

Dr. Matthew S. Harmon, The Bible's Use of the Bible, Session 1, The Value of Studying the Bible's Use of the Bible and How to Get Started

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This is Dr. Matthew S. Harman in a series on the Bible's use of the Bible. This is session number one, the value of studying the Bible's use of the Bible and how to get started. Welcome to this course on the Bible's use of the Bible.

This first session is entitled the value of studying the Bible's use of the Bible and how to get started. I'm Dr. Matt Harman, and I will be your guide for this. And as we get started, I want to note that the material in these sessions is based on parts of this book that I co-wrote with Gary Snicker called *How to Study the Bible's Use of the Bible: Seven Permanent Choices*.

And so if your interest is piqued by what you find in these lectures, I encourage you to buy the book and dive in even deeper to this subject. So as we begin, it's always good to start with what we mean by the Bible's use of the Bible. You might be already familiar with the idea of the New Testament authors quoting or alluding to the Bible Testament, but we intentionally use the expression the Bible's use of the Bible to also capture Old Testament writers using earlier portions of the Old Testament.

So what's a basic definition? Basic definition is how later biblical authors make some kind of use of earlier biblical writings. Another way of thinking about this is what's sometimes referred to as scriptural exegesis of Scripture. And as a starting point, biblically, getting into how do we see this, I think a good passage for us to reflect on is what Peter writes in 1st Peter chapter 1 verses 10 through 12.

The Apostle writes concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves, but you in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. So this text is indicating to us that as later biblical authors were inspired by the Spirit and God was moving them to write, they searched and inquired carefully.

They reflected on what it is, not just that God is currently revealing to them, but how it connects to what God had previously revealed to them. And in many cases, what that looks like was God reiterating things he had previously said and allowing the prophet or the later author of Scripture to engage with that and to further expand and explain what God meant when he said those things. So that's just one passage that kind of gives us an insight into this reality. So when we think about the Bible's use of the Bible, you might have wondered why that expression is used. I call it that.

Again, it's to capture the reality that later Old Testament writers use earlier portions of the Old Testament. And so we see many examples of this. I'll point you to just one as an example to start here.

Many of us might be familiar with Isaiah chapter 6, and after the throne room vision that Isaiah has, God says, "Who will go for us?" Isaiah says, here am I, send me. And then this is what Yahweh says to Isaiah. He says, go and say to this people, keep on hearing, but do not understand.

Keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull and their ears heavy and blind their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn and be healed. So that's what Isaiah 6 says.

And you'll notice from the underlined in bold words that that is actually borrowing language from Deuteronomy chapter 29. There in verse two, it says Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, you have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land. The great trials that your eyes saw the signs and those great wonders.

But to this day, the Lord has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear. And so this amount of overlap is not accidental. This is not just some sort of strange coincidence.

This language in Isaiah is intentionally picking up what was said in Deuteronomy 29. And here in Isaiah 6, that language is being used and further applied to a new situation. So you have a later Old Testament author drawing upon language that is found earlier in the Old Testament.

And so that's one of many, many examples of an Old Testament author using earlier Old Testament scripture. And there is interpretive significance that comes from observing these examples. So that's the Old Testament use of the Old Testament.

But of course, there are also examples of the New Testament use of the Old Testament. And there are so many examples we could go through. But let's look at this one here in Romans chapter 10, verses 6 through 8. Paul writes, but the righteousness based on faith says, do not say in your heart, who will ascend into heaven, that is to bring Christ down, or who will descend into the abyss, that is to bring Christ up from the dead.

But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart; that is the word of faith that we proclaim. And then if you look at what we find there in Deuteronomy 30, verses 12 through 14, you see that Paul is very clearly drawing language from this text. Deuteronomy 30, verse 12 begins, it is not in heaven that you should say, who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it.

Neither is it beyond the sea that you should say, who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it. But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

Now what's especially interesting about this example is that Paul is very explicit about giving an interpretation of what these phrases from Deuteronomy 30 mean in his argument. So you'll notice that he says, for example, who will ascend into heaven, and then there's this parenthetical remark that he makes, that is, to bring Christ down. So he's doing interpretation.

He's not just copying and pasting; he is engaging with it, he's interpreting it, he's reflecting on it. And that is just one of many, many examples we could point out. So that gives you a sense of what this is: what is the Bible's use of the Bible.

Now we need to think a little bit about why it is important. Why does it matter? Is this just something for scholars to engage with and something that really doesn't have any impact on the ordinary Christian life? I would argue that this is important because it connects with exegesis. In other words, the Bible's use of the Bible comes to bear when we go to determine the meaning of texts. It's hard to understand what Paul is saying there in Romans 10 if you don't have some sense of what is being said in Deuteronomy 30.

So it helps us understand the meaning of the text. But it also connects with biblical theology. And that term is used in a variety of different ways.

But what I have in mind by biblical theology is an understanding of the storyline of the Bible that runs from Genesis to Revelation, and traces themes and promises and covenants and people and helps you to see the coherent message of the Bible. And one of the ways that God helps us to see how the whole Bible fits together is by having later biblical authors interact with earlier biblical texts. One of the great challenges in studying the Bible is trying to figure out how it fits together.

And there are different proposals as to how we put together, say, the Old Testament and the New Testament and those kinds of things. But I would suggest to you that the best starting point for answering those questions is to see how the New Testament authors themselves understood the Old Testament based on how they quote it and how they allude to it and how they interact with it. That is giving us a starting point for understanding how they view the relationship between what God revealed in the Old Testament and what he is saying in the New Testament.

So it is part of biblical theology. I think it also comes to bear on systematic theology. So when I'm using the term systematic theology, I'm thinking of the study of the Bible that seeks to gather together all that the Bible says based on specific categories and topics.

So things like what does the Bible say about God? And so you try to gather together as many of the texts as you can and synthesize them into a summary. What does the Bible say about human beings? What does the Bible say about this created world? Those are all different types of categories that we find in systematic theology. And again, how a later biblical author engages with earlier scripture can give us a window into seeing the best way to start making those connections between what otherwise might seem like disparate, separated texts and try to bring them into a coherent.

Lastly, I do think that there are benefits to the Christian life when it comes to studying and understanding the Bible's Use of the Bible. At one level, when you think about perhaps the

most fundamental aspect, how we understand how to read the Bible will absolutely shape how we live the Christian life. Just to give a very practical example, we all hopefully have some sense that there's a difference between what we read in, say, Leviticus versus what we read in, say, 1 Peter.

So we're reading along in Leviticus, and we see all of these laws and regulations, and we hopefully at some level realize I'm not supposed to apply those verses exactly in the way that the Israelites did. So when I said I'm not supposed to offer that specific type of sacrifice. But why? Why not? I mean, it's God's word.

And as Christians, we want to take God's word seriously. So we want to make sure that we understand, well, why is it that when we read Leviticus, we don't say, well, I guess I have to go out and offer this specific sacrifice? Well, the use of the Bible can help us see why some of those things that we don't do. And yet, what are the continuities? For example, we know that we're not supposed to offer those same sacrifices.

And yet 1 Peter will quote Leviticus 11 that says that God's people are to be holy because God is holy. So that's clearly something that hasn't changed between Leviticus and 1 Peter. And so even that example helps us to see how the New Testament helps us understand how we should live as Christians.

And it's quoting from Leviticus. So those are just some of the ways it can be helpful to us. What are some of the challenges? Well, one of the first challenges is in the area of what we think of as hermeneutics.

So hermeneutics is the art and science of interpretation. How is it that we approach a text? And one element of hermeneutics that is very important is the area of assumptions or presuppositions that everyone has starting points or assumptions when they start reading the Bible. And I think we intuitively recognize this.

You've probably had the experience where you read a passage of Scripture, and you come to a conclusion of what you think it means. And then you see, maybe you read a commentary or a resource, and they've read the same passage, and you think, did they really read the same passage? Because they are seeing a completely different meaning than I'm seeing. And oftentimes, the difference is rooted in starting points or presuppositions or assumptions.

To give an example, there are obviously a lot of miracle stories in the Gospels. Jesus is doing all sorts of miraculous things. But if you approach the Bible with the assumption that the supernatural doesn't exist, that God doesn't exist and the supernatural doesn't exist, you're going to give some other kind of explanation for what's happening in that passage compared to someone who says, well, no, I believe God exists, and I believe the supernatural realm is real.

And so those different assumptions and starting points will shape the way that we read and interpret the text. So when people come to the Bible with different starting points, that can be one of the challenges in studying the Bible's use of the Bible. Second, Old and New Testament introduction.

What I mean by this is understanding which books of the Bible were written before other books of the Bible. Now, in one sense, if you're just studying how the New Testament authors use the Old Testament, that one isn't really an issue. It gets more complicated when you're working in the Old Testament, in the prophets, for example.

And sometimes it may not be clear when a prophet was writing. Maybe one of the clearest examples of this is the book of Joel. The scholars will very differently conclude; some will say, oh, this was written before Israel's exile, very early.

And those say, oh, no, no, no. This is written after the exiles returned from Babylon or living in the land and points in between. And so that can make it difficult to know.

OK, so if we have a line here in Joel that looks like it's related to another Old Testament prophet, it might be difficult to know, well, is Joel using Isaiah or is Isaiah using Joel or whatever the case might be. So those come into play as well, especially when we're talking about the Old Testament use of the Old Test. Now, oftentimes it's not that difficult.

For example, when Isaiah uses language found in Deuteronomy, it's pretty straightforward. Although, again, here's where your critical debates about scholarship might come in, right? The critical scholars might say, well, I know Deuteronomy presents itself as being written by Moses, but actually we think it was written in the 6th century or whatever. And so that makes it challenging as well.

Another challenge is an awareness of ancient Near Eastern and Second Temple Jewish contexts. What's fascinating when it comes to the Old Testament is that, for example, when you read Proverbs, there are similar proverbial statements in other ancient Near Eastern wisdom texts. And so that raises the question.

So is the author of Proverbs borrowing from those? Is he just aware in general of wisdom principles? So how do we think through those things? How do we wrestle with that? When it comes to the New Testament and its use of the Old Testament, the issue is typically a little bit different. There, it's: are the New Testament authors aware of how other Jewish writers already engaged with those same Old Testament texts they're interpreting? And as a result, how aware are they? And if they are aware, are they borrowing from those Jewish writers more directly than they are directly from the Old Testament? Or are they simply living in the same kind of context in which they were generally aware of interpretive traditions associated with an Old Testament text, but not specifically aware of how, say, Philo might be interpreting that text? So those are some of the challenges that come into play here as well. Another challenge, the original languages, Hebrew and Greek, and we should also throw in Aramaic in there because some small portions of the Old Testament were written in Aramaic as well.

And you might think, well, why is this an issue? Well, in the most basic sense, if you're studying how the New Testament authors engaged with the Old Testament, already you've got a language thing. You've got a language issue because the New Testament is written in Greek and the Old Testament, written in Hebrew, again, with a few small portions written in Aramaic, and so how do we put that together? Well, a complication of that is the fact that by the time of the New Testament, the entirety of the Old Testament had been translated at various points into Greek. And so when the New Testament authors are using the Old

Testament, often they are using those Greek translations of those Hebrew Old Testament books.

But then that raises the question, how closely do those Greek translations line up with the Hebrew Old Testament text itself? The more you dive in and study this issue, what you discover is that there's kind of a range. That some of the Old Testament books, when they were translated from Hebrew into Greek, were translated very carefully- is not the right word I'm looking for here- but with the idea of trying to stay as close to the wording of the Hebrew as possible. Almost like a contemporary translation that tries to go very word for word, woodenly, to try to match what that Old Testament book says.

And so you've got some portions of the Septuagint that are translated almost like the New American Standard Bible, which is known for it being very word for word, and can be sometimes a little bit clunky to read in English because they're so devoted to this one word in the original language has to match up with one word in the English language. So you've got some books that are like that. And then you've got other books that are more of a dynamic translation, that almost read a little bit more like a contemporary translation, like the New Living Translation, which is more oriented towards trying to get the meaning of the phrases and clauses without being slavishly tied to the precise wording in the original language.

So it'd be like having a modern-day English Old Testament, where some of the books were the New American Standard, and then some of them were like the English Standard Version. And then others are like the New Living Translation, and they could just be very mixed in terms of what you're getting in terms of the quality of the translation. And then, as if that's not complicated enough, you always have the issue potentially of what we refer to as textual criticism, where you're trying to reconstruct, well, what was the original wording in that Hebrew manuscript or in the Septuagint translation or even in the New Testament Greek? Because you have examples where maybe a scribe recognizes, hey, this author, Luke or whoever, appears to be quoting or alluding to this Old Testament text, but he left this little phrase or word out.

I'm going to help him out and tidy that up and insert that word so it more closely matches what that Old Testament text says. So all of those things come to bear when you're doing a deep dive into the study of how the Bible uses the Bible. And my fear in saying all of that is that I've scared you off.

That you hear all this and you're thinking, oh, my goodness, how am I ever supposed to even approach this? And I want to stress that there are levels to this. OK, of course, there is the deep dive academic, very detailed type of study of these passages that is good and necessary. But that's not something that the ordinary Bible reader needs to necessarily engage in.

And good news, there are resources out there that can help you at least access to some degree what scholars have discovered as they've engaged in these sort of deeper dives with the original language. But at the basic level, I hope to persuade you that this can be done even at a simple level if you are only able to read the Bible in English. And I'll come back to that as we come to the end of this particular session.

So that's kind of clearing the ground a little bit. I want to move now to what we discuss in the book. I mentioned earlier how to study the Bible is used for the Bible.

The subtitle is Seven Hermeneutical Choices for the Old and New Testaments. And so we're trying to explain how these different hermeneutical issues, interpretive issues, have a bearing on the way that we understand how the Bible uses the Bible. And just to be clear, this book is oriented more for a, I would say, a seminary textbook level kind of engagement.

I think it can be read by others and there could be benefit and profit. But just be aware that there's a lot of engagement with the original languages, though we do try to help you see in the English text as well what's going on. And so this book is structured around these seven hermeneutical choices.

And I'm not going to go through all of these in this course, but I do want to show you what these seven hermeneutical choices are and give a very brief explanation. And then in the sessions that follow, I'll go through a few of them in more depth to give you a taste. So the first one is what we have labeled sequestered versus connected.

What you'll see in the wording of these choices is that we frame them as this versus that. And sometimes we will, through the course of the chapter, conclude that one of these is the preferable way versus the other. And this is one of those.

I'll explain what I mean by this in a minute, but we opt for the connected approach. But other choices will be this versus that, and we'll say it's actually a both-and, not an either-or. But this one is an either-or, sequestered versus connected.

What we mean by this is, in the academic study of how the Bible uses the Bible, there has been this tendency to have one group over here that studies how the Old Testament uses the Old Testament, and they do their own thing, and they have their own discussions, and their own scholarship. And then over here, you have scholars who do a study of the New Testament use of the Old Testament, and they do their own thing, and they have their own scholarship, and rarely do they talk to each other. They just kind of go about their merry way, and they often will come to different conclusions and say, well, Old Testament authors are doing these things, but New Testament authors are doing very different things.

Our argument is that, in fact, these should be studied together as part of the same larger phenomenon. That's why we use the expression, the Bible's use of the Bible, to try to capture that. And so that's what we mean by connected.

Furthermore, we contend that what the New Testament authors do with the Old Testament is really just following in the footsteps of what the Old Testament authors were already doing with earlier texts in the Old Testament. So when you get to the New Testament, they're not doing something radically new. They're doing a lot of the same things that these Old Testament authors were already doing with earlier scripture.

And when you understand them together, it helps you see a consistent, broad, hermeneutical approach that enables you to better see the unity of Scripture. So that's the first choice, sequestered versus connected. Second, adjusting meaning and/or adjusting context versus advancement of revelation.

Now, this one is a little bit more complicated. You might be thinking, I thought the first one was complicated. This one is even more, but try to stay with me here.

The idea here is that when we come across a later biblical author, and maybe you've had this experience, you're reading in the New Testament and you see, oh, the author is quoting this Old Testament passage. And then you go back, you say, I'm going to look up that Old Testament passage. And you look it up, and you think, that does not seem to be the most obvious meaning of that passage in the Old Testament.

And yet that seems to be what Paul or Matthew or Luke or Peter is saying it means. So this chapter is devoted to trying to understand that phenomenon. What's going on with that? So do later biblical authors adjust or change the meaning of the text? Or do they adjust the context of it? Or is it God working through the later biblical author as they engage in exegesis of previous scripture to say more than might have been understandable by the original human author, and yet is legitimately there in the original passage? That's what the thrust of that is.

That's one of the most complex issues in this whole area of the Bible's use of the Bible. What's the relationship between the intended meaning of the human author, say the Old Testament passage, and then of the New Testament author coming along later and saying, essentially, this Old Testament passage means this. You think, well, did the human author of that Old Testament passage recognize that as what was meant? And then how does the divine authorship come into play? What is the divine and divine authorial intent in that passage? That's all in the mix in this particular chapter.

Number three, detecting illusions as art versus science. So when it comes to seeing the presence of an illusion in a text, some approaches are very much almost scientific in their approach, very detailed criteria. It has to be a certain number of words that are shared from the Old Testament text to the New Testament text or whatever it might be.

And if you don't reach that certain threshold, then you just dismiss it as, well, that doesn't count. And then other approaches are almost free association, just sort of a, well, this kind of reminds me of, and then fill in the blank. And so in this chapter, instead of doing an either-or, we try to say there's a both-and.

That yes, there are good, solid principles that we can follow, but there is a sense in which having the right kind of sensibilities and inclinations based on immersing yourself in Scripture can help you to see connections between texts. So that's the third chapter, detecting illusions as art versus science. Fourth, horizontal context versus vertical context.

We will talk more about this in our next session. So I won't go into much detail here, other than to say both of these types of contexts are important. Horizontal context is the surrounding sentences, paragraphs, and chapters within both the original text and the later text.

Vertical context is going to refer to this idea of how, when a biblical author uses an earlier text, there's an accumulation of meaning that happens, and you need to pay attention to

that. I'll explain more about that in our next session. Fifth, biblical versus extra-biblical relationships.

We mentioned this a little bit earlier, but what role do we give to parallels or use of scripture in books or writings that are outside of scripture itself? So again, this is ancient Near Eastern. This is Second Temple Jewish texts. How do we factor that into the process here? Sixth, backward-looking versus forward-looking typological patterns.

We'll do a whole session on this. So all I'll simply mention here is that this is a both and, that there are both types of typology in Scripture itself. And I'll give a definition of typology in that session.

Lastly, seventh choice. Historical exegesis versus historical and prosopological exegesis. Now that might be a term you've never heard before, prosopological exegesis.

It's a way of referring to when a later biblical author takes something that was said by an earlier biblical author, but puts it with a different speaker. That's not as complex as it might sound. Basically, the primary way this works out is, for example, like in Hebrews, where something that's said in a psalm by the king is said to be God speaking to his people in Hebrews, for example.

So that term prosopological, *prosopos* is the Greek word for prosopological. Greek word for face. And so the idea is the face of a different speaker is kind of behind that.

So that is what we discussed there in chapter seven. So that gives you an overview of kind of the larger scope of the book. I want to finish out this particular session by trying to give some brief definitions to help us get oriented.

The first is allusion. One of the difficulties in this whole area of study is that scholars use these terms differently. So when we talk about allusion, we're trying to make that the biggest category possible.

So as we use it, it includes both quotations, where there's a clear, written quotation, and then a word-for-word quotation from a previous text. Down to even the most faint of references where it might only be one word or two words that are intended to refer the reader back to an earlier text. One of the important things here is that we are arguing that allusions are author-intended.

The author intends to draw your attention to that connection. Maybe this will be helpful for you. I've laid this out as a spectrum of influence.

And you'll see that on the right, actually start on the left here, on the left side of the screen, you'll see citation. That is clear; it's obvious; it's a quotation. Often introduced with what's called an introductory formula like it is written or as Isaiah said or something like that.

Clear, lots of overlapping words of vocabulary, etc. Now next to that, we've got the term allusion in the sense of there's not necessarily a direct quotation, but several words borrowed from an Old Testament text where clearly the author's trying to draw your attention to that. And you'll notice that the line gets progressively lighter the further we move to the right here.

And down to what some scholars refer to as echoes, meaning the faintest of overlap in vocabulary where it might even just be one word or something that is very faint and is debatable, to be honest. Where good faith people can discuss and say, I don't think there's really a reference back to that Old Testament passage. And others might say, no, actually, I think there is based on that.

And then all the way over here to the right, you have thematic similarities. And this might be understood as something where it's not an explicitly shared language between the Old Testament text and, say, the later Old Testament text, but it treats similar themes in a similar way. And therefore, the biblical author still might intend you to be thinking about that previous Old Testament passage, even if they're not using the exact same vocabulary from that text.

And so here's that spectrum that gives us a sense of the range of how biblical authors might use the Old Testament. A few more definitions here. What our focus is on is what we refer to as exegetical allusions, meaning that there is a donor text, a receptor text, and an exegetical outcome.

So what do we mean by that? The donor text is the text that is cited, the original text. So back in one of our earlier examples, where we saw Isaiah 6 draws on Deuteronomy 29, Deuteronomy 29 is the donor text that is donating the original words and ideas. So then the receptor text is the text that is quoting or borrowing from that earlier text.

So Isaiah 6 is the receptor text, receiving the wording and ideas from Deuteronomy 29. And then an exegetical outcome. What do we mean by that? This is the interpretation of the donor text within the receptor text, meaning that the later text is doing something with that passage.

It's not really borrowing the words for literary effect. There's an interpretive move in view here where the later text is interpreting or engaging with the donor text. So that's really the focus of our work in this book.

So bringing it to a conclusion here. Where do we start? The first place I would say is just be on the lookout for it. It's way more common than you might expect to see these allusions to previous texts.

And so just being aware of it is often a significant starting point. The second, and this is something I want to stress for those who don't know the original languages, is pay attention to your cross-references. I mean, these are a great gift in many of our English Bibles.

And so if you're reading along and you see a phrase and you think, that seems to be something that maybe I've heard before, use those cross-references to go track it down. Now, sometimes that cross-reference is merely going to be a conceptual parallel where it's like, oh, this passage talks about giving and this other passage talks about giving. That's not really an allusion.

It's just two texts that talk about a similar concept. But other times you'll discover, oh, interesting. It seems like this later author is actually referring back to this and might be alluding to it.

And one resource that I will recommend for doing that is this tool that has come out. It is called the Connecting Scripture New Testament. And so the Connecting Scripture New Testament.

It's based on the Christian Standard Bible translation. And what's unique about this particular resource is that in the text itself, Old Testament allusions are color-coded in green and quotations are put in blue in the body of the text. So when you read through, it's alerting you to, hey, this is an allusion to an Old Testament text.

And then in the cross-reference side here, it gives you an indication of where that passage came from. So if it's green here in the body of the text, the scripture reference in the side here is in green. Or if it's blue in the text here, it's blue in the side.

One other feature of this at the bottom, these are study notes that explain the significance of that particular allusion. Just in a paragraph to try to help you see, here's why it's significant that this biblical author is referring back to this Old Testament passage. Lastly, this also has two different indices.

It has a New Testament index where you can look up any New Testament passage and see the proposed Old Testament allusions listed there, which is super helpful. But I think the even better resource in the back here is the Old Testament index. This is what makes this so super useful.

So if you're reading through a passage in the Old Testament, since this only contains the New Testament, they are working on the Old Testament version of this. But if you're reading through Genesis 44 or whatever, you can go here and say, okay, are there any allusions in the New Testament to Genesis 44? And then you look, and you go, yes, there are right here. And then you can go look at that New Testament passage and see how the New Testament author is engaging with that particular verse or chapter.

And so this resource is a phenomenal starting point to help you start to make some of those connections. Two more things here as we wrap up. How do we start? Learn to read deeply.

I think sometimes we can read so quickly through a biblical passage that we don't slow down and notice the turns of phrase or the images or the symbols or the language, and that we miss out on the intentional wording that the author uses that's intended to catch your attention and say, hey, wait a minute, slow down. This is pointing back to that earlier text. At the same time, we can make the opposite mistake: if we ever learn to read widely, then we're not able to see the big picture connections that we get so lost in the details of every single word and clause and phrase that we miss the big picture flow and then larger connections that scripture holds out for us.

So that's enough to get us started. In our next session, we will look at the value of studying both horizontal and vertical context. And I am confident that when you understand those

concepts, you will start to see some connections within Scripture that you probably never noticed before.

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