

Dr. David Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Lecture 13, Interpretation, Word Study and Context, Intertextual Allusions to the Old Testament

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This is Dr. David Bower in his teaching on Inductive Bible Study. This is session 13, Interpretation, Word Study and Context, Intertextual Allusions to the Old Testament.

We want to move really to the next major phase of Inductive Bible Study and that is interpretation, which as I mentioned actually involves answering the questions raised under observation.

Those questions form the bridge really between observation and interpretation, which we think is important because part of what's involved in valid interpretation is making sure that the questions that you answer in interpretation arise from the text itself. A lot of eisegesis, that is to say, reading things into the text. Deductive interpretation involves directing questions toward the text that the text is not prepared to answer, that do not arise out of the text, and that do not accord with the agenda of the text itself. If you ask the wrong questions, your answers are suspect. So, it's very important that the interpretive agenda be the same and correspond to the communication agenda of the text itself.

That's why interpretation for us involves the answering of questions raised out of the observation. Now you saw, of course, in the detailed observation of James 1:5 through 8, that even in the observation of a small passage, you generate a whole lot of questions, and so it's important first of all to choose or to select the question or questions to be answered. What questions there that were generated from your observation seem to be the most important? What are the most difficult? Some questions practically answer themselves.

Where are the difficulties in the passage? And then a third basis for selecting questions is personal interest. It may be that a particular question is not central to your passage, but it's not most important as far as the dynamics of the text is concerned, but it's important to you. And so there's nothing wrong with choosing a question on the basis of interest of course.

And then interpret the passage by answering the selected question or questions, and we need to identify the relevant evidence in terms of answering the question that you have. What kinds of evidence do you have to answer? What kinds of evidence will be most helpful in answering that question? And so here are some of the possibilities. If your question involves the meaning of a term and a lot of questions do involve the meaning of terms, you might begin with what we call preliminary

definition, which involves looking up the word in an original language lexicon and getting the basic definition of the word.

Now it is, even if you don't know Greek or Hebrew, but we'll assume we're working with the New Testament here. Even if you do not know Greek, it is important to identify the definition of that Greek word. It's not sufficient really to identify the definition of the English word that the translation has used because you want to get at the definition of the word that your author has employed, and your author, of course, did not employ an English term, but a Greek term, and there is there is some slippage necessarily between the Greek word and any English word that a translation chooses to render it. Now, this is not a problem, of course, if you know Greek.

You simply go to a standard Greek lexicon. Bower-Danker is really the standard one now in English. Thayer's is an older one that still has value, although it does not have the kind of reliability anymore that that Bower-Danker has, but you go to a standard Greek lexicon, look up the word, get the basic definition at the top of the entry, write it down, and then draw an inference as to what this would might mean for the interpretation of your passage.

Now if you do not know Greek though, there is a way of managing this, and that is to make use of Blue Letter Bible, and I'll just demonstrate here exactly how you can get the definition and Blue Letter Bible. And by the way, the Blue Letter Bible has Thayer's lexicon there, so you get the definition from Thayer's lexicon for that word. If I may just indicate how this is done, it's really quite simple.

You type in, and you can Google Blue Letter Bible, go to the site, and let's assume that we're answering the question, what is the meaning of the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, son of Abraham, in Matthew 1:1, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham. So, we type in our verse, Matthew 1:1, and you want to go to the NASB because the database in Blue Letter Bible is better; it's more complete in the NASB than in other translations here. And then go ahead and search that, and that will bring up, you see, your passage.

And so, you click on tools, and of course, let's assume that we're answering the question, what is meant by book of genealogy? So, we go to the word genealogy and click here on Strong's number because that is the Greek number for that word. So, we click on that, which is 1078, and that, you see, brings up Thayer's lexicon, and that gives you the basic definition of the word. I would not read very far down into the entry here, but just get the basic definition or definitions at the top of the entry and go from there.

I wouldn't spend much time really with preliminary definition either. It's simply a matter of getting from the standard Greek lexicon, in this case, as I say, Thayer's, the basic definition of the word, noting it with a view then toward drawing inferences for

the meaning of that word. Now, I would go ahead then, and the next type of evidence is evidence from context.

Evidence from context involves really all evidence of whatever kind is found in the biblical book. Remember, we mentioned the other day that the basic literary unit of the Bible is a biblical book. So, context has to do with all evidence of whatever kind within the biblical book.

Now, this would involve, there are three levels of context then. First of all, immediate context. We've already done the detailed observation, which involves making observations about the passage itself in its immediate context.

So, I begin by looking at my detailed observation, asking myself, have I made any observations in my detailed observation that can now be turned into evidence for answering this question raised? And of course, if so, identify that as evidence with a view toward drawing inferences for possible answers to your question, your interpretive question. I wouldn't stop there. I would also read the immediate context in a directed way again with my question in the back of my mind, asking myself, is there any other evidence here in the immediate context beyond what I observed in the detailed observation that might be relevant for answering this question? The second level of context is segment context.

And, of course, we've already done the survey of the segment. So, I begin here by looking at my segment survey, asking myself, have I made any observations in my segment survey that can now be taken up and turned into evidence for answering this question that I've raised, including the structure of the segment? By the way, quite often, this is pertinent, even for interpreting individual verses within a segment. The observations you've made in the segment survey can often be quite helpful here.

But again, I wouldn't stop looking at my segment survey. Again, I'd look at the segment in a directed way with my question in the back of my mind, asking myself, is there anything else here in this entire segment beyond what I've observed in my segment survey that may serve as relevant evidence for answering this question? Now, the third level of context, of course, is the book as a whole. And yes, you've guessed it.

We've already done the survey of the book. So, I begin here by looking at my book survey and asking myself, have I made any observations in the survey of the book that can be turned into evidence, even for answering a question about the meaning of an individual verse? And sometimes that is the case. I'm thinking about, right now, a passage in Matthew where the interpretation is very much helpfully informed by evidence from one of the major structural relationships that we identified in the survey of the Gospel of Matthew as a whole.

One of the major structural relationships in the whole Gospel is very significant for interpreting this one verse that I'm thinking of just now. Sometimes that is helpful. Again, I wouldn't stop there, but I would ask myself, is there anything else in the entire book that may serve as evidence for answering this question here in my passage? Now, when it comes to context, there are two things that I want to mention specifically, among other things, that we ought always to keep in mind.

One is structure. You notice that in observation, we spend a lot of time dealing with literary structure. The reason why we spend time with that in observation is because that, we have found, can be so very helpful when it comes to interpretation.

So, I would always ask myself, what difference does structure make? I've made all these structural observations. What interpretive difference does that make? I'd be intentional with regard to that. But a second thing to look at, always in terms of especially broader book context, is this.

Does this word that I'm interpreting here, does this word that I'm interpreting appear anywhere else in this book? Because all evidence of whatever kind within the book falls under context, including other places in the book where the same word appears. So already here, at the point of context, you're making use of a concordance. Now, again, as I said with regard to preliminary definition, also with regard to the appearance of the word elsewhere in the book, we're talking about not the appearance of the same English word but the appearance of the same Greek word that your author used.

And there's no avoiding making use of a Greek concordance. You cannot do this with an English concordance because there is not a one-for-one correlation between an English word used to translate a Greek word in a passage and that Greek word.

English translations use a variety of Greek words to translate the same English word. And they translate different Greek words with the same English word. So, there's not a one-for-one correlation.

Now, again, this is not a problem if you know Greek. You simply identify the root of your word, the word that your author used, go to a standard Greek concordance, like Moten and Gaydon, or maybe use a Bible software program. Of course, that's another way of doing it.

And find out where that Greek word appears elsewhere in the book. But if you don't know Greek, again, this is also not a big problem. You can identify where that same Greek word appears elsewhere in the book without knowing Greek.

And again, it involves Blue-Letter Bible. You, of course, go through the same process. Again, our example is, Bibla is a book of the genealogy, what is meant by book of genealogy in Matthew 1:1. We've already, of course, typed it in.

We've clicked NASB. It's taken us to that passage. We click tools, and we're at the tools page here.

And remember, we went to this very spot for the preliminary definition. But just below the preliminary definition is a concordance. This shows every place where that Greek word appears in the New Testament, including elsewhere in the book, in this case, Matthew's Gospel.

So, you find that that word, that Greek word, appears once more in Matthew. That would be contextual evidence if you're interpreting Matthew 1:1. The Greek word appears once more in Matthew, and that is in Matthew 1:18. So, you look up that, you read that passage in its immediate context, draw certain conclusions with regard to how that word is being employed there, and then, with a view toward drawing inferences as to how that might inform the meaning of your word in your passage. So, that's contextual evidence.

I might say that evidence from context is always a relevant type of evidence. Not all of the types of evidence in this list will be relevant, but context is always a relevant type of evidence. Okay, now we'll go back to our list of possible types of evidence here.

And the next one we'll mention is word usage. Now, there are really two types of word usage. One is the use of the word in the Bible, and then also word usage in terms of how that word was used outside the Bible.

We'll focus, for our purposes, upon biblical word usage. This involves, again, the concordance. And we just saw how you can identify where that Greek word appears, not only elsewhere in your book, but elsewhere in the New Testament.

We've just done that, showed the concordance. This involves making use of the concordance. Now, there is, in biblical word usage itself, two levels.

There is, first of all, the use of the word in the Testament. That is to say, where does this word appear, this Greek word appears, and where is it used in the rest of the New Testament? Now, if, in fact, your book is part of what we call a corpus, that is to say, if your book was written by someone who wrote other books in the New Testament, say you're interpreting a passage from Galatians of course, that was written by Paul, and Paul wrote other books beyond, in addition to, Galatians. And so, if you're interpreting a passage that was written, if you're interpreting a passage in a book that was written by someone who wrote other books in the New

Testament, like we mentioned Paul, as an example, it would be helpful to begin with where that word appears elsewhere in the corpus.

This reminds us that, everything else being equal, how your same author used that word will be more significant than how that word is used by other New Testament writers. Then, having identified where it's used in the corpus, outside the corpus, in the rest of the New Testament. Now, of course, in the case of James, we have a book that was written by someone who did not write any other book in the New Testament, so we go immediately then, in our study of James, to where the word is used in the New Testament as a whole.

The thing to do is to look up, in the English Bible, every passage where that Greek word appears, and of course, we were able to identify those passages where the Greek word appears from the concordance in Blue Letter Bible. You use that concordance to identify those passages where it's used elsewhere in the New Testament. Look up each of those passages, take a quick glance at the immediate context, and make a judgment about how that word seems to be used there in that context.

Then, engage in critical conversation about how that word seems to be used in that other New Testament passage and what's going on with the employment of that word in your passage. This kind of critical conversation between how that word is being used in that other New Testament passage and what's going on in the use of the word in your passage is important because you cannot assume that the way in which the word is used in another New Testament passage is necessarily the way your author is using it. You have to be careful, in other words, not uncritically, to dump all the suggestions of the meaning of that word, the use of that word in other New Testament passages, into your passage.

James Barr coined a term that is used quite often here to talk about that danger. He referred to illegitimate totality transfer. And that is an illegitimate practice of just, as I say, dumping all the suggestiveness of the use of the meaning of that word as used in another passage into your passage because there's no reason to think that necessarily your author had all that other stuff going, all those other things that another writer might have had in mind using that word, that your author had necessarily all of that in mind.

So, you have to ask yourself whether that word in the other passage seems to be used in essential continuity with the way the word is employed in your passage, in basically the same way. And if so, you can make positive use of that word. You bring it in, and that will help really to fill in, to make more complete, more robust, more clear, perhaps, how the word is being used in your passage.

It will have that kind of positive, complementary sort of function. If the word, however, is used in a quite different way, you have not continuity, but discontinuity. And the very differentness of how that same word is used in another biblical passage over against how it seems to be employed in your passage, the very differentness can illumine by way of contrast what is going on in your passage.

It is often said, and perhaps this is unfair, but I'm not making any claim as to whether this is a legitimate criticism or not, but it is often said that Luther tended to read everything in the New Testament in light of Paul. And when it came to the law, which in Greek is the word *nomos*, when it came to the law, that Luther had a tendency to read Paul's understanding of the law, how Paul uses the word law, in other places in the New Testament where the word law appears. Barr would refer to that, of course, as illegitimate totality transfer.

In fact, Paul does use law somewhat differently than, say, Matthew or James does. And the charge has been made, legitimate or not, towards Luther, that he was never able to hear really what Matthew or what James said regarding the positive function of the law in the Christian life because of his tendency to read law in Paul into the Matthean and the Jamesian references to law. So it's very important, and by the way, the point here then is that it might have been a helpful thing, it might be a helpful thing to note the very differences between Paul's use of law, *nomos*, and James' use of law, *nomos*, and that very difference could point to two quite different ways of how the law may function in the Christian life, and by way of contrast, would clarify how James understands the role of the law in the Christian life.

In other words, there's another way in which law could function, but this is not what James has in mind. And that very differentness could bring clarity and a more precise understanding of what James has in mind. Now, if, in fact, you know Greek or you have access to a Bible software program that has search capabilities in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, what is normally referred to as the Septuagint, this would be the use of the word in the Other Testament, really the Septuagint, or what scholars increasingly are wanting to call Old Greek, the Old Greek, this can be helpful.

Because, of course, the Septuagint was really the translation of choice for almost all, if not all, of our New Testament writers. All of our New Testament writers quote from the Old Testament in using the Septuagint. The only possible exception is Jude.

There's no clear place where Jude quotes from the Septuagint. But we hasten to add that Jude is only one chapter long, and we wonder if, in fact, he had written more if he would not have used the Septuagint. Paul will quote sometimes from the Septuagint and sometimes from his own translation of the Hebrew, depending on what serves his purposes at any one point better.

But the point is that the Septuagint, the Greek translation that was in vogue at the time, was very popular, was very familiar. It was really their Bible. And even as our theological language is very much influenced, shaped, by how terms like sanctify or righteousness or justify or what have you, are how those terms are used in our English Bibles.

So also, their theological vocabulary was very much influenced by the way in which the Septuagint used these words. So, Septuagint word usage can be very helpful, but if you don't know Greek and don't have access to a Bible software program, it's not really worth the trouble to try to identify it. But if you do have, as I say, a Bible software program that has search capability in the Septuagint, it's easy, just a click and it will create a concordance right there for you.

Do the same kind of thing, look up the word as it's used in the Old Testament and then draw possible conclusions in terms of how it's used in your passage. A further type of evidence is scriptural testimony. Scriptural testimony has to do with all evidence of whatever kind outside of the biblical book.

Remember, all evidence within the book itself is contextual. And outside of those passages where the word itself appears, that would be word usage, and scriptural testimony involves all evidence in the Bible outside of those two areas. Let me give you an example of what we have in mind here.

In Matthew 6:25, as you remember, we read, Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life. Let's assume that we're answering the question, what is meant by the phrase, do not be anxious? The word there is *merimnao* in Greek. If, in fact, you note in your process of interpretation of where else in Matthew's Gospel, where in Matthew's Gospel that same word appears and make use of Matthew's employment of the word *merimnao* or anxious, that would be context.

Because all evidence of whatever kind within the book falls under context. But if you explore where *merimnao*, that word that is translated anxious, where *merimnao* appears outside of Matthew in the rest of the New Testament, that would be word usage. But if you ask yourself where else in the New Testament is the topic, is the issue of worry over material necessities discussed, in those passages where the word *merimnao* does not appear, but the idea appears, where the idea is discussed, that would be scriptural testimony.

As a matter of fact, there are basically three types of scriptural testimony. The one is the concept, which we've just been talking about. Where else in the Bible is this concept described, even though the word itself is not found? Speaking of Luther, and here we're going to say something more positive about him, kind of balance what was kind of tentatively negative about him a moment ago, it was said of Luther that he had basically committed the whole of the Bible to memory.

Most of us cannot say that. And it's quite clear that making use of conceptual scriptural testimony does depend upon Bible content knowledge. How well do you know the Bible so that you can identify passages where the same idea is found, even though the passage, even though the word itself is not found.

There is a kind of resource, though, that will help those of us who are not Luther in this regard, and that involves topical concordances or topical Bibles. And yes, in my book, *Essential Bible Study Tools for Ministry*, I have a section on topical concordances. And the best one really, in my judgment, is Kolenberger, that's K-O-H-L-E-N-B-E-R-G-E-R, Kolenberger, Zondervan, N-I-V, Naves Topical Bible.

Zondervan, N-I-V, Naves Topical Bible. This is a kind of concordance, but it's not a word concordance; it's a topic concordance. So, if you look up anxious, anxiety, or worry in Kolenberger, you'll find every passage in the Bible that discusses that theme, even those passages where the word itself does not appear.

Now again, you have to beware of Barr's illegitimate totality transfer here as well. You cannot necessarily assume that every other passage in the rest of the Bible will discuss or treat this theme in the same way that your author wishes to treat it here. You want to know both points of continuity and discontinuity.

Is the theme discussed in this other passage in essentially the same way as your author treats it? If so, you have the continuity, you have the principle of fit, and you can make use of that in a positive way in terms of providing a kind of clarity and richness to the way the theme is treated in your passage. But it may, in fact, be the case that it's treated in a different way. And if, in fact, it's treated in a different way, you need to embrace the difference.

And again, you can make use of the difference in order to highlight, by way of contrast, how that theme is being treated in your passage. You could actually clarify how James or Matthew says, if that's you were interpreting that passage from James or Matthew, is talking about and making use of that theme.

Now, a second type of scriptural testimony beyond the conceptual type that we've been discussing is scriptural allusion or quotation. Is your author in the passage that you are interpreting quoting or alluding to another biblical passage? If so, of course, he is clearly drawing the attention of the reader to this other biblical passage. We have a kind of obligation really to go and look at that passage in its original wording and context and ask exactly how that passage in its original wording and context illumines our passage, which is quoting or alluding to that passage here. Now again, you may have a case where the writer, your writer, or the writer of your passage is alluding or quoting another passage in a very positive way.

That is to say that there is complete congruence between that passage in its original wording and context and how your writer is employing it here. If so, of course, you would bring that kind of thing in. As an example of this, let's look at Romans 5, verses 12 through 14.

Romans 5 verses 12 through 14. Paul says, Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned. Sin, indeed, was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.

Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. Now clearly, Paul is drawing the attention of the reader back to Genesis 1 through 3, perhaps especially Genesis 3, and is wanting the reader to remember, maybe even to consult Genesis 3 with a view towards asking him or herself exactly how the story of the fall of Adam there illumine what Paul is saying here in the argument that he is making in Romans 5 verses 12 through 14. That involves essential continuity.

By the way, that's not to say that Paul necessarily wants the reader to bring everything from the fall narrative to bear and to read that into what you have in chapter 5. Again, what's called for is a critical conversation between Romans 5 in its context and what you have in Genesis 3 to discern exactly what aspects of Genesis 3 Paul wants the reader to bring to bear in the reader's interpretation of Romans 5 and how he wants the reader to bring that to bear in the interpretation of Romans 5. Now let's take another example, and of course, that involved an allusion, and the second example will involve an allusion as well. 2 Peter 2:15. Well, actually, let's look even more clearly here, I think, at 2 Peter 2. We could talk about 2:15, but let's mention a chapter 2 verse beginning to read at verse 5. But if God did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven other persons, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly, if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to destruction and made them an example to those who were to be ungodly, and now this is the operative verse here, verse 7, and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the wicked, for by what that righteous man saw and heard as he lived among them, he was vexed in his righteous soul day after day with their lawless deeds, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of punishment. Here, of course, you have, you have an allusion to the story of the rescue of Lot and his family from Sodom, which is recounted in reported in Genesis 19.

Here, though, you have some significant discontinuity between what is said with regard to the rescue of Lot in 2 Peter and what you have in Genesis 19. 2 Peter was to emphasize the righteousness of Lot and the value towards Lot of this rescue. If God rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the wicked, for

by what that righteous man saw and heard as he lived among them, he was vexed in his righteous soul day after day with their lawless deeds.

If you read the account of the escape of Lot from Sodom in Genesis 19, you'll be struck by the fact that his righteousness is not by any means emphasized. As a matter of fact, the angel or angels did rescue Lot, but only by dragging him, literally dragging him out of the city, kicking and screaming. He did not want to go.

There is really little indication that he was, in Genesis 19, that he was vexed in his righteous soul. As a matter of fact, Genesis 19 has a pretty negative view of Lot. Lot, in that whole Abraham narrative, is contrasted with his uncle Abraham and contrasted with Abraham in a quite negative way and the like.

So, what you have here, then, is some discontinuity between what is said with regard to Lot and the passage that is being alluded to in 2 Peter. It's important, therefore, to recognize the difference there and to note that the very difference then can illumine what Peter is talking about here. Peter really, one might say, adds his own perspective to the Genesis account, which really highlights that perspective there as being especially important for what Jude wishes to communicate.

He's not simply inheriting this from the Genesis account that he's alluding to. He is actually, in a sense, adding it to the Genesis account. Another example that we might cite has to do really with a quotation, this time a quotation from the Old Testament, not simply an allusion.

And that would be found in Peter's Pentecost sermon in the second chapter of Acts, beginning at Acts 2:16. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel, and then he quotes from Joel 2:28 through 32. And in the last days it shall be, God declares that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Yea, and all my men servants and my maid servants in those days, I will pour out my spirit, and they shall prophesy.

And I will show wonders in the heaven above, and signs on the earth beneath, blood and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day. And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Now, here you have essential continuity with what you have in Joel 2.28 through 32. The writer is inviting us to go back and look at that passage and then to ask exactly how that passage, in its original wording and context, illumines what is going on here. How does it help us to interpret the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost? Although it's a little more complicated than that here because you also

have some differences that Luke apparently, or Peter as Luke presents him, has introduced into the Joel account.

For example, Joel does not include God declares. As a matter of fact, the Joel account says, and after these things it shall be, whereas in Acts 2 we read, and in the last days does not appear in Joel 2:28. There it is after these things, but here in the last days. And Peter adds God declares, which is not found in the Joel account.

It adds also in verse 18b, and they shall prophesy. That phrase is not found there either. And in verse 19, and I will show wonders in heaven above and signs on the earth beneath.

Above and beneath are not found in the Joel account. That is added by Peter here. So, you have both points of continuity and discontinuity.

Again, note not only the points of continuity there with Joel 2:28 through 32, but also the points of discontinuity where Peter, as presented by Luke, has actually changed the wording of that Joel account, presumably in such a way as to tweak it so as to show how, in fact, what Joel has in mind is being brought to fulfillment here, even beyond the wording of the Joel account. A third type of scriptural testimony involves parallel passages. This, of course, is especially relevant when it comes to interpreting gospel passages, where you have the same event in Jesus' life or the same teaching of Jesus found not only in the gospel that you're interpreting, let's assume you're interpreting Matthew, but is also found in Mark and perhaps Luke and maybe even John as well.

Again, it's important to note both points of continuity and discontinuity. How is a parallel account similar to the parallel account in your gospel? Are there elements here in the parallel account that you have reason to believe that the author of your passage assumed that his original readers would know and would bring to bear in the construal of this passage? If so, you have continuity, complementarity, and the background principle; you bring that to bear. That's really the operative question.

Are there elements in this parallel passage that you have reason to believe on the basis of the context of your passage and on the basis of historical probability that you have reason to believe that the author of your passage assumed his original readers would know? Not that they knew that other account in that gospel, but they knew that information that is found in that other account, the account in the other gospel. You have reason to believe that your author assumed that his readers would know that information and would bring that to bear in the construal of this passage. If so, you bring that in.

That involves assumed knowledge on the part of the reader of your passage. On the other hand, if you answer no to that question, then you need to note the differences,

the different ways in which the other gospel writer or writers presented this event in Jesus' life or presented this teaching of Jesus. Note that those differences and that very difference can highlight the unique perspective or the unique concerns or specific concerns of your evangelist, of your passage.

That the other gospel accounts dealt with it in this way included these other details your writer didn't. That can clarify, that can make more precise your understanding of what your author is trying to get at in this account. Now, in terms of continuity, how a parallel account might actually clarify what's going on in the passage that you're interpreting, let's assume that we are interpreting Matthew 10, 11 here.

This is Jesus' instruction to his disciples when he sends them out on their mission. In Matthew 10:11, we read, Now, this is a little cryptic. Clearly, we understand basically the instruction, but we don't understand exactly why this is important.

He says when you enter a town or village to minister in that town or village, find out who is worthy in it, stay with him, and don't and don't leave. Stay in that same house; don't shift around from house to house. That's clearly what he has in mind.

But why? What's the point? Well, the point of this is actually clarified by the parallel account in Luke 10, verse 7. Here we read and remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the labor deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. Eating and drinking what they provide do not go from house to house.

Luke, you see the Luke parallel clarifies that passage in Matthew 10. In other words, don't move from house to house when you minister in a particular place in order to find the best bed and breakfast, the best food and the best accommodations. That should not be the basis for what you do and where you stay when you minister and the like.

The parallel account gives clarity then to what Jesus seems to have in mind in Matthew 10. But you can have a case where the parallel account is quite different. And as I say, that very differentness can be what's going on in your passage.

I'm going to give as an example here, a parallel, not from the Gospels, but from the historical books of the Old Testament. You know that the books of Chronicles really appears to be largely based upon and had as a primary source, the books of Samuel and Kings. If we go to 2 Samuel, we note the account of David's census in 2 Samuel 21.

One, we read this. Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, and David sought the face of the Lord, and so on and so forth. But you see here, actually I was thinking of 1 Chronicles.

We have this 1 Chronicles 21. There we go. The account of this actually in 2 Samuel is in 2 Samuel 24.

Again, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, Go, number Israel and Judah. Notice here that it is the Lord who incites David to perform this census. The Lord incited David against them, saying, Go, number Israel and Judah.

In the parallel account in 1 Chronicles 21:1, we read that Satan stood up against Israel and incited David to number Israel. So, according to 2 Samuel 24, it was the Lord who incited David to number Israel. According to 1 Chronicles 21, it was Satan who incited David to do so.

There is a difference in those accounts. Now, what you have, of course, is Samuel presenting this census from one point of view, Chronicler presenting it from a somewhat different point of view. It would be inappropriate, I think, to read 1 Chronicles into 2 Samuel.

That would not be a matter of allowing 2 Samuel's own voice. 2 Samuel's own perspective. The very difference, though, can highlight that perspective in 2 Samuel.

Or, if you are interpreting 1 Chronicles, the difference can highlight the specific perspective with regard to the census that you have in 1 Chronicles. Preachers often fall into the trap of combining or collapsing parallel accounts to one another. This is really a dangerous thing to do because it involves creating a new account that doesn't exist anywhere except in the preacher's own mind.

I remember hearing not too long ago a sermon on the feeding of the 5,000 in Matthew 14. The preacher began by saying, well, you know, this story of the feeding of the 5,000 is also found in John 6. John includes a lot of details about the feeding of the 5,000 that Matthew does not include. So, we're going to understand Matthew 14 in light of John 6. This uncritical collapsing of John 6 into Matthew 14 involved, actually, the preacher wasn't aware of this, but what he was actually doing was creating a new account that didn't exist anywhere except in his own mind.

It corresponded neither to the account of the feeding of the 5,000 in John 6 nor to the feeding of the 5,000 in Matthew 14, but it was a kind of his own coalescing of them. That raises all sorts of problems. It raises problems with regard to authority in preaching because he was preaching, really, on a non-canonical text.

He had created a non-canonical text, and that was the basis of his proclamation. He was unable, really, to hear what either Matthew or John had in mind with regard to the feeding of the 5,000. Now, of course, you might ask, well, is it never appropriate to bring accounts together in such a way as to try to understand how the New

Testament as a whole deals with this event? Of course, it is, but when you do that, you need to do it in such a way as to ensure that the distinctive perspective of each of the gospel writers is understood and brought into account.

Now, beyond that, another type of evidence we have is that of literary form or forms here. Of course, this is the kind of thing that we identify in the survey of the segment. We talked really in the earlier segment about the character of these literary forms and suggested something of their role in interpretation.

Let me give you an example here of this. I heard a sermon years and years ago on the 12th chapter of Acts, which is a story of the miraculous release from prison of Peter there, who was under arrest by Herod and about to be executed by Herod. The sermon that I heard was entirely allegorical.

We were told that Peter, of course, was in prison and his hands were in chains, were in fetters. The fetters represented original sin. Of course, when the angel appeared to release him, the fetters fell off.

He was freed from original sin. Of course, you remember that there were two doors from the inner prison out into the street. The first door, we were told, represented justification.

It opened up its own. This was a Methodist who was pre-preaching this, a Wesleyan. The second door represented entire sanctification, we were told.

Then you remember that Peter walked from the prison to the house of the mother of John Mark, where the church had gathered for prayer. That was the life of discipleship and growth in grace throughout the Christian life. The house where the church was gathered, the house of the mother of John Mark where the church was gathered, we were told represented heaven.

His entrance into that house represented glorification. So, you had justification, entire sanctification, growth in grace, and glorification; the order salutes all there in the twelfth chapter of Acts. Now, what was wrong with that? What was wrong with that sermon? It was a violation of genre.

If it had been cast in the form, in the literary form, in the genre of an allegory, that might have been okay, or at least something like it might have been all right. But to allegorize prose narrative is to deal with prose narrative contrary to the genre that the author actually used. This illustrates the importance of general literary form in interpretation.

Also, a further type of evidence that is sometimes significant is the atmosphere of the passage, the tone or atmosphere of the passage, really the feel of the passage.

Now, with regard to tone or atmosphere, this has a twofold bearing, twofold significance. One is the tone of the passage one might reasonably conclude ought to be reflected in the tone of the interpretation, including the tone of any preaching or teaching that is based upon that passage.

One of the best books still, it's an older book, but one of the best books still in my judgment on preaching, on biblical preaching, is by Donald G. Miller, *The Way to Biblical Preaching*. And in that book, he said that it is possible that a preacher, say, exegetes, interprets technically a passage very well, pursues, you know, the meaning of terms, takes its context into account, interprets it very well, but may miss the point entirely with regard to tone. He says, imagine a preacher like that interpreting a passage, say, that has a tone or atmosphere of encouragement, of nurture, and preaching a sermon on that, a sermon whose tone, the tone of preaching or the tone of teaching is one of judgment and censoriousness.

That passage would not have the same impact as the inspired biblical writer intended that it should have. The tone of interpretation, including preaching and teaching, should reflect the tone of the passage. But beyond that, tone or atmosphere can actually affect the meaning, the basic meaning, or the basic sense of a passage.

Especially, this is found, for example, if you have a passage that is sarcasm, really involve, the tone of sarcasm often involves the subversive use of language, so that words actually mean the opposite of their definitions in passages that have a sarcastic tone. Let me give an example of this from 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verses 19 through 21. 2 Corinthians 12:19 through 21.

Actually, let's see here, I think I'm going to go with a somewhat clear example of 1 Corinthians 4:8, which might be just a bit clear. The other would do, but 1 Corinthians 4:8, already you are filled, already you have become rich, without us you have become kings, and would that you did reign so that we might share the rule with you. Notice the sarcasm. That's dripping with sarcasm.

Notice also, along with that tone, we recognize the subversive use of language. When Paul says, already you are filled, he doesn't mean that. He means they're empty.

They think they're full, but they're really empty. Already you have become rich. You're not rich at all.

You're poverty-stricken, Paul is saying here. As a matter of fact, their problem is that you don't realize just how poor you are. Without us, you have become kings, and would that you did reign so that we might share the rule with you.

Paul isn't interested in this kind of rule, either for his Corinthian congregation or for himself. Again, the role of tone or atmosphere. A further type of evidence is the author's purpose and viewpoint.

This has to do with the point of view, and it has especially to do with the relationship between the point of view of the author of your book and the point of view of characters that he describes or that he allows to speak within the book. What is the relationship between the point of view of your writer and the point of view of other voices, of characters, or of other voices within that book? Does the author agree with the point of view of this character, or does he disagree with the point of view of this character? Now, let's again take just a couple of examples. Well, let's take for example, let's take as an example, Peter.

We mentioned just a few moments ago Peter's Pentecost sermon there in the second chapter of Acts, where he quotes from Joel and says, this phenomenon that you are witnessing here, he says, is actually the fulfillment of the prophet Joel. In the last days it shall be, God declares that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams, etc.

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. Now, does Luke, the inspired author of Acts, does Luke agree with what Peter says here or not? Does the point of view of Luke correspond with the point of view of Peter in quoting this Joel passage? Well, the answer is yes and no. Clearly, he agrees with Peter when Peter quotes this passage on the surface.

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. But we know that when Peter quotes this in Acts 2, what Peter is thinking when he quotes from Joel, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh, is actually what Joel had in mind. I will pour out my spirit on all flesh within Israel, on all classes of Jewish society, not Gentiles.

Peter in Acts 2, in quoting from Joel, did not have in mind Gentiles when he said all flesh. We know that because Peter doesn't come to that realization until the 10th chapter of Acts, in the conversion of Cornelius. And it took a vision from God at that point, you remember the great sheet coming down from heaven, it took a vision from God himself to bring Peter around.

The passage that is often there in the 10th chapter is sometimes referred to, although this involves, I think, too loose a use of language, the conversion of Peter. It certainly involved a kind of theological conversion of Peter. Peter hasn't gotten a message yet.

But Luke, when Luke writes this, when Luke records this, what Luke has in mind when Peter says, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh, Luke has in mind all flesh,

including Gentiles. That's Luke's point of view with regard to Acts 2:17. But that's not Peter's point of view, with regard to Acts 2:17. So, Luke does not agree with Peter's point of view completely here in this quotation of Joel 2:28 in Acts 2. Well, we could cite other examples as well, but anyway, that's the case.

Now you'll notice that a number of these types of evidence really overlap. A lot of them really have to do with context. For example, when it comes to the author's point of view and the point of view of characters that he includes within his book, in order to establish what the author's point of view is and even what the point of view of these characters are, you go back to context.

So these things, these various types of evidence are not hermetically sealed off from one another. As I say, especially context plays a role in several of these. By the way, we mentioned here not only the author's point of view, but also the author's purpose and point of view.

What is the author's purpose in including points of view that differ from his own? Not only how does the point of view of this character relate to the point of view of the author, but what is the author's purpose in including this other point of view? Then a further type of evidence is the psychological factor. And the psychological factor actually has two aspects to it. The first has to do with psychology, that's to say, the state of mind, that's what we mean by psychology, the state of mind of the writer of your passage.

The state of mind of the writer of your passage. This can be significant in understanding or interpreting exactly what that writer is saying. I think a great example here would be Lamentations.

Lamentations was written by someone, perhaps Jeremiah, but anyway was written by someone who was experiencing the most distressful event imaginable. The destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple and of everything that he held dear. And this writer, might have been Jeremiah, this writer did not handle this kind of stress, this kind of distress well.

This is a person under great mental duress. So how does a writer's frame of mind help us to understand then what he is saying, to interpret what he is saying? But this can also be the case with regard not just to the writer but also to the state of mind of characters within a book. I think a good example of this would be, and let's look at it, you should always have Bibles with you and open 1 Kings 19:1-8.

1 Kings 19:1-8. Now, you remember that this is a story of, this is found really in the Elijah narrative. And it is the, and this event, this passage really comes right on the heels of what you have at the end of chapter 18 of 1 Kings.

And that is literally Elijah's mountaintop experience. He is, there on top of Mount Carmel, has challenged the prophets of Baal to a contest. Baal was a storm god.

He gives Baal all the advantages, remember, of passing down fire from heaven and consuming the sacrifice. It was a contest between God, the Lord, Yahweh, and Baal. Whichever God acted would be the true God and would be the God of Israel from now on.

As I say, he gave the prophets of Baal and Baal every advantage and gave Yahweh every disadvantage. But in spite of the disadvantage, it was Yahweh who sent down fire from heaven that consumed the sacrifice, and it was not Baal. And, of course, in the wake of this, the prophets of Baal are taken out and stoned, and the name of the Lord is exalted.

But what do you have in the very next passage? Right, coming right off of this great success, the most imaginable success possible. In 19:1, we read that Ahab, the king, told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah saying, so may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as a life of one of them by this time tomorrow.

Then he was afraid, and he arose and went for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree and he asked that he might die saying, it is enough now, it is enough now, oh Lord, take away my life for I am no better than my fathers. Now here you have a passage where the writer practically begs us, urges us certainly, to take the psychological factor into account.

The text really shouts and shrieks the question into our ears: how has Ahab gone from this great success, this mountaintop experience, to this great distress and this great fear that leads him even to want to abdicate his prophetic role and to die? Something is going on up here in Elijah's mind and that is front and center in terms of the agenda of this passage. Now, really, we have to be careful here of what scholars refer to as a psychological fallacy or the psychologizing, the tendency to psychologize the text by which they usually mean bringing in issues of psychology, of state of mind, of emotion. This kind of thing in passages where the writer does not invite us to do so and in ways that the writer does not invite.

This often is done by bringing certain modern psychological theories to bear upon biblical characters and the like, which there is no reason at all to think that the writer of our passage had this kind of thing in mind. So, it is always important to ascertain whether the writer of our passage is encouraging and is inviting this kind of psychological consideration or not. The passage that I just cited, of course, clearly he does.

But it seems to me that, for example, in the words of extermination in the book of Joshua, you have a very studied attempt on the part of the writer of the book of Joshua to keep the reader at arm's length in relation to the emotions and the psychology of the Canaanites who were being exterminated. We are not to feel along with them. We are not to consider their thinking as they were being exterminated.

There is a kind of psychological distance that the writer wants to create between the reader and the Canaanites who are being destroyed there. So, the question is whether there are clues within the text. Often this involves the use of a motive or affective or state of mind sort of language that suggests that the writer wants us to think of these psychological sorts of aspects.

A further type of evidence is inflections. Of course, again, this is the kind of thing that we've talked about already. Inflections involve changes in the form of a word that point to its grammatical meaning and significance.

Inflections involve both verbs and nouns, as well as Greek and English. But with regard to, and here basically I'm going to give just a couple of examples from the English text. You can do a great deal with inflections even from the English, although you can do more with it, of course, if you're working with the original language, the original text, etc.

But with regard to nouns, let's note Matthew 2:20. Matthew 2:20 is interesting here. This is a story of Joseph and the holy family in Egypt, beginning in verse 19. But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel.

For those who sought the child's are dead. Now notice you have the plural noun there: those who sought the child's life are dead. That is really quite surprising in context because up to this point in chapter two of Matthew, so far as we know, only one person has sought the child's life, and that is Herod.

What is behind them? How do you explain the use of the plural? Not he who sought the child is dead. By the way, it talks about when Herod died; he said those who sought the child's life were dead. So how are we to take this plural? Are we to think that perhaps that this plural, those who sought the child's life are dead, suggests that not only Herod but also the chief priests and scribes of whom Herod inquired earlier on in chapter two as to where Christ is to be born, that somehow the chief priests and scribes were complicit in seeking the death of Jesus here, complicit in the death of the Bethlehem infants? Is he thinking perhaps of the soldiers who were sent to Bethlehem to kill all the children, all the male children, two years old and under, that they are the ones who are included in this plural, those who sought the child's life are dead? Well, with regard to the chief priests and scribes, there is no indication

really that they were complicit in the attempt to kill Christ, no indication of that at all.

And in the case of the soldiers who were sent to Bethlehem, clearly, even if they had died, that would be no problem at all because, of course, other soldiers could be marshaled in order to do this kind of ugly work. So that doesn't seem to be the case. We're still left with the mystery: what is involved in the plural here, those who sought the child's life are dead? Well, the answer to that is actually found in the fact that this is practically a word-for-word quotation from Exodus 4:19.

The angel appears to Moses on the slopes of Sinai. After Moses, of course, had escaped himself from Egypt and said, return to Egypt for, quote, those who sought your life have died. So, this suggests then that this is an allusion to Exodus 4:19.

And what Matthew is suggesting by the use of the plural is that this experience in the life of Jesus brings that experience in Moses' life to fulfillment. That Moses' experience back there anticipates and informs, illumines what is happening here in the experience of our Lord. Well, we have just a few more of these types of evidence to look at, but this is a good place to stop.

I think we've gone quite a little while. So, let's take a video segment break just here.

This is Dr. David Bower in his teaching on Inductive Bible Study. This is session 13, Interpretation, Word Study and Context, Intertextual Allusions to the Old Testament.