

Inductive Bible Study Pt.6



Chapter Study (cont.) / Introduction to Interpretation

IBS: Observation / Chapter Study (continued)

1. *PRAY.*
2. *KEEP THE CONTEXT IN MIND.*
3. *ASK THE '5W & H' QUESTIONS OF THE TEXT.*
4. *MARK KEY WORDS AND PHRASES.*
5. *LIST WHAT IS LEARNED ABOUT EACH KEY WORD.*
6. *LOOK FOR CONTRASTS.*
7. *LOOK FOR COMPARISONS (FIGURES OF SPEECH).*
8. *LOOK FOR TERMS OF CONCLUSION/EXPLANATION*

Terms of conclusion are specific words or short phrases which are used to identify a summary, a conclusion or a result.

COMMON TERMS OF CONCLUSION IN SCRIPTURE ARE: therefore, for, so, because, so that, so then, for this reason, for this cause, consequently

- “So” is frequently found at the beginning of verses and when used as a term of conclusion should prompt us to ask “why?”

LUKE 12:21

21 *“SO IS the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*

This should draw our attention to preceding context to answer the question. This simple technique serves to slow us down and aids our interpretation of the passage.

- These words may also be classified as ‘Terms of Explanation’ because they **often function as connective words indicating purpose.**
- They may serve as a marker that shows the cause or reason for something, specifically expressing the reason for what has been stated before.
- “For” may be used to introduce a detailed description of something alluded to earlier in the section. In many of these uses of “for” as a conjunction (see below) the synonym “because” can be substituted. For example, Mark records that as Jesus taught in the synagogue at Capernaum on the Sabbath,

MARK 1:22

22 *They were amazed at His teaching; FOR (substitute “because”) He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*

What does “for” explain in this verse? When encountering a “for” (or “because”), **stop and interrogate the text asking why the “for” (or “because”) is there. WHAT IS BEING EXPLAINED?**

- Always **mark these important connective words** by underlining or boxing them in.

EZRA 7:10

8 *He came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.*

9 *For on the first of the first month he began to go up from Babylon; and on the first of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, because the good hand of his God was upon him.*

10 *FOR Ezra had ¹set his heart to study the law of the LORD and ²to practice it, and ³to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.*

Observe the use of “for” here. (Also notice the progressive list in verse 10. Why has the author begun the sentence with a “for”?)

- When encountering a “*therefore*,” stop to see what it’s there for. **Terms of conclusion will often COMPEL US to LOOK BACK OVER THE PREVIOUS PASSAGES** (the preceding context) **to determine why the conclusion is being rendered.**

The writings of the Apostle Paul are full of “*therefores*”— conclusions drawn from certain statements of divine truth.

9 LOOK FOR EXPRESSIONS OF TIME.

- References to time **identify the timing or sequence of events.**

EXPRESSIONS OF TIME IN SCRIPTURE: *After, Afterward(s), As soon as, At that time, Later, Now, Soon, Then, Until, When...*

- These words generally answer the question “*When?*”
- Every time a **time phrase** is encountered, pause and ask “*When?*” type questions like — *What time is it? When did this happen? When will this happen? The answer will often become apparent by examining the context or surrounding passages.*
- Mark expressions of time with a circle or clock.

Time phrases are especially crucial when interpreting prophecy. **Example:** In **Matthew 24:15-31** there are six uses of “*then*” or “*when*.” It is important to observe how the events come into focus when we make note of these expressions of time. Other time phrases to make note of, might be “*in that day*” and “*Day of the LORD.*”

The term: “*in that day*” is used 40 times in **Isaiah** and 19 times in **Zechariah 12-14**

Step 2: Interpretation

Interpretation asks the question: “What does the passage mean?” Interpretation always flows from careful observation.

We’ve done our ‘fly over’ and our walkabout. Now it’s time to discover the meaning of what we’ve observed.

I. CONTEXT RULES.

- Interpret everything within its context:
 - Surrounding verses and chapters
 - The entire book
 - Other books by the same author
 - The Testament in which it is located
 - The entire Bible
- Is our interpretation of a passage consistent with the theme, purpose, and structure of the book in which it is found?
- Is our interpretation consistent with other Scriptures about the same subject or is there an obvious difference?
- Are we considering the historical and cultural context of what is being said?