula of quotation – (Acts 28:25) The Holy Spirit says something through the prophets: (Acts 1:16; 4:25; Matt 1:22; I Cor 2:13; Deut 18:18)
5. Uses of Scripture by Jesus Christ:
 - a. Matt 5:17, 18 – Even the letters of the Hebrew text are important.
 - b. Matt 24:35 – Christ believed in the O.T. canon of Scripture.
 - c. Luke 24:27, 44 – Christ places His stamp of approval on the three sections of the Hebrew canon.
 - d. Matt 4:4, 7, 10 – Christ uses O.T. to rebuke Satan.
 - e. John 10:35 – Scripture cannot be broken.
6. Writers of Scripture recognized other men's writings as Scripture:
 - a. Dan 9:2, 11, 13 – speaks of Jeremiah's works.
 - b. Zech 7:12 – former prophets.
 - c. Matt 2:15 – the Lord speaking through a prophet.
 - d. I Tim 5:18 – Luke's writing (10:7).

e. II Pet 3:15, 16 – Paul's writings.

7. The writers were conscious that they were writing God's Word (I Cor 2:13)

E. Inerrancy

1. Difference between infallible and inerrant

a. Infallible includes the idea of trustworthiness.

b. Inerrant means truthfulness – What is recorded in Scripture is true to fact.

2. The proof of the doctrine

a. It involves the witness of the Scripture to its own inerrancy.

i. Verses of the Scripture that affirm the truthfulness of God (Jn 3:33; 17:3,8,17; Rom 3:4; I Thess 1:9).

ii. Verses that emphasize the abiding character of Scripture (Matt 5:17-19; Jn 10:33-36).

iii. Verses of the Scripture in which the argument of the text is based upon a word or form of a word (Matt 22:32; 22:43-45; Jn 8:58; Gal 3).

b. It involves faith.

3. Attitude toward difficulties in the text

a. From the very nature (size, time frame, number of authors) of the Bible we should expect problems.

b. A difficulty in a doctrine does not in any way prove that the doctrine is untrue.

c. There are more problems in a strictly human authorship than a dual authorship of the Bible (e.g. prophecy).

d. Because you or I cannot solve a problem does not mean it cannot be solved.

e. The seeming defects of the Bible are insignificant compared to the excellencies of the Bible.

f. The difficulties have far more weight with superficial readers than with profound students.

- g. The difficulties rapidly disappear upon careful and prayerful study.
(Difficulties in the Bible by R.A. Torrey)

F. Inadequate Theories of inspiration

1. NATURAL inspiration – there is no supernatural element in the text. The Scriptures are the product of human authorship (I Cor 2:14).
2. DYNAMIC or mystical – writers of Scripture were just spirit-filled like Christians are today. This denies that inspiration is a special work of God.
3. DICTATION or mechanical
4. PARTIAL – Certain parts of the Bible are supernaturally inspired, namely, portions which would otherwise have been unknowable (accounts of creation, prophecy, etc.).
5. CONCEPTUAL – God gave concepts but not words. Allows for a measure of authority without the necessity of the words being completely accurate.
6. DEGREES of inspiration – extension of partial. The Bible was inspired in degrees, i.e. Jesus' words more inspired than Paul's.
7. NEO-ORTHODOX – human writers could only produce a record that has errors in it. But it can become the Word of God when it inspires me (confuses inspiration with illumination).
8. ENDORSEMENT – busy executive theory. Men wrote Scripture but God put His stamp of approval on it.
9. INSPIRED purpose – The Bible is infallible and inerrant in areas of faith and practice but not in historical facts. (But who can separate history from doctrine.)

III. ILLUMINATION - A proper understanding of the Bible depends on two things: (1) The illuminating work of the Holy Spirit, and (2) The interpreting work of the reader (more on this later).

A. Definition – the ministry of the Holy Spirit promised to men which:

1. Enables the unregenerate man to see the truth of the Gospel and
2. Enables those believers who are in a right relationship with God to understand spiritual truth (Eph. 1:18,19 and Col. 1:9,10).

B. Agent – the Holy Spirit (I Cor 3:16 and Rom 8:9)

C. Need for illumination – man is unable to understand the things of God because of:

1. Depraved nature (I Cor 2:14 and Jn 1:5)
2. Satanic blindness (II Cor 4:3,4)
3. Fleshly blindness (I Cor 3:1,2)

D. Nature

1. The unsaved cannot experience the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit because they are blinded to the truth (I Cor 2:14). This does not mean they cannot learn anything of the facts of the Bible, but they consider what they do know about God's truth as foolishness. However, the Holy Spirit can open the unsaved person's heart (Jn 16:7-11).
2. The Christian has been promised this illumination (I Cor 2:6-3:2 and Jn 16:12-15). Taking these two passages together, several facts emerge:
 - a. The most obvious is that the Holy Spirit Himself is the Teacher.
 - b. The content of His teaching encompasses all the truth, including prophecy.
 - c. The purpose of the Holy Spirit's illumination is to glorify Christ, not Himself.
 - d. Disobedience in the believer can hinder and even nullify the work of the Holy Spirit (I Cor 3:1-2)

E. Avenues of Illumination

1. Personal Bible study (Prov 2:3-5; I Cor 2:9-14)
2. Instruction by human teachers (I Cor 12:28 ; II Tim 2:2; Eph 4:11, 12 and I Pet. 2:2)

IV. INTERPRETATION

A. Primary Considerations

1. Both a science (because it follows rules) and an art (application of the rules).
2. Things to remember:
 - a. Purpose of the Bible as a whole – to bring God glory.
 - b. Distinctive character and message of each book. (Example: Prov 22:11, 14:20 and 15:1 – are they always true – no, they are proverbs, generally true but we want to make Prov 22:6 a promise.)

c. To whom is a given Scripture addressed (e.g. Josh 1:8)?

B. Principles of Interpretation

1. Interpret plainly (or normally). To do so one must understand what each word means in its normal grammatical historical sense.
2. Allow for use of figures of speech to give word pictures, etc.
3. Read in context like any other book.
4. "Recognize the progress of revelation. Remember that the Bible was not handed down all at once as a complete book, but that it came from God through many different writers over a period of about 1600 years. This means that in the progress of revealing His message to man, God may add or even change in one era what He had given in another. The New Testament adds much that was not revealed in the Old Testament. Furthermore, what God revealed as binding in one period may be rescinded in another (as the prohibition of eating pork, once binding on God's people has been lifted today, I Tim 4:3). This is most important, otherwise, the Bible will contain apparently unresolvable contradictions (as Matt 10:5-7 compared with 28:18-20)." – Ryrie
5. "Expect the Bible to use what is technically called phenomenal language. This simply means that it often describes things as they appear to be rather than in precise scientific terms." – Ryrie (Ex: sun rising)
6. Recognize the important divisions of the Bible when interpreting it. We will discuss dispensations later.

V. CANONICITY

A. Fundamentals

1. Canon means "rule" or "measuring rod" or standard by which the books were measured and found to be authentic and authoritative.
2. The Bible is self-authenticating.
3. God guided the councils. The books were already God's Word, men just recognized them as such.
4. Faith must be expressed.

B. The Canon of the Old Testament

1. Some believe that all the O. T. books were gathered by Ezra in the 5th century B.C.

2. Christ attested to the O. T. canon (Lk 11:51). II Chronicles was the last book in the Hebrew Bible so it was as if Christ was saying from Genesis to Malachi.
3. Neither the Jews nor Jesus accepted the Apocrypha. The Apocryphal books were accepted by the Roman Catholic Church in 1548 A.D. at the Council of Trent.

C. The Principles for Canonicity of the New Testament books

1. Writer's authority – It had to be written or backed by an apostle in order to be recognized. Peter was the backer of Mark, and Paul of Luke.
2. Content – It had to contain some internal evidence that the book was unique in character, inspired and authoritative.
3. Acceptance by the churches – "There was a surprising unanimity among the early churches as to which books belonged in the inspired number. Although it is true that a few books were temporarily doubted by a minority. No book whose authenticity was doubted by any large number of churches was later accepted." – Ryrie

D. The Formation of the New Testament Canon

"The first church council to list all 27 books of the New Testament was the Council of Carthage in A.D. 397. Individual books of the New Testament were acknowledged as Scripture before this time (II Pet 3:16; I Tim 5:18) and most were accepted in the era just after the apostles (Hebrews, James, II Peter II and III John and Jude were debated for sometime). The selection of the canon was a process that went on until each book proved its own worth by passing the tests for canonicity." – Ryrie

E. Reliability of present text (taken from Ryrie)

1. The original copies of the O.T. were written on leather or papyrus from the time of Moses (1450 B.C.) to the time of Malachi (400 B.C.). Until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 we did not possess copies of the O.T. earlier than A.D. 895.
2. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, they gave us a Hebrew text from the second to first century B.C. of all but one of the books (Esther) of the O.T. This proved the accuracy of the previous texts.
3. Other means of checking word accuracy have been translations such as the Septuagint (complete Greek O.T. translation dated 200 B.C.) Also include the Aramaic Targums (paraphrases and quotes of the O.T.), quotations in early Christian writers, and the Latin Vulgate by Jerome (A.D. 400). All of these give us the data for being assured of having an accurate text of the O.T.

4. More than 5000 manuscripts of the New Testament exist today, which makes it the best attested document in all ancient writings.
5. Many of these copies are early. Approximately 75 papyri fragments date from A. D. 135 to the 8th century.
6. Codex Sinaiticus (4th century), Codex Vaticanus (4th century), Codex Alexandrius (5th century)

VI. ANIMATION

A. Definition of animation:

1. The idea of giving life.
2. Theological animation: the vitality of life that is found in the Bible.

B. Scriptural Proof

1. Heb 4:12
2. Ps 119

VII. PRESERVATION

A. Scripture: Ps 119:152, Matt 24:35, I Pet 1:23-25, Jn 10:35, Isaiah 40:8

B. Theological Presuppositions

1. Since God has delivered to us an inerrant word it only makes sense that this word has to be preserved, to have any meaning to us.
2. God sets forth the truth so that it always tests a man's faith.

VIII. BIBLICAL COVENANTS

A. Definition of a covenant: an arrangement or agreement

B. Two Classifications

1. Conditional covenants

"One in which God's action is made to be contingent upon some action on the part of those to whom the covenant is addressed." – Chafer

2. Unconditional covenants

"A declaration on the part of God as to what He is going to do and is made without reference to human action, purpose, or merit." – Chafer

C. Major Covenants in Scripture

1. ADAMIC covenant (Gen 1:26-31; 2:16,17) – This was a conditional covenant "with Adam in which life and blessing or death and cursing were made to depend on the faithfulness of Adam. Human failure followed and the terms of the covenant were executed in righteousness." – Chafer
2. Covenant with FALLEN MAN (Gen 3:16-19) – "This is an unconditional covenant in which God declares to man what his lot in life will be because of his sin." – Chafer
3. NOAHIC covenant (Gen 9:1-18 – esp. v. 9-11) – An unconditional covenant that promised mankind that the world would never again be destroyed by water.
4. ABRAHAMIC covenant (Gen 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8) –
 - a. Provision:
 - i. Individual promise made to Abraham that he would become a great nation. Emphasis is on his seed.
 - ii. National promise to Abraham's seed. Emphasis is on the land.
 - iii. Universal promise – blessing for all nations.
 - b. Character: It is an unconditional, eternal covenant (Gen 15:18; 17:7).
5. MOSAIC covenant (Ex 20:1-31:18) – A conditional covenant where God is basically saying to Israel that if they keep His commandments He would bless them, if they do not keep His commandments, He would curse them (see Deut 28:1-62, esp. 63-68).
6. PALESTINIAN covenant (Deut 28-30; esp. 30:1-10) –
 - a. Importance:
 - i. Reaffirms to Israel the title deed to Palestine. (Israel had been out of the land for over 400 years.)
 - ii. It pointed to the Mosaic covenant. This covenant did not set aside God's promises to Abraham.
 - iii. It confirms and enlarges upon the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant.
 - b. Provisions of this covenant (Deut 30:1-10):

- i. The nation will be removed from the land for unfaithfulness (Deut 30:1-3).
 - ii. There will be a repentance of the nation (30:1-3).
 - iii. Israel will be restored to the land (Deut 30:3-6).
 - iv. Israel will be converted as a nation (30:6, 8).
 - v. Enemies of Israel will be judged (30:7).
 - vi. Israel will receive her full blessing (30:9).
- c. Character of this covenant:
- i. Unconditional (Ezek 16:60)
 - ii. Eternal (Ezek 16:60)
 - iii. Conditional blessings (Deut 30:10)
 - iv. Amplification of Abrahamic covenant

7. DAVIDIC covenant (II Sam 7:4-17) –

- a. Importance: Guarantees to Israel a King and a Kingdom.
- b. Provisions:
 - i. David is promised an unending royal lineage, a throne, and a kingdom – all of which are to endure forever.
 - ii. Jehovah reserved the right to interrupt the actual reign of David's sons if chastisement is required (II Sam 7:14,15; Ps 89:20-37).
 - iii. But the perpetuity of the covenant cannot be broken.
 - iv. Christ will yet sit on this Throne (Lk 1:31-33).
This is an eternal, unconditional covenant (Ps 89; Isa 55:3; Ezek 37:25; Lk 1:31-33).

8. NEW covenant –

- a. Guarantees Israel that God is going to yet work with them. God is going to give them a new heart – based on blood – anticipates the death of Christ (Jeremiah 30-33).
- b. Provisions (Jeremiah 31:31-34):

- i. God is going to give Israel a new mind and a new heart (31:33).
 - ii. Restoration to the favor and blessings of God (Hosea 2:19,20).
 - iii. Forgiveness of sin (31:34).
 - iv. Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (31:33 see II Cor 3:3,6).
 - v. Material blessing from the land (32:41).
 - vi. Sanctuary will be rebuilt in Jerusalem (Ezek 37:26,28).
 - vii. War will cease, peace will reign (Isa 2:4).
- c. Character:
- i. Eternal (Jer 31:36)
 - ii. Depends on God – not man (Jer 31:33)
 - iii. Unconditional covenant

IX. DISPENSATIONS

- A. Definition: a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose.
- B. Distinctions of each economy:
 - 1. A different governing relationship with God.
 - 2. Man's responsibility.
 - 3. Man's failure.
 - 4. God's judgment.

"Each dispensation, therefore, begins with man divinely placed in a new position of privilege and responsibility, and closes with the failure of man resulting in righteous judgments from God." – Chafer

- C. Particulars:
 - 1. Keep Israel and the church separate (see the chart in the appendix of this booklet).
 - 2. Normal hermeneutics.
 - 3. God's purpose: glorify Himself.
 - 4. Grace, not the Law, is our rule of life.

D. Seven Dispensations:

1. INNOCENCE (Gen 1:28 - 3:22) –
 - a. Responsibility: to abstain from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and to tend the garden.
 - b. Failure: original sin.
 - c. Judgment: God drove them out of the garden and they died spiritually and began to die physically.
2. CONSCIENCE (Gen 3:22 - 7:23) –
 - a. Responsibility: to respond to God through the promptings of his conscience and bring blood sacrifices to God (Gen 4:4).
 - b. Failure: widespread evil desire (Gen 6:5).
 - c. Judgment: the flood.
3. CIVIL or HUMAN GOVERNMENT (Gen 8:20 - 11:9) –
 - a. Responsibility: to scatter and fill the earth (9:6,7).
 - b. Failure: stayed together and built the Tower of Babel to show their independence of God.
 - c. Judgment: confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel.
4. PROMISE (Gen 12:1 - Ex 19:8) –
 - a. Responsibility: to believe and serve God

"The promised land was theirs and blessing was theirs as long they remained in the land."
 - b. Failure: Jacob led the people to Egypt and they stayed.
 - c. Judgment: slavery.
5. LAW (Ex 19:8 - Acts 1:26) –
 - a. Responsibility: to obey the Law.
 - b. Failure: did not obey (Rom 10: 1-3).
 - c. Judgment: captivity and later dispersion (70 A.D.) and also the tribulation period.

6. GRACE (Acts 2:1 – Present) –
 - a. Responsibility: to accept the gift of righteousness which God freely offers to all (Rom 5:15-18).
 - b. Failure: the vast majority will reject Him.
 - c. Judgment: church removed; rejecters of Christ will go into the tribulation.

7. KINGDOM (Rev 20: 4,5) –
 - a. Responsibility: to obey the King and His laws.
 - b. Failure: rebellion against Christ (Rev 20:7-9).
 - c. Judgment: rebels cast into everlasting punishment (Rev 20:14,15).

NOTE: Salvation has always been and will always be by grace alone through faith alone. In the O.T., men were saved by faith on the basis of the work of Christ which was still in the future. Today we are saved by faith on the basis of the work of Christ which took place 1900 years ago.

X. COVENANT THEOLOGY

- A. Definition – A system of theology which unites all the dispensations as phases of the covenant of grace; unites all the saved of all the ages as the one people of God (the church). This view states that all of scripture is covered by two or three covenants. These covenants are not directly revealed in Scripture, but are implied:

1. The Covenant of Works: An agreement between God and Adam promising life to Adam for perfect obedience and including death as the penalty for failure. Adam sinned and thus man failed to meet the requirements of the covenant of works. Therefore a second covenant, the covenant of grace, was brought into operation.
2. The Covenant of Grace: The gracious agreement between the offended God and the offending but elect sinner, in which God promises salvation through faith in Christ and the sinner accepts this believingly, promising a life of faith and obedience.
3. The Covenant of Redemption (this is held by some Reformed theologians): Made in eternity past and became the basis for the covenant of grace. This covenant of redemption is supposed to be the agreement between the Father giving the Son as Head and Redeemer of the elect, and the Son, voluntarily taking the place of those whom the Father had given Him (see Heb. 13:20).

B. Oppose:

1. Covenant theology is not based upon direct revelation but upon reason and logic. The existence of the covenants is not found by an inductive examination of passages; it is a conclusion deduced from certain Scriptural evidences. Nowhere does Scripture speak of these covenants.
2. Covenant theologians see little distinction between biblical living in the OT and NT, or between Israel and the church. They do not use literal measures in areas of prophecy.
3. Covenant theologians spiritualize the prophetic Scriptures in order to fit them into their view. The covenant theologian views most prophecies as already fulfilled allegorically or symbolically. They believe that the church, not literal Israel, is the recipient of the covenant promises. Thus, the church is spiritual Israel.
4. Under covenant theology the distinction between Law and grace as a rule of life is blurred.

PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION

General Principles of Interpretation

1. Work from the assumption that the Bible is authoritative.
2. The Bible interprets itself; Scripture best explains Scripture.
3. Saving faith and the Holy Spirit are necessary for us to understand and properly interpret the Scriptures.
4. Interpret personal experience in the light of Scripture and not Scripture in light of personal experience.
5. Biblical examples are authoritative only when supported by a command.
6. The primary purpose of the Bible is to change our lives, not increase our knowledge.
7. Each Christian has the right and responsibility to investigate and interpret the Word of God himself.
8. Church history is important but not decisive in the interpretation of Scripture.
9. The promises of God throughout the Bible are available to the Holy Spirit for the believers of every generation.

Grammatical Principles of Interpretation

1. Scripture has only one meaning and should be taken literally.
2. Interpret words in harmony with their meaning in the times of the author.
3. Interpret a word in relation to its sentence and context.
4. Interpret a passage in harmony with its context.
5. When an inanimate object is used to describe a living being, the statement may be considered figurative.
6. When an expression is out of character with the thing described, the statement may be considered figurative.
7. The principal parts and figures of a parable represent certain realities. Consider only these principal parts and figures when drawing conclusions.
8. Interpret the words of the prophets in their usual, literal and historical sense, unless the context or manner in which they are fulfilled clearly indicates that

they have a symbolic meaning. Their fulfillment may be in installments, each fulfillment being a pledge of that which is to follow.

Historical Principles of Interpretation

1. Since Scripture originated in a historical context, it can be understood only in light of Biblical history.
2. Though God's revelation in the Scriptures is progressive, both Old and New Testaments are essential parts of this revelation and form a unit.
3. Historical facts or events become symbols of spiritual truths only if the Scriptures so designate them.

Theological Principles of Interpretation

1. You must understand the Bible grammatically before you can understand it theologically.
2. A doctrine cannot be considered biblical unless it sums up and includes all that the Scriptures say about it.
3. When two doctrines taught in the Bible appear to be contradictory, accept both as Scriptural in the confident belief they will resolve themselves into a higher unity.
4. A teaching merely implied in Scripture may be considered biblical when a comparison of related passages supports it.

Taken from "Studying, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible," by Walter Henrichsen and Gayle Jackson, published by Lamplighter Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan - Zondervan Publishing House.

Distinctions Between the Church and Israel		
Point of Difference	Israel	Church
Ministry	Guardian of Truth	Disseminator of Truth
Plan	Worldwide Kingdom	Worldwide Witness
Rule of Life	Mosaic Law	Grace - Faith - Holy Spirit
Relation to the Spirit	Sovereign, Selective Indwelling	Universal Permanent Indwelling
Relation to the Son of God	King	Head
Relation to the Kingdom	Ruling Servant Nation	Ruling Consort Bride
Expectation	Second Coming	Rapture