

Inductive Bible Study: Interpretation (part 1)

Question:

1. **Definitions** (what are the significant words used in the passage? Look them up in a Greek/Hebrew bible dictionary, like www.blueletterbible.com or www.biblehub.com)

Evidence <i>(information/observation)</i>	Inferences <i>(answers suggested by the evidence)</i>

2. **Context** (what clues can you find in the text that may help answer your question?)

Evidence	Inferences
<u>A. Immediate Context</u> <i>(look at the verse and the verses right around – refer to detailed observation)</i>	

Bible Study: Interpretation (part 2)

Question:

3. **Word Usage** (*Where/how else are the key words - Greek/Hebrew - used in the Bible?*)

Evidence	Inferences

4. **Scriptural Testimony** (*Where/how else is this concept/topic addressed in the Bible?*)

Evidence	Inferences

Bible Study: Interpretation (part 3)

Question:

There are several other factors or “data points” that we *may* need to consider depending on the passage and the question being considered. Look over this list and pursue any that may be important in interpreting your question:

- **Kinds of Terms** (literal vs. figurative) – do you need to identify if certain terms/phrases are meant to be taken literally vs figuratively?
- **Inflections and Syntax** – do you need to examine the grammar of the passage in detail? Might this inform your interpretation?
- **General literary form** – Will the literary form have implications for how the passage is interpreted? Is there a question about what literary form is present?
- **Psychological factor** – Might the psychological factors of the author/characters be significant?
- **Atmosphere** – Is the general atmosphere of the passage significant? What is the intended atmosphere?
- **Author’s purpose and viewpoint** – Will considering this influence your interpretation?
- **Historical background** – Does this need to be researched in order to fully understand the passage?
- **History of terms** (etymology) – What is the history/origin of the significant terms?
- **History of text** (textual criticism) – Will it be helpful to look at the original manuscripts and see what they say and if there are any discrepancies?
- **History of tradition** (source criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism) – Are the potential sources of the passage significant? What about the different forms the passage may have taken from its origin to its current form? Is how the document was edited into its final form significant?

5. _____

Evidence	Inferences

6. _____

Evidence	Inferences

7. **Interpretation of others** (*How do commentaries and scholars understand this passage/question?*)

Evidence	Inferences

Conclusion – Looking through all your inferences, write a summary of your findings which best answers your interpretive question: