MOROGORO BIBLE COLLEGE

5 EXEGESIS (1)

# What exegesis is

## Careful reading

### Seeking what the author is communicating through the text

#### in the case of Scripture, dual authorship 2 Peter 1:20-21

### So we are interested in how the author presents a story. Two parts to this

#### Looking for the structure: how the story is organised

#### Asking the seven key fact-finding questions

# Look for the structure

## read the passage several times in at least two different versions

## Translation

### are there significant *problems* of translation?me.g. Luke 11:3 *episousios* = ‘daily’ (?) bread

### what *consequences* might issues of translation have for understanding the passage? If none, you can ignore them!

## Context

### what comes before and after this section?

### what is the *relationship* of the passage to the preceding and following sections of the book? Some possibilities:

#### *contrast* e.g. Zechariah (Luke 1:18) and Mary (Luke 1:38) are both puzzled by the angelic message

#### *comparison* e.g. trial of Jesus and trial of Peter in Mark 14:53-65 (Jesus), 66-72 (Peter)

#### *consequence* e.g. prophecy and fulfilment theme e.g. Mark 14:29-31 Jesus prophesies Simon’s betrayal and Mark 14:66-72 Peter three times denies Jesus (note v 72)

#### *repetition*, to emphasise a point, e.g. lost sheep and lost coin in Luke 15:3-7, 8-10—both responding to criticism in Luke 15:1-2

#### *illustration*, stating principle and then giving examples

##### Matthew 5:17-20 on the principle of keeping the torah, applied to murder and anger vv 21-26; adultery and lust vv 27-30; divorce vv 31-32; oaths and speaking truthfully vv 33-37; revenge and generosity vv 38-42; love for neighbour and enemies vv 43-48

## Form

### what kind of story/saying?

### what are the *marks* of that form? e.g. emphasis at the end, Luke 20:21-26

## Structure: how is the text organised? What is the ‘flow’ of it?

### some possibilities:

#### cause and effect e.g. Luke 4:1-13, 14

#### means to an end e.g. Luke 5:1-11

#### progression to climax/challenge

#### general statements followed by specific instances Matthew 5:17-20 (above)

#### same idea repeated in different ways Matthew 13:44-50 sequence of three short parables all making the same point about the incredible value of the kingdom of God

### key clues in finding the structure: *grammar and vocabulary (word choice)*

#### grammar

##### who is doing what to whom and with what consequences?

##### watch for ‘shift’ words (technically, conjunctions), such as:but, therefore, for, because, yet, if, since, when, while, so that, in the same way

##### vocabulary/choice of words

###### use Bible dictionary/commentary

###### use concordance for (Greek) word used, e.g. Young’s or Strong’s

## Historical/cultural setting issues

### customs, words, ideas alien to your culture or historical situation: use reference books to check these out e.g. Luke 7:36-50

# Ask the seven key fact-finding questions

## Who? (are the people involved)

### writer/speaker

### readers/hearers

### what is the relationship between the people involved?(friendly, antagonistic, open, closed, related, etc.)

### look for how the writer portrays characters

#### telling, e.g. narrator’s comments Luke 1:6; 2:25; 23:50

#### showing, e.g. synagogue leader Luke 13:10-17: see his character from his opposition to the healing (v 13) and to Jesus (v 14), and Jesus’ reaction to him (v 15)

#### what reaction is Luke seeking to characters?

##### *empathy*: identify strongly with character, perhaps because see likeness with them, or want to be like them, e.g. the disciples Luke 6:12-16; 8:25; 9:40; 10:23; 11:1; 22:40, 45-46; 24:44-53, 27, 32, 45

##### *sympathy*: less intense identification, sometimes because character with which empathise is positive towards them, e.g. woman in 7:36-50: see Jesus’ positive attitude (vv 44-50), contrasted with censure by Simon (v 39)

##### *antipathy*: alienation from or disdain for character, e.g. Judas 6:16; 22:3, 47-48 (cf. Acts 1:16-20)’ Satan 4:1-13; 8:12; 13:16; 22:3, 31

##### Luke sometimes *leaves it open* for the reader to respond, e.g. 15:11-32 the older brother

## Where? (are they)

### writer/speaker? why there? readers/hearers?

### what’s the atmosphere?

## When?

### what’s the location in the story of Jesus?

### was it written/spoken? what caused it to be written/said?

## What? (is the central event/key theme)

### a problem? an event influencing others? a conflict? a crisis?

## How? (does the writer/speaker seek to communicate)

### description of event?

### do previous events lead up to this? do following events develop from this?

### do words reveal motives, feelings, etc.?

## Why? (does it happen)

### are reasons stated (explicitly or implicitly)? does the writer hint at reasons?

## So? (what results follow)

### are they expected or not?

### what results follow accepting or rejecting the story for the reader(s)?