

How to Read Sacred Scripture



Remember that Sacred Scripture is neither a history, nor a novel, nor a newspaper, nor science.

- ♦ *It is a faith document - written & presumed to be read through the lens of faith.*
- ♦ *It is written for disciples (you & me).*

Scripture is *always* promoting reliance on God.

- Always pay attention to what God says.
- Notice who it is that acts exactly as God commands.
- When one disobeys God, do they repent?
- Notice God's reactions to non-repentance.

A genealogy typically signals that an important person or event is soon to be introduced.

Note that *God's* ways are not our ways. His plan is not always obvious at the time. It is a pitfall to try and fit *God's actions* into our conception of God.

Read a pericope through. Then go back and read it aloud slowly.

- Always ask: What is the faith lesson for me?
- Be attentive to details - they tend to connect a passage with a future or past passage.
- Details are important, but only as they add to the theological meaning of the text.

Be aware of three levels of meaning:

1. The intention of the inspired author and the interplay of the characters.
2. the original audience
3. the present-day audience (us)

Factors that can contribute to the complexity of interpretation:

- **Dependence on translations - every translation is already in some way an interpretation.**
- **Gaps in culture, customs, worldview of the Biblical world (Twelve centuries span the composition of the Bible)**
- **Allowing the text to speak rather than imposing our own traditions or opinions into the text (exegesis vs. eisegesis)**

Sacred Scripture is Inspired and Inerrant

Inspiration

(from Latin "to breathe into")
God's help to certain chosen people, first to understand, then to freely express in words -well and without error - what God wants to communicate through the sacred text.

Inerrancy

"The books of Scripture firmly, faithfully and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures."
(*Dei Verbum*)