SECTION 16

The History of Interpretation

THE HISTORY OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

1. Ancient Jewish Interpretation
2. Use of the O.T.
3. Patristic Interpretation
4. Medieval Interpretation
5. Reformation Interpretation
6. Post-Reformation Interpretation
7. Modern Interpretation

A. ANCIENT JEWISH INTERPRETATION

1. The ministry of Ezra - Nehemiah 8:8 – "And they read from the book, from the Law of God, translating (explaining) to give the sense so that they (the people) understood the reading."
2. At the time of Christ - 4 main types of Jewish interpretation existed:
   - Literal - (*peshat*)
   - Midrash - Rabbinic expositional commentary on the OT. Rabbi Hillel - developed basic rules of Rabbinic interpretation
   - Pesher - (Hebrew for "commentary") - unique form of Midrash found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Noted by the phrase "This is that" - meaning "this present phenomenon is a fulfillment of that ancient prophecy."
   - Allegorical - true meaning lies beneath the literal meaning (symbolic interpretation) Philo of Alexandria (c.20BC - 50AD) was a leading exponent. Often led to fanciful interpretation.
3. Post-apostolic developments among Jewish interpreters
   - Mishnah – authoritative compilation of Jewish oral tradition grouped into topical collections of legal rulings, completed at the end of the second century AD, compiled by Rabbi Judah.
   - Talmud – The Mishnah in addition to later rabbinic commentary (Gemara). The Palestinian Talmud was completed in the 4th century, AD. The Babylonian Talmud was completed in the 5th century, AD, and is about three times the length of its Palestinian counterpart.
   - Josephus (37 – 100 AD) – A Jewish historian whose writings are especially important for Jewish and Roman political history during his lifetime and the two centuries beforehand.
   - Philo (20 BC – AD 50) – An Alexandrian Jew whose writings represent a synthesis between Greek philosophical thinking and Jewish traditions.

SUMMARY -

1. Literal employed in areas of judicial and practical concerns
2. Mostly employed Midrashic methods
3. Most used allegory to some extent

B. N.T. USE OF THE O.T.

Approximately 10% of the NT is OT quotation, paraphrase, or allusion. Of the 39 OT books, only 9 are not referred to in the NT.

1. Jesus' use of the OT

- Jesus accepted the entire OT as Word of God and completely true (Matt. 5:17-18)
- Normal, literal interpretation as opposed to allegorical was His method.
- Historical narratives of OT were accepted as straightforward records of fact.

2. Apostles' use of the OT
   - Following Jesus, they viewed Scripture as the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21)
   - When quoting the OT, the apostles sometimes modify the wording.
   - Several Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek versions were circulating.
   - It is not necessary to quote the OT verbatim. (Remember the translation principle: Faithfulness not exactness is the issue.)
   - Freedom from verbatim quotation is a sign of mastery of the material.
   - Mostly they interpreted the OT literally - history as history, poetry as poetry, Symbols as symbols, etc. (Literally here = "normally" or "naturally" in its historical-grammatical sense.)

C. PATRISTIC (CHURCH FATHERS) INTERPRETATION (AD 100-500)
*Allegorical method dominated
*2 Major schools of interpretation develop: Alexandria (allegorical) and Antioch (literal)

1. Alexandrian School - (emp. allegorical interpretation)
   A. Clement of Alexandria (c.150-c.215)
      1. Scripture hides its true meaning behind the literal words.
      2. Hence, there is a need for allegorical method.
      3. Clement accepted the allegorical method of Plato and applied it to the NT Scriptures.
   B. Irenaeus (d. ca. 200)
      1. Took interpretation in a typological direction.
      2. Followed the principle that obscure passages should be interpreted in light of clear.
      3. Introduced the idea of authoritative exegesis - true meaning of Scripture invested in church where apostolic authority is preserved. (Led to the Catholic error that true interpretation is what the church leaders say it is rather than in careful study of the Bible. Reformation opposed this error vehemently. Catholic Council of Trent affirmed ecclesiastical infallibility).
   C. Origen (185-254)
      1. Systematized allegorical method.
      2. Wrote *De Principiis* - deals with inspiration and interpretation
      3. All Scripture has a spiritual meaning, not all has a literal meaning.
      4. His emphasis on scripture having a divine allegorical meaning which was different from the literal meaning set the tone for interpretation through the Middle Ages.
2. Antioch School (emp. literal interpretation)
   1. Defended the grammatical-historical method of interpretation against the allegorizing of the Alexandrian School.
   2. Literal interpretation of Scripture paramount.

3. Spiritual meaning not opposed to the literal but flows out of the literal.
4. Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428) most well known.
5. Laid groundwork for Reformation and modem evangelical hermeneutics.

*Augustine - (354-430)
1. Wrote *On Christian Doctrine* - outlined rules for interpretation.
2. Tended toward excessive allegorizing.
3. Scripture has a 4-fold sense:
    - Historical
    - Allegorical
    - Tropological - (moral)
    - Anagogical - (spiritual meaning as it relates to the future and the eternal...)

D. MEDIEVAL INTERPRETATION - (600-1500)
Augustine's 4-fold sense of Scripture came to dominate Medieval interpretation. The following little verse was used during the time:

"The letter shows us what God and our fathers did;
The allegory shows us where our faith is hid;
The moral meaning give us rules of daily life;
The anagogy show us where we end our strife."

*William Tyndale (1494-1536) was a forerunner of the Reformation. He aided the return to historical-grammatical interpretation. Addressing this 4-fold approach to Scripture he wrote: "They divide Scripture into four senses, the literal, typological, allegorical, and anagogical. The literal sense is become nothing at all: for the pope hath taken it clean away, and hath made it his profession. He hath partly locked it up with the false and counterfeited keys of his traditions, ceremonies, and feigned lies; and driveth men from it with violence of sword: for no man dare abide by the literal sense of the text, but under a protestation, 'If it shall please the pope.'...Thou shalt understand, therefore, that the Scriptures hath but one sense, which is the literal sense. And that literal sense is the root and ground of all, and the anchor that never faileth, whereunto if thou cleave, thou canst never err or go out of the way." -William Tyndale, "The Observance of a Christian Man" in *Doctrinal Treatises* (Cambridge, 1848, pgs. 303-304)

Example: "Jerusalem" in Galatians 4:22 understood in 4 different ways:
- Historically - literally city of the Jews
- Allegorically - church of Christ
- Morally - human soul
- Analogically - heavenly city

1. 2-fold reason for insistence on multiple meanings of Scripture:
    A. No adequate theory of the relation of revelation to reason had been worked out.
    B. Through the Greek Patristics and Augustine, Platonism influenced the Christian

worldview. God's Word and will not overtly expressed in Scripture, but hidden in symbolic meaning behind the literal words. Scripture was like a Medieval Cathedral, which spoke to the people in the language of symbols.

2. Thomas Aquinas - (1225-1274)
   A. Most influential and important theologian of Middle Ages.
   B. Principle exponent of the literal sense during the Middle Ages.
   C. Views expressed in his most famous work, *Summa Theologica*.
   D. Aquinas made the declaration of independence from the allegorical method.
   E. Catholic Church viewed as the authoritative interpreter of Scripture.

SUMMARY:

1. Late Middle Ages began a return to a study of Hebrew and the production of literal and historical commentaries on the OT.
2. Rejection of the Patristic theological method - theology now divorced from exegesis.
3. This divorce was followed immediately by a remarriage of theology to philosophy.
4. Emphasis on historical studies led to claim of objectivity in interpretive understanding.
5. Heavy emphasis on Rationalism (Aristotleanism).
6. Claim to objectivity would come to fruition in the Modern era of biblical interpretation in a negative way - rejection of inspiration, inerrancy, etc.
7. Throughout Medieval Period, the source of theology is not the Bible alone, but the the Bible as interpreted by the Church and tradition.

E. REFORMATION INTERPRETATION - (1500-1600)

2 Watchwords of the Reformation:

Sola Fide - "Faith alone"
Sola Scriptura - "Scripture alone"

1. Luther - (1483-1546)
   - Believed Faith and the Spirit's illumination were prerequisites for interpretation.
   - Church should not determine what the Scripture,s teach.
   - Rejected the allegorical method (called it "dirt" and "scum") in favor of a return to the literal method.
   - Affirmed the perspicuity of Scripture - clarity of Bible.
   - All OT and NT points to Christ.
   - Carefully distinguished between Law and Gospel.
   - Scripture is its own best interpreter.
2. John Calvin - (1509-1564)
   - Greatest exegete of the Reformation - *Institutes* and *Commentaries* are must reading.
   - Rejected allegory in favor of literal interpretation.
   - Return to a study of the original languages of Scripture in exegesis.

SUMMARY:
Reformation period was a return to the Bible alone as the sole rule of faith and practice. Rejection of the authority of the Catholic Church in providing the only true interpretation of Scripture. Priesthood of believer rediscovered in biblical interpretation. Translation of Scripture undertaken by Luther and others.

F. POST-REFORMATION INTERPRETATION - (1600-1800)

1. Rationalism - intellectual movement - human mind is an independent authority capable of determining truth.
2. Rationalism became a tool of reason used against the Bible (The Enlightenment).
3. Rise of Empiricism - valid knowledge obtained through the five senses.
4. Scripture subjected to the authority of the human mind rather than the other way around.

   17th Century Examples:
   - Thomas Hobbes - Anglican Philosopher
   - Richard Simon - French Catholic Priest
   - Bernard Spinoza - Jewish Philosopher

5. Reason rather than revelation is now the key to biblical interpretation. Later, in reaction to a dead rationalistic religion, there will be a turn to experience.

G. MODERN INTERPRETATION - (1800-PRESENT)

Influenced by Freud, Nitzeche, Darwin and Hegel, the Bible came to be viewed as a record of the evolutionary development of Israel's religious consciousness and an expression of the religious experiences of its authors.

1. 19th Century - Rise of Liberalism
   A. Freidrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) – "father of modem liberalism"
      1. Must interpret the Bible like any other book.
      2. Confluence of Rationalism with Subjectivism
      3. Rejected the absolute authority of Scripture and a supernatural worldview.
      4. Pioneer in Hermeneutics - identified 2 sides to understanding texts:
         a. Grammatical Interpretation - objective side - focus on grammar, words, etc.
         b. Technical Interpretation - subjective side - focus on attempts to get into the mind of the author.
   B. Birth of the Historical-Critical Method of interpretation
      1. Rationalistic assumption
      2. Naturalistic worldview
      3. Bible's greatest contribution is its moral emphasis rather than its theological teachings.
   C. 3 Influential German scholars: F.C. Baur, Julius Wellhausen, and Adolf von Harnack - Harnack's book, *What is Christianity?* (1901), summarized liberal theology as shaped by its biblical interpretation with its evolutionary matrix and antisupernatural worldview.

2. 20th Century (Neo-Orthodoxy)

   A. Karl Barth - (1886-1968)
   1. Commentary on *Romans* (1919) was a watershed book.
   2. Attacked liberalism as inadequate.
   3. Reemphasized authority of Scripture.
   4. Reemphasized need for personal encounter with God.
   5. Multi-volumed *Church Dogmatics* his major work.

B. Rudolph Bultmann - (1884-1976)
   1. Applied method of Form Criticism to Gospel.
   2. He sought to "Demythologize" the Bible, strip away the mythical (supernatural) embellishments/framework.

BASIC TENETS OF NEO-ORTHODOXY

1. Words of the Bible cannot convey the knowledge of God as abstract propositions. God can only be known in personal encounter.
   The Bible is not the Word of God but the record of God's involvement in history. The Bible becomes the Word of God to us in existential encounter.

2. A gulf separates God from fallen humanity - myths can bridge this gulf. Neoorthodoxy downplays the historicity of biblical events.

3. Truth is viewed as ultimately paradoxical (dialectical) in nature. There is no underlying rational coherence that binds the diverse ideas of Scripture together.

A CRASH COURSE IN LINGUISTICS (Language philosophy at the end of the 20th century.)

A. IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

- ***Linguistics*** - The study of the structure of language, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.
- ***Phonology*** - The identification and classification of all sounds used in a given language.
- ***Morphology*** - The study of the structure of words: the classification of word formation including inflection, derivation, prefixes, suffixes, roots, etc.
- ***Syntax*** - The study of the arrangement of words as elements in phrases, clauses, or sentences to show their relationship. Study of phrase, clause and sentence structure.
- ***Semantics*** - The branch of Linguistics concerned with meaning, its nature, structure, and development.
- ***Grammar*** - The study of the forms and structure of words (Morphology) and their arrangements in phrases, clauses, and sentences (Syntax). Also, a system of rules relating to morphology and syntax.
- ***Translation*** - The transfer of meaning from one language to another.
- ***Source Language*** - The language we are translating - ex. Greek for the NT
- ***Receptor Language*** - The language we are translating into - ex. the English Bible for us.
- ***Surface Structure*** - The form of a text which includes phonology, lexicon, and grammar. Words, phrases, clauses, sentences, etc. are a language's surface structure.
- ***Semantic Structure*** - The content of a text which includes its meaning.
- ***Meaning*** - All the relevant information that is transmitted by an act of communication (spoken or written). (See under "Types of Meanings" below)

B. THE HIERARCHY OF LANGUAGE

In all languages words are combined into larger units of meaning: Words - Phrases - Clauses - Sentences - Paragraphs - Discourse

Important principles to remember:

1. The whole is more than the sum of its parts.
2. Language is characterized by the concept of "embedding."
   Example: a sentence may have embedded within it smaller sentences I John 1:5 – "God is light" is embedded within the *oti* clause.
3. Language has "content" words and "function" words.

Example: Content words: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs Function words: articles, prepositions, conjunctions

C. TYPES OF MEANING

1. Referential Meaning: that which is being talked about; the subject matter of a text.
2. Situational Meaning: information pertaining to the participants in a communication act (environment, social status, etc.)
3. Structural Meaning: arrangement of the information in the text itself; the grammar and syntax of a text.

Illustration of the 3 types of meaning in the following sentence:

DAVID OWNS A DODGE PICKUP.

Referential Meaning - David, a pickup truck; a relationship that exists between them, namely, ownership. This sentence is about these things.

If the sentence reads: David owns a Dodge clunker.

Situational Meaning: the referents have not changed, but with the substitution of "clunker" for "pickup" we learn something about the attitude of the speaker toward the pickup and possibly toward David. In the first sentence nothing is said about the attitude of the speaker, not so in the second sentence.

If the sentence reads: He owns a Dodge pickup.

Structural Meaning: same referents but "he" is linked to another sentence in context not given here. Furthermore, the structure within this sentence is:

He = pronoun functioning as Subject
owns = verb
a = indefinite article modifying "pickup"
Dodge = adjective modifying "pickup" describing kind
pickup = noun functioning as the object of the verb

D. KEY ELEMENTS IN LANGUAGE THEORY

Semiotics - Study of human communication as a signaling system.
Linguistics - Study of the structure of human communication (written or verbal)
Semantics - Structure and development of meaning in a text
Pragmatics - Circumstances that accompany communication

THE GRAMMATICAL-HISTORICAL APPROACH TO INTERPRETATION

1. We are to understand the text literally (naturally/normally) not allegorically. Literal - the simple, direct, plain, ordinary meaning We communicate truth in 1 of 2 ways:
   a. Literal - no figures of speech...explicit assertion of words.
   b. Figurative literal - interpret using the specific intention of the figure and what that figure

   connotes.
2. Importance of authorial intent cannot be overstated. We should honor the author's intended meaning as discovered in the text (not his mind. Schleirmacher was wrong).
3. To take the figurative-literal text and interpret it as a plain literal text is to interpret it allegorically.
   Ex. Isaiah 55:12 - Mountains and Fields
4. To take the plain literal and interpret it as figurative-literal is to interpret it allegorically as well.
5. The joint authorship of Scripture must be affirmed (Confluency) - 100% divine, 100% human.
6. Progressive Revelation - a later author will have fuller insight than an earlier author. A later writer may understand a given passage to imply more than the original author understood or applied (sensus plenary - a hotly debated issue!)
   Ex. Matt. 1:23 and Isaiah 7:14 - Matthew infers more from the text than Isaiah understood at the time.

GUIDELINES:

1. Assume a plain literal sense.
2. If plain literal sense involves a contradiction to known literal truth, interpret the passage figuratively. Ex. - Isaiah 55:12
3. If interpreting figuratively, look to the immediate context for the explanation of the figure. Ex. - Rev. 20:2 - Dragon = Satan
   (The material on linguistics comes from David Allen of SWBTS)

Respect for Authorial Intention

E. D. Hirsch: "A stable and determinate meaning requires an author's determining will . . .All valid interpretation of every sort is founded on the re-cognition of what the author meant" (*Validity in Interpretation*, 126).

"the meaning of a text is the author's meaning." (p.25)

David Dockery: With Hirsch and those emphasizing the primacy of the author in interpretation, we can maintain . . . the plausibility of determining a text's normative meaning . . . The author's meaning is only available in the text, not by making contact with the author's mental patterns (*Biblical Interpretation Then and Now*, p. 182)

William W. Klein, et al: Though one may never completely understand all dimensions and nuances of a specific message, normally the goal of the recipient in communication is to understand what the author/speaker intended (*Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, 117).*

Kevin Vanhoozer: The author's intention is the real causality that alone accounts for why a text is the way it is . . .A Text must be read in light of its intentional context *(Is There Meaning in This Text?, 249, 265).*

G. B. Caird: We have no access to the mind of Jeremiah or Paul except through their recorded words. A fortiori, we have no access to the word of God in the Bible except through the words and minds of those who claim to speak in his name (*The Language and Imagery of the Bible, 61).*

PREUNDERSTANDING

(Summary form Duvall and Hayes)

Preunderstanding: refers to all our preconceived ideas and understandings that we bring to the text, which have been formulated, both consciously and subconsciously before we actually study the biblical text in detail.

1. Preunderstanding can result from previous encounters with a biblical passage causing us to believe that we already understand the passage.

2. Preunderstanding is influenced by what we have been taught in the past – both the good and the bad.

3. Preunderstanding surfaces when one comes to the text with a theological agenda already formulated. Vanhoozer refers to this as “overstanding” and not “understanding.”

4. Preunderstanding can be the result of familiarity with the biblical text.

5. One of the most powerful, yet subtle, aspects of preunderstanding is that of culture.

The Changing Face of Hermeneutics: The New Hermeneutic

Hermeneutics is the term that has traditionally been applied to the interpretation of texts. But the discipline has gone through some major changes – therefore it is worth pausing and considering some of the ways in which the discipline of interpretation has changed. Three stages may be discerned, however, throughout the process there has been much overlap.

1. Hermeneutics was once understood to be the science and the art of biblical interpretation: science because there were important rules and principles that could be applied to the task, and art because there were many calls for mature judgment borne of experience and competence.

The task of the interpreter was to understand what the author meant in the text under consideration. It was assumed that if two interpretation of equal competence understood the rules of interpretation well enough, then in the great majority of cases their understanding of what a passage meant would be the same.

In this approach a great deal of emphasis is paid to grammar, genre, principles for studying words and how to relate biblical themes.

2. Hermeneutics became increasingly used to describe an array of literary critical tools: source, form and redaction criticism. Admittedly some gains were made by such approaches, however, there were also many loses by such approaches. Much of the purpose of these techniques was to reconstruct the history and belief-structure of particular believing communities behind the text, rather than to listen to the message of the text.

3. Both of these approaches have largely been eclipsed by what is known as the new hermeneutic, or reader-response criticism. Here the important insight that people bring their own biases and limitations to the interpretative task is raised as the controlling thought.

At one level this observation is purely salutary. Everyone does bring his or her own interpretative gird with them to the interpretative process, there is no thing as a totally open-mind (see Bultmann's article).

Many proponents of this method of interpretation argue that since each person interpretation will differ in some measure from everyone else's interpretation, we cannot legitimately speak of "the" meaning of the text (as if it were something objective). Meaning they argue does not reside in the author, or the text, but in the readers, the interpreters of the text. If different interpretations are legitimate then one cannot speak of the correct interpretation; some expressions are nothing more than personal preferences. If no single interpretation is right, then either all interpretation are equally meaningless (deconstruction, hermeneutical nihilism) or all are equally right (all are good or bad insofar as they satisfy, or meet the needs of a particular person or community or culture, or meet certain arbitrary criteria).

In this regard advocates of the new hermeneutic foster different readings of scripture:

- A liberation theology reading
- A gay/lesbian reading
- A white male Anglo-Saxon protestant reading

Aligned with the thought of political correctness this new hermeneutic rules out no interpretation as invalid with the exception of those that claim their interpretation is right and that others are wrong – that interpretation is the only invalid one.

It is important to note that this approach to understanding meaning governs much of the agenda not only in contemporary biblical interpretation but also in the disciplines of history, literature, politics, and much more.

Despite some helpful insights, the new hermeneutic can be challenged at several points.

1. There seems to be some wrong with a theory that proposes the relativity of all knowledge gleaned from reading, while producing innumerable books that insist on the rightness of this view. The theory assumes that the author's intent is not reliably expressed in the text. It builds a barrier between the author and the reader and that barrier is the text. The oddity is that these ideas are written by authors who expect their readers to understand what they write, authors who write what they mean and hope the readers will be convinced by their reasoning. One only wishes that they would extend the same courtesy to Isaiah, Paul and John.

2. Even if it is admitted that finite human beings cannot attain an exhaustive knowledge of the text, it is difficult to understand why they could not attain a true knowledge.

Doubtless a reader may be largely controlled by personal biases and rigid agendas when first approaching the Scripture, and thus find in the text much that the author did not intend to be there, or, alternately, the interpreter may not see many things that are in fact there. The total mental baggage of the reader, what modern interpreters call the reader's "horizon o understanding," may be so far removed from the horizon of understanding of the author as expressed in the text that great distortions occur.

But it is also possible that the reader will re and re-read the text, learn something of the language and culture of the authors, and gradually discover what his or her baggage must be discarded and gradually fuse hi or her horizon of understanding with that of the text. Others speak of the hermeneutical spiral, that is the interpreter spirals in on the text.

There are a few potential gains with the new hermeneutic:

1. The new hermeneutic reminds us that God's verbal revelation to us in scripture comes to us not only clothed in the language and idiom of particular historical cultures, but to improve our understanding of the objective truth that is their disclosed it is necessary to think our way

back into those cultures, as far as possible, to minimize the dangers of interpretative distortion.

2. The new hermeneutic reminds us that even if an individual interpreter gains some significant understanding of the text, none will understand it exhaustively and other interpreters will bring to light insight that is genuinely there in the text that we have missed.

3. Properly applied, some of the insights of the new hermeneutic remind us that human beings bring enormous cultural and conceptual baggage to the Scriptures they claim to interpret and that this allied with out understanding of our own sinfulness and that out sin and self-centered seeks to drive us from the light (Jn. 3.19-20) my send us to our knees in recognition that the interpretation of God's word is not merely an intellectual discipline, but turns also on moral and spiritual bearings. We need the aid of the Spirit not only to do the Scripture but in some sense to understand the Scripture to the fullest.

HERMENEUTICS, EXEGESIS, AND PROCLAMATION.

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Hermeneutics, exegesis, and proclamation form the crucial triad with which every pastor must reckon. A proper biblical hermeneutic provides the philosophical underpinnings which undergird the exegetical task. Likewise, a proper exegetical methodology provides the foundation for the sermon. Then, of course, proper sermon delivery is necessary to carry home Cod's truth to the hearer. This article will attempt a discussion of these three aspects in both a descriptive and evaluative manner. Hermeneutics as a philosophical base for exegesis will comprise section one. Section two of the article will suggest a methodology for exegesis from the field of Text Linguistics as an augment to the traditional method of biblical exegesis. Finally, in section three, the matter of proclamation will be briefly discussed.

I. *Philosophical Basis of Exegesis*

A discussion of the principles and practice of biblical exegesis would not be complete without mention, however brief, of the philosophical arena in which these issues stand today. The field of hermeneutics, the science of interpretation, has undergone tremendous upheaval in recent years. A host of new questions about the nature of meaning are being asked. In the first section of this article, we offer some tentative answers to the following questions which must be addressed by the biblical exegete, since they will invariably affect his exegetical method.

1) What is the difference between traditional hermeneutics and modern hermeneutics?
2) How does our understanding of the subject/object distinction affect our theory and practice of Interpretation?
3) What is the difference between what a text meant historically and what it means today?
4) Is authorial intention a valid criterion for biblical interpretation?
5) Is the distinction between “meaning” and “significance” a valid distinction for the biblical exegete?
8) Does a text have one primary meaning or are multiple meanings of equal validity possible?
7) How do the horizons of the interpreter affect exegesis?
8) What presuppositions about language and its nature inform one's theory and practice of exegesis?

In an effort to offer some workable answers to these questions, the first part of the article will attempt to outline some of the changes which have taken place In hermeneutics since 1800. It is an apodictical fact that the field of biblical interpretation has radically

changed, especially from the time of F. Schleiermacher onwards. Traditional hermeneutics involved the formulation and implementation of proper rules for interpretation. Primary attention was paid to the linguistic aspects of textual Interpretation, including grammar, syntax, vocabulary, etc. Meaning was bound up M the text and awaited the Interpreter to dig it out via proper exegesis. Traditional hermeneutics assumed that a text contained a determinate meaning which with the proper exegetical method could be discerned by an interpreter.

Modern hermeneutical theory is characterized by a twofold transition: the shift from a special/regional hermeneutical approach to that of general hermeneutics, and the shift from a primarily epistemological outlook to an ontological one. The former was inaugurated by the advent of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics while the latter shift occurred with the advent of M. Heldegger's *Being and Time*.[1] In general, we may say that traditional hermeneutics focused on the text, while sometimes neglecting the role of the interpreter, and modern hermeneutics focuses on the reader/interpreter, while sometimes neglecting the role of the text. It is our contention that a balanced theory of interpretation must give advertence to both of these aspects as in play every time interpretation takes place. Such a position seems to be represented by men like P. Ricoeur in his *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*[2] and E. D. Hirsch in his *Validity in Interpretation*.[3]

Hermeneutical Theory Since 1800: an Historical Assessment

No discussion of hermeneutics would be complete without mention of the father of modern hermeneutics, F. Schleiermacher. He argued that interpretation consisted of two categories: grammatical and technical or psychological.[4] Grammatical interpretation focused on the text Itself and dealt with such matters as grammar, syntax, etc. while technical interpretation focused on the mind of the author in an attempt to reconstruct his psyche in order to determine his mental process that led him to write what he did. Schleiermacher defines authorial intention in a way which most, if not all, would agree today is untenable for the simple reason that we cannot get into the author’s psyche. This problem is particularly acute when considering ancient texts. The only hint at authorial intention we have is what the author has deposited in his text. We cannot get behind the text to the author’s thought processes.

[1] M. Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Blackwell: Oxford, IM)

[2] P. Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus at Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University, 1976).

[3] E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven & London: Yale University, 1967).

[4] F. Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscript,* ed. H. Kimmerle, trans. J. Duke and H. J. Forstman (Missoula: Scholars, 1977), 67-88.

For our purposes, we note two important features of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics. He emphasized that interpretation involved both objective and subjective factors. Furthermore, he did not attempt to dissolve the subject/object distinction as many later theoreticians have attempted to do. Schleiermacher's s recognition that interpretation involved both objective and subjective factors should be a vital part of a balanced theory of interpretation. If we inject the notion of the interpreter's own horizons playing an integral part in meaning determination coupled with a more workable definition of authorial intention (see below), then Schleiermacher's basic scheme proves to be a valuable hermeneutical method.

From Schleiermacher the history of modern hermeneutical theory followed the trail of W. Dilthey to C. Frege to E. Husserl to M. Heidegger to H. Cadamer. Space does not permit an analysis of the contributions and insights of Dilthey, Frege, and Husserl. Yet it is important to note that Heidegger was a student of Husserl and could not agree with his mentor that objective knowledge was possible. This point is crucial for it was Heidegger who ushered in the ontological revolution in hermeneutics. With it came an increasing skepticism towards the possibility of achieving determinate meaning in textual interpretation. Hence, we may say that Schleiermacher, Frege and Husserl are representative of the school of thought that determinate meaning and objectivity are possible in interpretation while Heldegger and his student Cadamer are representative of the view that there can be no determinate meaning and objectivity in textual interpretation.

Heidegger has had a profound influence on contemporary hermeneutical theory in his two works *Being and Times*[5] and *On the Way to Language*[6] It Is to Heidegger that we owe the valuable insight of hermeneutics as embracing the whole of man's existence. Heidegger is an ontologist who posited "interpretation" as one of the fundamental modes of man's being. However, Heidegger's theory concerning the historicity of all understanding forced him and his followers to exaggerate the difference between past and present into a denial of any continuity of meaning at all. In Heidegger, the shift Is made from the primacy of the text to the primacy of the interpreter. Indeed, for Heidegger the interpreter is himself the source of meaning. Reality for the interpreter is "disclosed" via his understanding. Heidegger seems to disallow the cognoscibility of any objectively valid and determinate meaning.

[5] Heidegger, *Being and Time.*

[6] Heidegger, *On the Way to Language* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

Our critique of Heidegger must be brief at this point. It is not our purpose to critique captiously those with whom we disagree. Suffice it to say that from our perspective he has overemphasized the role of the interpreter In creating meaning by not allowing the text to communicate determinate meaning. His theory assumes the collapse of the subject/object dichotomy and therefore the impossibility of objective textual meaning. R. Bultmann may be the most influential figure in NT studies in this century. While teaching at the University of Marburg, Bultmann found the philosophical framework for his approach to scripture , from his colleague, Heidegger. It Is primarily through Bultmann that Heidegger's philosophical existentialism has found its way Into biblical studies. Bultmann's excellent article, "Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?" should be lead by all who practice exegesis. Bultmann has accurately emphasized the fact that one cannot come to any text from a totally objective standpoint. The Interpreter always brings his own conceptual grid to the text. His first paragraph is worth quoting:

> The question whether exegesis without presuppositions is possible must be answered affirmatively if "without presuppositions" means "without presupposing the results of the exegesis." In this sense, exegesis without presuppositions is not only possible but demanded. In another sense, however, no exegesis is without presuppositions, inasmuch as the exegete is not a tabula rasa, but on the contrary, approaches the text with specific questions or with a specific way of raising questions and thus has a certain idea of the subject matter with which the text is concerned[7]

Yet Bultmann, following Heidegger, exaggerates this notion of presuppositions and subjectivity by arguing that the text of the Bible is not intended to be interpreted objectively but rather is to be a "Subject" that determines the interpreter's existence. While we can agree that the Scriptures do "speak" to us in a sense as subject to object, we must reject the notion that with each approach to the text, there Is no valid or permanent meaning to be identified. By de-emphasizing the cognitive aspects of textual meaning, and unduly exalting the ontological notion of interpretation as "encounter," Bultmann injects into the main arteries of biblical exegesis an overdose of Heideggerian ontology and existentialism.

[7] R. Bultmann, "Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?" *Existence and Faith*, ed. S. M. Ogden (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961), 289-96.

We can all agree that interpretation does not involve. a totally passive subject who stands wholly apart from his text and interprets it without any input from his own subjectivity. Like F. Kant, we have all been awakened from our Cartesian dogmatic slumbers. Whatever Insights Heidegger, Bultmann and the like may press upon us in this vein, we are the better for it. However, we must argue that meaning is not a construct of the interpreter's subjectivity alone. It must be forcefully stated In opposition to the correlation of interpretation with ontology by Heidegger and Bultmann that they are doing nothing more In the end than suggesting that the interpreter projects his own subjectivity. Unless we maintain the otherness or objectivity of textual meaning, then we must face squarely the fact that we could not interpret at all. Heidegger's scheme ineluctably results in the complete breakdown of the subject/object dichotomy, and it is this fact which causes his "method," along with Bultmann's, to be methodologically inadequate in biblical exegesis.[8]

[8] The so-called "New Hermeneutic" school of interpretation is one example of exegesis which has followed the lead of Heidegger and Bultmann. For a critique of the New Hermeneutic, see A. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 352-56, and "The New Hermeneutic," *New Testament Interpretation- Essays on Principles and Methods,* ed. I. H. Marshall (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 308-33.

Like Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Gadamer's monumental work *Truth and Method*[9] must be reckoned with by evangelical exegetes. It contains some crucial insights which should not be ignored by those of us interested in text interpretation. Particularly helpful is his emphasis that interpreters come to a given text with their own worldview, presuppositions, or "horizon" as Gadamer uses the term, which is different from that of the text. What is necessary is a "fusion of horizons" for interpretation to take place.

However, Gadamer's system is not without its philosophical and methodological flaws. Gadamer continues the attack on objective textual interpretation by emphasizing that meaning is not to be identified with authorial intention. Furthermore, exegesis has no foundational "methods" to be used in eliciting meaning from a given text. According to Gadamer, our historicity eliminates the possibility of discovering any determinate textual meaning and therefore objective meaning is not possible.

Yet Gadamer does not want to proffer relativism in text interpretation and hence he falls back on three concepts in an attempt to extricate himself from ultimate hermeneutical nihilism. These are 1) tradition, 2) meaning repetition, and 3) fusion of horizons. The role of tradition, as Gadamer sees it, is to enlarge the horizons of the text for each passing generation such that tradition serves as a bridge between the past and the present. The problem here is of course how to mediate between two conflicting traditional interpretations. By eliminating the possibility of objective textual meaning, Gadamer also eliminates the criterion needed to make a choice between conflicting interpretations and he is again left with relativism.

Gadamer seems to argue that a text does represent a repeatable meaning and yet in the same paragraph turns around and suggests that this is "not repetition of something past, but participation in a present meaning."[10] This creates confusion in that Gadamer seems to be saying first that meaning is repeatable and then that it isn't. Such reasoning leads Hirsch to point out: "This kind of reasoning stands as eloquent testimony to the difficulties and self-contradictions that confront Gadamer's theory as soon as one asks the simple question: what constitutes a valid interpretation?"[11] While we can profit greatly from Gadamer's statements about pre-understanding and "fusion of horizons," we must reject his basic thesis that a text contains no determinate meaning.

[9] H. C. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1975).
[10] Ibid., 370.
[11] Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 252.

In Heidegger and Gadamer, the notion of understanding is not conceived as a way of knowing but rather as a mode of being. Somehow they never quite get around to answering the epistemological questions which were left in the wake of the ontological revolution. What we need is a hermeneutical system which strikes a proper balance between epistemology and ontology.

Hirsch of the University of Virginia has countered the relativism of Heidegger and Gadamer by arguing for the stability of textual meaning in two important works: Validity in Interpretation and The Aims of Interpretation.[12] One of Hirsch's most important contributions is his emphasis on the distinction between "meaning" and "significance." Drawing on A. Boeckh's division of his *Encyclopaedie*[13] into the two sections labeled "Interpretation" and "Criticism," Hirsch points out that "the object of interpretation is textual meaning in and for itself and may be called the 'meaning' of the text." Conversely, the object of criticism is textual meaning as it bears on something else. This object is what Hirsch refers to as the "significance" of the text.[14]

Roughly speaking, such a division corresponds to the exegesis of a text which seeks to determine the text's meaning and the application of that meaning (as, for example, in preaching) to point out its significance/application for today. Both meaning and significance or interpretation and application are two foci which the exegete must constantly keep in mind. Furthermore, because they tend to happen concurrently, it is probably not wise to argue that in practice these two foci can remain completely separated, although for the sake of discussion, we may separate them for the purpose of investigation and analysis.

Hirsch's categories of "meaning" and "significance" are important and helpful for us. When the biblical exegete comes to a text of Scripture, he can proceed on the premise that there is a determinate meaning there. His job is to discover this meaning through exegesis. Having done this, there remains the further task of applying this meaning to modern day man.

Hirsch has also made a solid contribution in that his writings stand as perhaps the best critique of Gadamerian hermeneutics. His most telling criticism of the weaknesses of Gadamer's theory can be found in Appendix H of his *Validity in Interpretation*.[15]

[11] E. Hirsch, *The Alms of Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago. 1978).

[12] A. Boeckh, *Encyclopoedie end Methodologie der Philologischen Wissenschaften* (ed. E. Bratuscheck; Leipzig, 1888).

[13] Hirsch, *Aims*, 445-64.

[14] Hirsch, *Validity*, 210-11.

A third valuable contribution of Hirsch to the contemporary hermeneutical scene Is his insistence upon authorial intention as a criterion of validity in text Interpretation. What do we mean by the term "authorial intention" It may be helpful to outline what we do not

mean. By this term, we do not mean the psychological experience of the author for such is inaccessible. We do not mean the relation between mental acts and mental objects as in Husserl's theory. We do not mean the hoped for consequences of the author's writings. Authorial intention Js to be identified with textual meaning, with the "sense of the whole" by which the author constructs, arranges and relates each particular meaning of his work.[16]

We propose then that a text has one primary meaning with multiple significances or applications of that meaning. Generally speaking, a text will not have multiple meanings of equal validity.[17] The key phrase here is "of equal validity" because some method and norms are necessary to adjudicate meaning possibilities. Hirsch has argued for such norms in his works. By way of illustration, we may say that the one primary meaning of a text is like an iceberg. The tip protrudes above water and- is analogous to "meaning," but further investigation continues to yield fuller and deeper "meaning" just as the bulk of the iceberg is underwater. It is the same iceberg and hence the same meaning. Various disciplines approach the "meaning"/ iceberg in different ways. For example, a photographer would analyze the iceberg from the standpoint of its aesthetic value. An oceanographer would analyze it to obtain its scientific value, while a ship's captain may analyze it so as to avoid any damage to his ship. It is the same iceberg that all are analyzing, but it yields for each different aspects of meaning. At no time do any of these "interpreters" interpret the iceberg as a whale! The iceberg itself furnishes the constraints which guide and limit the interpreters potential elicitation of meaning. The kind of meaning we find in a text depends to some extent on the kind of meaning for which we are looking. Sometimes interpreters differ on a given text because they are looking for different kinds of meaning and from different perspectives. But it is the iceberg/text which determines the meaning capable of being drawn out, not the interpreters themselves, although they contribute to it.

[16] See the excellent article by E. Johnson, "Authors Intention and Biblical Interpretation." *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible,* eds. E. Radmacher and R. Preus (Grand Rapids: Academie, 1984) 409-29. His definition of authorial intention, which we have used here, is found on p. 414.

[17] One exception to this would be the notion of census plenior. For a good discussion of this topic, see D. Moo, "The Problem of Sensus Plenior," *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon*, eds. D. A. Carson and J. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids: Academie, 1986), 179-211.

As A. Thiselton says: "For there is an ongoing process of dialogue with the text in which the text itself progressively corrects and reshapes the interpreter's own questions and assumptions."[18]

Ricoeur, the French phenomenologist, is considered by many today to be on the cutting edge in the field of hermeneutics. His work has caught the attention of us all. In an

important work entitled *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*,[19] Rieoeur defines discourse as a dialectic between event and meaning. Discourse occurs as an event (conversation, the writing of a text, etc.) but as soon as the conversation ceases or the text is written, the event ceases. Yet the text as propositional content remains and this is the meaning which can be reidentified. Written discourse awaits reactualization as event by a reader.

A second dialectic which Rieoeur describes is that of Distanciation and Appropriation.[20] The Scriptures, for example, are distanced from us historically and culturally in the sense that they were written centuries ago by authors who are no longer around to tell us what they mean. Furthermore, our own cultural horizons serve as a barrier between us and the world of the text. The aim of all hermeneutics is to struggle against cultural distance-and historical alienation. This goal is attained only insofar as interpretation actualizes the meaning of a text for the present reader, a notion which Rieoeur calls "appropriation."

A crucial point in Ricoeur's theory is the fact that texts do have determinate meaning which can be appropriated by a reader. He has synthesized many of the insights of Gadamer into his theory without coming under the spell of Gadamer's "cognitive atheism" in interpretation, as Hirsch would call it.

What we have said to this point is that the crucial difference between the two competing hermeneutical schools of thought is whether a text has a determinate meaning or not. Heidegger, Gadamer, Bultmann and company argue that it does not, while Hirsch, Rieoeur, and company argue that it does. Evangelical exegetes must be aware of the debate and its implications for our exegetical task.

Philosophical Conception of Language

Another crucial consideration for the biblical exegete is the nature of language. Much discussion has occurred on this subject in recent years which has a direct bearing on biblical exegesis. When considering the language of the Bible, in our opinion the following presuppositions are necessary: 1) language has a cognitive function; 2) language can interpret reality; 3) language both expresses and interprets ultimate reality by serving as a means of God's revelation to man.

[18] Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, 439.

[19] Rieoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, 8-12.

[20] I. B. Thompson, ed., Petit Rieoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Humor Sciences* (London: Cambridge University, 1981) 131-44, 182-93.

The rise of analytic philosophy and logical positivism led to the notion that the only reality which philosophy was to investigate is language. Interestingly, this idea was long ago anticipated by Aristotle and criticized in his Metaphysics. Failing to recognize that language actually provides windows into reality, analytic philosophy has tended to investigate language itself rather than any reality about which language may speak.
Truth is a property of the sentence/proposition and the biblical revelation is a propositional revelation where God has conveyed truth about himself to us. The task of the exegete is to interpret accurately these truth-bearing propositions which have been placed in linguistic form. There is an ultimate referent beyond language (God) about which language may speak.
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Most of the non-evangelical and some of the neo-evangelical theologian-exegetes have disallowed the propositional nature of God's revelation in Scripture. One need only read the writings of K. Barth, E. Brunner, Bultmann, and H. and R. Niebuhr along with a host of others to see that this is the case. The modern biblical exegete must be aware of the philosophical and theological one-sidedness of such an approach to scripture. Revelation is both propositional and personal. We may accept one aspect of revelation as being "encounter" and use phenomenological categories in describing it. But, we must also recognize the cognitive aspect of revelation as well.[21]

When we interpret a text from the Bible, we are seeking to interpret the very words of God conveyed through human instrumentality and language. Such a mode of disclosure does not obviate divine revelation. As R. Longacre so aptly puts it: "I think the moral of the story is that rather than language and its categories veiling reality, they are windows into it."[22] It is our foundational principle that God has so constructed language that it can be used by man to describe reality, and; by God to reveal reality, even such ultimate reality as the nature and person of God himself.

We have attempted in this brief sketch to offer some tentative answers to the eight questions at the beginning of this article. The field of hermeneutics can be seen to be of

[21] For an excellent discussion of this subject, see C. F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority* (6 vols.; Waco: Word. 1976-1983) 3.429-81.

[22] R. Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse* (New York: Plenum,1983) 345.

great importance to the exegesis of the biblical text. Evangelical theologians have shown a willingness to engage the competing hermeneutical schools of thought in dialogue, and as a result biblical exegesis from an evangelical standpoint has been enhanced. The interested reader should pursue Thiselton's *The Two Horisons*,[23] *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible*,[24] edited by E. Radmacher and R. Preus, and *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*,[25] edited by I. H. Marshall, to name just three of many outstanding works available from an evangelical perspective. We as biblical exegetes must maintain a dialogue with not only the state of our own discipline, but with what is taking place in other fields as well, especially when it may relate specifically to the discipline of biblical studies.

II. *Exegetical Methodology*

Theory without practice is useless and practice without theory is unserviceable and unproductive. The previous discussion on hermeneutical theory was dedicated to the above maxim. One's approach to biblical exegesis rests upon certain theoretical considerations which are foundational to that approach. While it is not necessary to be a thorough student of hermeneutical theory since Schleiermacher to engage in exegesis, one should at least be acquainted with the present state of the discussion.

The purpose of exegesis is to "lead out" the meaning which has been deposited in the biblical text by the writer. Exegesis is of crucial importance because it is the foundation for theology and preaching. We cannot communicate the meaning of God's word via preaching until we have understood it ourselves.

We will argue in the second part of this article that exegesis is more than meaning determination which is arrived at only from a combination of word studies with ,syntactical analysis on a sentence level. Unfortunately, it is probably true that a great deal of exegesis that goes on in the average pastors study is little more than this. The average pastor, plundered by an already too busy daily schedule, resorts to an uncritical method of exegesis which results in an all too shoddy interpretation of a given biblical text. He may look at a sentence in his Greek NT, parse what he considers to be the key

[23] Cf. n. 8 above.

[24] Cf. n. 16 above.

[25] I.. H. Marshall, ed., *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977).

verbs, do word studies on key words, and then from this material fashion a sermon. All of this is, of course, well and good as far as it goes. The problem is that it does not go far enough.

Text Linguistics and Exegesis

We are thoroughly convinced that contemporary linguistic theory has a great deal to offer the biblical exegete in terms of both theory and method. The rise of Semantic :analysis from the Chomskyian revolution onwards has already found its way into biblical studies. The field of discourse grammar (Text Linguistics as it is called in Europe) has much to offer those who interpret the Scripture. Discourse analysis is already proving to be a fruitful method in Bible translation. By and large, however, the insights of contemporary linguistic theory, discourse analysis, and the like have found their way into biblical exegesis only in a limited way. This is evidenced by the very few commentaries written from a discourse perspective rather than the traditional sentence level or verse by verse perspective. Many seminary professors, pastors and seminary students have little or no knowledge of what if taking place in the field of discourse grammar and its place in biblical studies.[26]

The question may be asked, "Is discourse grammar necessary in text interpretation, especially in the study of the Scriptures?" We believe that it is. Over a decade ago, Longacre was involved in workshops which concentrated on the discourse structure of a number of languages in Columbia and Panama. He argued that it was impossible to analyze correctly the grammar of a language without accounting for its discourse level features.
in earlier work, discourse analysis was regarded as an option open to the student of a language provided that he was interested, and provided that he had a good start on the structure of lower levels (word, phrase, clause). But early in the first workshop it was seen that all work on lower levels is lacking in perspective and meets inevitable frustration when the higher levels-especially discourse and paragraph-have not been analyzed ... discourse analysis emerges not as an option or as a luxury for the serious student of a language but as a necessity.[27]

[26] We have here in mind the work of J. Beekman, J. Callow, and M. Kopesec, *The Semantic Structure of Written Communication* (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1981) as well as the application of this model to Bible translation. Furthermore, the work of Longaere in various articles, his most recent book *The Grammar of Discourse* (New York: Plenum,1983) and a forthcoming volume on the Joseph story in Genesis is proving to be fruitful in analysis of both OT and NT texts.

[27] R. Longacre, ed., *Discourse Grammar: Studies In Indigenous Languages of Columbia, Panama, and Ecuador.* Part 1 (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics and University of Texas at Arlington, 1976), 2.

It is our hope that this article can contribute to biblical exegesis by integrating concepts and principles discovered by Beekman and Callow, Longacre, and others in the field of discourse grammar and applying them to a method of biblical exegesis. We are keenly aware of

the many fine books and articles of recent vintage which have been written on the subject of exegesis.. The reader will profit from consulting them. The approach taken in this article is of course dependent upon the time honored principles which have guided biblical exegetes for centuries. Yet in some respects, our method will describe features of text analysis not usually discussed in books and articles on biblical, exegesis. With this in mind, the following seven linguistic features of texts are offered in an attempt to guide the exegete into a more thorough and fruitful analysis of sacred discourse.

Discourse Genre

There are four major discourse types, all of which appear in Scripture. They are: Narrative, Procedural, Expository, and Hortatory. Narrative discourse primarily tells a story or narrates a series of events. Participants and events combine in a sequential chronological framework in narrative discourse. The book of Genesis, the Gospels and Acts are examples of narrative discourse. Procedural discourse answers the question, "How is something done?" Again there is a sequential chronological framework in this discourse type. An example of this type would be certain sections of the Pentateuch where specific instructions are given by God to Moses regarding the building of the tabernacle, the priesthood, etc.

Expository discourse is different from the previous two types in that it is set in a logical framework rather than a sequential chronological one. Expository discourse primarily explains or defines in some way and is probably the most frequently employed discourse type. Many of the Pauline epistles are said to be of this discourse type although we have come to believe that most, if not all, of the expository material in the Scripture is really hortatory in its semantic structure since truth is unto holiness. Nevertheless, there are large sections of embedded exposition in the Scriptures.

Hortatory discourse may be defined as an attempt to prescribe a course of action through a command, request, suggestion, etc. It tends to answer the question, "What should be done?" Hebrews is an example of hortatory discourse in the NT although it is usually defined as expository in most commentaries. Recognizing in which discourse genre an exegete is working is crucial to his exegesis.

This aspect of text analysis is somewhat analogous to Genre Criticism. This leads to a crucial question which must be answered by those who engage in biblical interpretation.

What is the value and role of higher criticism for biblical exegesis? There has been wide disagreement concerning the viability of higher criticism as a method of biblical interpretation. The Meier-Stulmacher debate illustrates the point. The problem resides not so much in the methodology as with the presuppositions of many who practice higher criticism. Pentateuchal criticism is illustrative of this point. It is commonplace to pick up a commentary or an article on some aspect of pentateuchal studies and observe that the author assumes at the outset some form of the Documentary Hypothesis. Multiple redactors and traditions are employed to explain textual phenomena all in a very subjective way. Would it not be better to assume the unity and integrity of the text until proven otherwise? Linguistically, there are other explanations for these textual phenomena which are just as valid and which are, in fact, predicated on textual phenomena rather than the suggestion of some elusive redactor. Linguist E. Wendland expresses the matter quite well when he says:

> I feel, for example, that some scholars suffer from a certain degree of "linguo-centrism"; in other words, they often have difficulty in appreciating the distinctiveness and genius of a language and literature that lies outside of the Indo-European family of which they are so familiar. Thus, when encountering a text such as the Hebrew Old Testament which allegedly contains so many "problems," they quickly propose that the text is, in fact, a patchwork, composed of fragments from sources J, E, D, P, X, Y, and Z, rather than recognizing the possibility that they may simply be dealing with a narrative style that is quite different from what they are used to.[28]

D. A. Carson sounds a much needed warning regarding the use of higher critical methodology when he says that

> the situation is worsened by the fact that these 'hermeneutical principles' are frequently handled, outside believing circles, as if they enable us to practise our interpretive skills with such objective distance that we never come under the authority of the Cod whose-Word is being interpreted, and never consider other personal, moral and spiritual factors which have no less 'hermeneutfcal' influence in our attempts to interpret the text.[29]

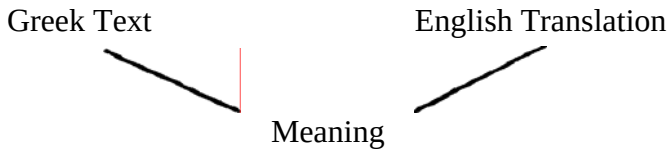
[28]E. Wendland, "Biblical Hebrew Narrative Structure," *Selected Technical Articles Related to Translation* 10 (1984): 35-36.

[29]D. A. Carson, "Hermeneutics: A Brief Assessment of some Recent Trends," *Themelios* 5 (1980): 14.

Language as a Form-Meaning Composite

Language is a form/meaning composite which contains surface structure=form and semantic/notional structure=meaning. By "form" we mean the phonological, lexical, and grammatical structure of a language. This Is what has traditionally been called "grammar." The notion of meaning is, like form, multidimensional. It contains three aspects: referential, situational, and structural. Referential meaning refers to the subject matter of the discourse, i.e., what the text is about. Situational meaning refers to the participants and the situation in which communication takes place. By participants here we mean author/speaker and reader/hearer rather than the participants who may be a part of the referential content of the discourse itself. When an exegete studies the background and provenance of a given biblical text, he is engaged in analysis on this particular level. Structural meaning refers to how the information in a discourse is "packaged" and how these units of meaning relate to one another in the discourse. Traditional grammatical analysis is subsumed in this category.

Meaning is communicated via surface structure. As we approach the Bible, we must decode the meaning from the surface structure of Hebrew or Creek and then encode that meaning in another surface structure, namely, English. This is what takes place every time the Bible is translated. Therefore, all translation is an interpretation. The following diagram illustrates the process.



The key here is that the form of the source language and the form of the receptor language are not totally congruent, yet the meaning is capable of being understood, preserved and re-expressed in the receptor language. This is crucial in that exegesis attempts to understand the meaning of the source text and then re-express that meaning in an English text (translation, essay, commentary, or sermon). In this view, meaning has priority over form.

Contextual Exegesis

Exegesis must be practiced contextually. Sentence level grammars, while valid, are not sufficiently descriptive of all the structural phenomena of a text. Following Longacre,

[30] Beekman, Callow, and Kopesec, *The Semantic Structure*, 8-13.

we accept three basic building blocks of communication: sentence, paragraph, and discourse. Sentences combine to form paragraphs and paragraphs combine to form discourses. A discourse is always greater than the sum of its parts and hence one's textual analysis cannot remain solely on the sentence level. Just as there is a grammar of the sentence, there is also a grammar of the paragraph and discourse as well.[31]

Most if not all of the Creek grammars appearing before 1965 view Koine Creek discourse with the presupposition that the suprasentence structure (paragraph and discourse) is basically non-linguistic. Features of paragraphs and whole discourses seem not to have been treated in any way. J. H. Moulton's famous three-volume A *Grammar of New Testament Greek*[32] appeared over a fifty-seven year span with N. Turner authoring the third volume, *Syntax,* in 1963.[33] In this entire three-volume work, the supra-sentence level of Creek discourse is never mentioned. A. T. Robertson's monumental A *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*[34] appeared in 1923. His discussion of grammar and syntax focuses solely on the clause and sentence level. Blass-Debrunner-Funk's A *Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* was first published in 1896 and passed through ten editions before being translated by Funk into English.[35] While the notes by Funk are important contributions to the work, the basic principles are the same as outlined by Blass and Debrunner. A concluding chapter entitled “Sentence Structure” occasionally touches upon matters relative to discourse features, but only in a tertiary way.

Of course, Text Linguistics as a discipline was not in existence when these grammars were written. From a sentence level perspective, they are excellent treatments of the subject. We are simply pointing out that the biblical exegete must acknowledge the fact that a great deal is happening in the text above the sentence level and, furthermore, his exegetical methodology must provide the tools to investigate meaning beyond that level.

[31] *For* evidence of paragraph grammatically see Longacre, “The Paragraph as a Grammatical Unit,” *Discourse and Syntax* (*Syntax and Semantics*; 18 vols.; ed. Talmy Givon; New York: Academic, 1979), 12.115-33.

[32] J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek,* 3rd ed.; 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908).

[33] J. H. Moulton and N. Turner, *Syntax*, vol. 3 In *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963).

[34] A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research,* 4th ed. (Nashville: Broadman, 1934).

[35] F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature,* trans. R. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961).

The Hierarchical Structure of Texts

Texts are hierarchically structured such that the organizing principle of surface structure in discourse is the notion of hierarchy. The following illustrates the levels of communication found in texts.

1) Who: discourse-highest level of language
2) Paragraph-viewed as a structural unit
3) Sentence
4) Clause
5) Phrase
6) Word
7) Stem
8) Morpheme

levels 4-8 are usually called "grammar"

These textual units of meaning may embed lower levels within them in such a way that a text is characterized by recursive embedding. A given discourse may embed discourses and paragraphs, a paragraph may embed paragraphs and sentences, and so on down the line. For example, the book of Acts is an example of narrative discourse, but it contains chunks of embedded expository and hortatory discourse. Stephen's speech in Acts 7 functions in the text of Acts as an embedded expository discourse in the surface structure form of a speech/sermon. This notion of recursive embedding is important for the biblical exegete and the homiletician in that its recognition will allow one to better analyze and outline a text accurately.

Most of the biblical exegesis in vogue today is intra-sentential, i.e., the exegete spends most of his time studying the syntax of the text from the clause level on down. What those of us in discourse grammar are advocating for biblical studies is that we also take into consideration the upper levels of communication as well including the sentence, paragraph, and discourse. In other words, biblical exegesis should not be limited to intra-sentential analysis, but must be expanded to include inter-sentential analysis as well.

Consider the following two sentences. S_1 "He slept for seventeen hours." S_2 "He was dead tired." These two sentences share a semantic level relationship of result-reason. S_2 is the reason far S_1. The same kind of relationship could have been expressed in a single sentence: "He slept for seventeen hours because he was dead tired." Here, the reason-proposition is subordinated in a causal clause. Thus, semantic level relationships exist intra-sententially as well as inter-sententially. Furthermore, the same kind of semantic relationship could exist between two paragraphs such that a given paragraph P_2 could be the reason for paragraph P_1. The point in all of this for the exegete is the fact that we must consider the overall context of sentence, paragraph, and discourse in the

text interpretation, as well as paying attention to the semantic relationships that exist between sentences, paragraphs and even embedded discourses In a given text. A finite network of communication relations is suggested in Beekman and Callow's *Semantic Structure of Written Communication*.[36] A text can be propositionalized according to these semantic level relationships to determine the propositional relationships.

Paying special attention to paragraph boundaries in the text is crucial to a proper analysis. The exegete should become aware of the ways in which paragraph onset is -marked in Hebrew and Greek discourse structure. In Greek, a number of particles and conjunctions can mark paragraph onset. Back reference or certain characteristic constituents at the beginning of a paragraph are used as well. For example, the vocative in Greek often marks the beginning of a new paragraph. In the epistle of James, eleven of the fourteen vocatives function as devices to mark paragraph onset. Tense spans can also serve to mark paragraph boundaries. For example, a string of present tense verbs may be interrupted with tense shift and such change may mark paragraph onset. Such an analysis serves the exegete well in his attempt to find a valid structure to the text. All of the features mentioned so far are surface structure features. There is a semantic level feature as well which identifies paragraphs in a given text. Thematic unity often aids in marking the onset or the conclusion of a paragraph. Each paragraph is constructed around a particular theme or participant. Usually a change in theme or participant engenders a change in paragraph as well.

Main Line Information vs. Ancillary Information

It is crucial for the exegete to recognize that a written discourse contains main line information as well as ancillary information. Information which is on the event line of a narrative discourse or the theme line of an expository discourse is more salient than that which appears in the supportive material. Longacre has suggested the notion of verb ranking as a means whereby the exegete can determine what is main line material and what is not. For example, In English, the simple past tense is used in narrative discourse to tell a story. By extracting the verbs in past tense, one gets the backbone or event line of the story. Sentences containing other verb tenses or verbals such as participles and infinitives are usually supportive material. In the Hebrew of the OT, for example, the *waw* consecutive plus the imperfect (preterite) is used to carry on the event line in narrative discourse. This tense form is always verb initial in its cause and can not

[36]Beekman and Callow, *Semantic Structure*, 112.

have a noun phrase or negative preceding it. Characteristically, clauses which begin in this way (with the preterite) are expressive of the story line in the narrative. By extracting these verbs and placing them in order one gets a usually well-formed outline of the story.[37]

The book of Hebrews is an example of hortatory discourse with sections of embedded exposition. The most salient verb forms are the imperatives and hortatory subjunctives. The main thrust of the book is centered around the clauses containing these verb forms. Yet, Hebrews is usually analyzed by exegetes as an expository discourse and the thematic material centered around the embedded sections of exposition such as the atonement or the High Priesthood of Christ, both concepts of which are important to the book, but neither of which constitutes its main theme. The point here is that the entire verbal system of a language needs to be evaluated to determine what part each tense form plays in the overall discourses.

The main line material of any text will be the material which is most important to the exegete and preacher if he wants to stay true to the emphasis placed by the text Itself. On the other hand, the supportive material will be viewed as just that, material which supports the main theme or story line of a given discourse. If the exegete/pastor analyzes a text and assigns the theme to supportive material, he has misplaced the emphasis which the text itself has marked. Thus, when he preaches the text, the subordinate material becomes the primary thrust of his message and he has missed the emphasis altogether.

Macrostructure in Texts

Every text contains a macrostructure, an overall theme or point of the text: The exegete must determine what this overall thrust is because then he can more readily see how all of the units of the text fit together to achieve this overall theme. Careful consideration of the verb structure of a discourse will aid in determining the macrostructure.

Peak Structure in Texts

Sometimes a text contains what Longacre calls peak. This textual phenomenon is quite common in discourse and its recognition will aid the biblical exegete in his analysis of a given text. Longacre defines peak as a “zone of turbulence” In the overall flow of the discourse. At Peak, routine features of the event line may be distorted or phased

[37] R. Longacre, “Verb Ranking and the Constituent Structure of Discourse,” *Journal of the Linguistic Association of the Southwest* 8 (1962): 177-202.

out. In short, Peak is any episode-like unit set apart by special surface structure features and corresponding to the climax or denouement in the notional/semantic structure.[38]

Longacre notes several surface structure features which can be used to mark Peak. The employment of extra words at the important point of the story via paraphrase, parallelism and tautologies may be used to mark the Peak of a discourse. The effect of such devices slows down the story so that this part does not go by too fast. Another feature is a concentration of participants at a given point resulting in the "crowded stage" effect. Heightened vividness may be used to mark Peak by a shift in the nominal/verbal balance, tense shift, or a shift to a more specific person as from third person to second or first person. This kind of marking usually occurs in narrative discourse. Change of pace may be used to mark Peak as in a shift to short, crisp sentences or a shift to long run-on type sentences.[39]

An example of this phenomenon occurs in the Flood narrative in Gen 6:9-9:17 where Longacre posits 2 peaks: an action peak in 7:17-24 where the destructiveness of the flood reaches its apex, and a didactic peak in 9:1-17 where the covenant concept comes into primary focus.[40] The action, peak describes the ever-mounting flood waters until finally the tops of mountains are covered. The author uses a great deal of paraphrase and paraphrase within paraphrase at this point in the story. Longacre notes that much of this paraphrase, which would normally be collateral material in the discourse, is presented with event line verbs. These are not normally used in backgrounded material such as paraphrase. Here, however, at the action peak of the story, the event line tense is extended to backgrounded material. The effect created is analogous to the use of slow motion at the high point of a film.

In the book of Philemon, the peak of the book is found in the third major paragraph (vv 17-20). Philemon is an example of hortatory discourse where Paul desires Philemon to receive the runaway slave Onesimus back into his home. Up until v17 there is not a single imperatival verb form. Yet when we come to this paragraph there are three imperatives which occur, the first being προσλαβου, "receive him. . . ." In the preceding paragraph there are seventeen verb forms and five of these are verbals. In this paragraph, however, there is a total of eleven verbs and not one of them is a verbal. There is a wide

[38] Longacre, *Grammar of Discourse,* 24.

[39] Ibid., 25-38.

[40] R. Longacre, "Interpreting Biblical Stories," *Discourse and Literature,* ed. Teun A. van Dijk (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1965): 169-85.

range of mode shift in the verbs of these four verses as well, including the imperative, the indicative, and the optative. Tense shift is also well represented as the present, aorist, and future tenses all occur. The sentence structure of this paragraph is quite different from the rest of the book in that Paul shifts to short almost staccato sentences with very little

preposed and postposed material. This added “punch” is further magnified by the increase in finite verb forms. All of these features combine to mark vv 17-20 as the hortatory peak of Philemon. Notice also how v 17, which contains the first imperative of the book functions as a good statement of Philemon's macrostructure: “Receive him as you would receive me.”

Summary Methodology

In summary fashion, we are suggesting that biblical exegetes should acknowledge the contribution that contemporary linguistic theory is making to the field of biblical interpretation. In terms of method, we suggest that text analysis begin with the original text. A preliminary translation should be made at the outset. This translation will serve as a guide and will be modified perhaps several times until the conclusion of the exegetical process when a final translation can be made. Several readings of the text should be made to get a sense of the whole before breaking it down into its constituent parts. Take the telescopic view before subjecting the text to your exegetical microscope. A text is always more than the sum of its parts and the parts cannot be interpreted except in light of the whole. Analyze the hierarchical structure of the text making tentative paragraph breaks. These may be modified upon further investigation. Analyze the verbal structure to get an idea of the event line or theme line of the text. Pay close attention to material that is thematic and determine how the subordinating ideas support It. Watch for features that may be marking Peak, especially in a narrative discourse. Determine the macrostructure and analyze how the constituent structure of the text contributes to it. Take note of participant reference in narrative discourse. Observe how participants are introduced and integrated into the overall discourse as well as how they are phased out. At this point, the groundwork has been laid for a microscopic view of the text. Dig into the clause level structure, making grammatical decisions aided by your telescopic view. Any necessary word studies should be done but always paying close attention to context since words are defined by context.

Propositionalizing the text as in the Beekman-Callow model will aid the exegete in determining the semantic level relationships that exist in inter-clausal connections.[41] In this way intra-sentential, intersentential and inter-clausal relationships can be identified and one can better see the meaning being communicated.

A recognition of these features of language and discourse will aid the exegete to achieve a more fruitful analysis of his text. They are not offered in any attempt to be exhaustive as a methodology, nor are they offered as a replacement for the standard exegetical methods which have been used for centuries. It is our hope that these insights from contemporary linguistic theory and practice can subsidize biblical exegesis as it is normally practiced.

III. *From Exegesis to Proclamation*

Sermon delivery is the counterpart of exegesis. However, the bridge from exegesis to proclamation is not easily built. Many pastors complete their exegetical work, fashion it into a well-organized sermon, and then enter the pulpit only to see their sermon die in the delivery process. Without a good delivery much of the sermon, as well as the meaning and significance of the biblical text, is lost as far as the audience is concerned.
If preaching is to be truly communicative, five aspects of delivery must be mastered by the preacher. 1. The first crucial area of delivery is what may be called the mechanical aspects. This includes such matters as breathing, articulating, pitch, inflection, vocal variation, etc. 2. Mental aspects of sermon delivery take us behind the spoken word to the mental dynamics that produce them. Communication is enhanced when a speaker learns to see what he says before he says it. 3. A third aspect of sermon delivery is the psychological aspect. Here the preacher-audience dynamic is the central focus. 4. The rhetorical aspect of sermon delivery focuses on the use of words and sentences effectively and persuasively. One cannot effectively communicate without carefully considering his audience. 5. The fifth aspect of sermon delivery is the spiritual aspect which emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit who vitalizes a sermon in the life of the preacher and audience.[42]

Aristotle's Rhetorical Triad

One of the best frameworks for analyzing the total communication situation as described in these five aspects of sermon delivery (excepting the spiritual aspect) is that

[41]Beekman and Callow, *Semantic Structure*, for the list of communication relations which undergird all discourse and the methodology for analyzing the semantic propositional structure of a text.

[42] J. Vines, *A Guide to Effective Sermon Delivery* (Chicago: Moody, 1986).

which Aristotle formulated centuries ago in his *Rhetoric* under the rubrics of *logos, ethos,* and *pathos.* If we could place any one textbook on the required reading list in all of the homiletics courses in seminaries today, it would be Aristotle's *Rhetoric.*

By *logos,* Aristotle referred to the use of logic and formal methods of persuasion. The use of induction and deduction are fundamental modes of rhetorical persuasion and should be used by the Christian persuader. The Pauline epistles are filled with material of an inductive and deductive nature.

Ethos refers to the impression which the preacher himself makes upon the audience. As far as the audience is concerned, the validity of what the preacher says will be proportional to the integrity which his audience perceives him to display.

Pathos describes the appeal to the emotions in an audience by means of the speakers rhetorical technique. Although some preachers disparage the use of any emotion in a sermon, and others absolutely abuse it, we must recognize that there is a valid use of the emotional appeal in preaching.

Aristotle defines the function of rhetoric as not only the art of persuasion, but also "to discover the available means of persuasion in a given case."[43] His rhetorical triad of *logos, pathos,* and *ethos* are the means of persuasion in any spoken or written discourse.

Preaching as Persuasion

Preaching is a form of persuasion. Every sermon should have a hortatory purpose as its underlying base. The simple reason for this is that we do not preach for the sake of preaching or even just to communicate truths, but we preach for a verdict. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that truth is unto holiness. However, it seems to us that some have lost sight of the fact that preaching should be geared to persuading people to respond. Some sermons are little more than a rehearsal of Bible history with no clear attempt to persuade the listener to any course of action. Other sermons are didactic in nature and while they contain excellent information, they never are persuasive because the preacher fails to tie the teaching to a prescribed course of action.

There are of course those who question the validity of the use of persuasion in preaching at all. Perhaps this is so because some within the ranks of the Christian ministry have become more like manipulators rather than persuaders. They have taken the philosophical stance of Utilitarianism with its characteristic maxim "the end justifies the means."

[43] *The Rhetoric of Aristotle*, ed. and tr. Lane Cooper (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1932), 7.

Biblical Basis for Preaching as Persuasion

Yet we must say that there is an adequate biblical basis for persuasion in preaching. A study of Paul's preaching ministry will reveal that he was a persuader in the finest sense of that term. For example, in Acts 13:43, we are told that Paul, in speaking to Christians, "persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." Acts 18:4 records the fact that Paul preached in Corinth on the Sabbath and "persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." 2 Cor 5:11 is perhaps the clearest passage where Paul mentions his attempt to persuade men as well as one of his motivations: "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. . . ." The particular word for "persuade" in this verse means to persuade or to induce one by words to believe.

The appeal to fear is not altogether an unworthy one. Of course, there should be no unreasonable or excessive use of fear in preaching. Scare tactics for the sake of fear are totally unwarranted. Yet fear is a genuine emotion of the human psyche. A doctor who wishes to cause his patient to abstain from smoking does not hesitate to make an appeal to fear. The Scriptures speak of the reality of entering eternity unprepared to meet God in the most fearful terms. Preachers should not hesitate to sermonize about that which God himself has revealed in his word.

Paul summarizes the preacher's attitude toward the subject of persuasion in preaching in 1 Thess 2:3-8 when he says,

> For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile; but as we were allowed of Cod to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men but Cod, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; Cod is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of Cod only, but also our own souls because ye were dear unto us (KJV).

There is an extreme to which some preachers go which must be avoided. It is possible to be too persuasive in one's sermon delivery. We have all heard sermons from well-meaning preachers who bombarded the congregation with one imperative after another. Such a concatenation of command forms bunched together in a sermon are not usually persuasive. They give the impression that the preacher is God's legislator who angrily barks forth "thou shalt nots." Such a preacher's motive was pure, namely to persuade the

people to do what the Bible says they should do. However, his technique did not fake into account the psychological and rhetorical aspects of sermon delivery and audience reception.

Mitigation in Preaching

In further development of this point, we should like to discuss briefly the notion of *mitigation* in discourse. No one likes to be told that a particular course of action they have chosen is wrong. Further more, no one likes to be told to do things. The wise preacher will learn to employ mitigation in his preaching.

For example, suppose a teacher is lecturing his class and the room temperature is too warm. He has at his disposal any number of ways of communicating to someone in the class that he prefers them to open a door. He may say to someone, “Bill, open the door.” Or he could say, “Bill, would you please open the door?” The first form of address is harsh and direct, employing an imperatival form. The second form of address is somewhat mitigated with the employment of the word “please” and the Interrogative “would you.” There are other ways even more mitigated in which he could communicate his desire for the door to be opened. He could say, “Would someone please open the door?” Here the shift from a specific person to the general “someone” mitigates the request even further. Another option available to the teacher would be to say, “I wish that door were open so it would be cooler in here.” Here, there is no imperative or interrogative, but a simple declarative statement. Chances are someone would open the door after hearing such a statement. Or take the statement, “It’s warm in here.” The surface structure is one of a declarative sentence with no mention whatsoever of the word “door.” Yet the underlying notional structure of this statement (given the context in which we have placed it) might be one of command in the sense that we could add the unstated sentence, “Open the door.” All of this goes to show that there are any number of ways a speaker may mitigate his commands to an audience. .

Preachers need to learn to make wise use of mitigation in their preaching. The NT writers employed a variety of mitigated forms of expression in an attempt to persuade their readers to a particular course of action.

In short, effective communication from the pulpit must be informed by Aristotle's rhetorical triad of *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. This involves a thorough knowledge of the subject matter and here is where there is no substitute for thorough exegesis. It involves a thorough knowledge of the speaker-audience dynamic such that the preacher must speak

from integrity and his audience must know of his sincerity and genuineness. Finally, it involves a knowledge of people and how they respond to the spoken word.

R. Roberts summarizes the triad of *logos, ethos,* and *pathos* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in words that every preacher needs to hear and heed.

> Be logical. Think clearly, Reason cogently. Remember that "argument" Is the life and soul of persuasion. Study human nature. Observe the characters and emotions of your audience, as well as your own character and emotions. Attend to delivery. Use language rightly. Arrange your material well. End crisply.[44]

Conclusion

A well-rounded approach to biblical interpretation involves three things. First, a recognition of the foundational hermeneutical principles necessary to inform a productive methodology. Foundational to one's biblical hermeneutic is the notion that a text has a determinate meaning. Second, a recognition of and implementation of exegetical methods which employ, along with traditional methodology, insights and methods from contemporary linguistic theory. Third, a recognition of Aristotle's rhetorical categories of logos, pathos, and ethos and how they inform good homiletical theory and practice. The bridge from hermeneutics to exegesis to proclamation is not easily built, but it must be built, and once built, ceaselessly traversed by us all.

[44] R. Roberts, *Greek Rhetoric and Literary Criticism* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1928), 50.