

Several observations should be made here:

- 1) There is great value in a broad knowledge of the biblical literature. Hence, continuing reading of large sections of the Bible is valuable--it is ever so easy to miss the proverbial forest for the trees. So also, frequent reading of a particular book or section being studied is valuable. There is often a circularity in the interpretation process between the general and the particular--this is really a large part of what we mean by the importance of context.

The particular passage can help us better understand the general context and vice-versa - Both are important

- 2) As a general rule it is the immediate context that is of greatest importance in the interpretation of a passage.

Sometimes a passage is isolated and the immediate context is not of great help, as in the Proverbs

- 3) Parallel materials (especially those of a different author) must be used with care. Is the apparent parallel a genuine parallel? See the discussion of Mickelsen, pp. 104-112.

You should be especially wary of parallels based only on the English Bible. If you think words or ideas are parallel, check carefully.

- 4) With some types of literature the interpreter finds much less help from the immediate context, e.g., some of the Wisdom literature. Even here however one may find that there are topical groupings which assist in understanding. Also, a knowledge of the broader context of "wisdom" is frequently useful. Or a knowledge of Hebrew poetry would be useful

- 5) See the summary of "Principles for Interpreting from Context" in Mickelsen, p. 113.

a) Observe carefully immediate context (precedes & follows)

b) " " parallels in same book → other books by same author → other books by diff. authors → the same time period. (when immed. context is not of much help.

c) smaller the amount of material to be studied, greater the danger of ignoring context