

Preserving **BIBLE TIMES**

· BRINGING ISRAEL TO THE CHURCH ·



- JANUARY 2015 SEMINAR - THE BIBLE: ITS LAND AND CULTURE



Topical Agenda

<u>Friday</u>	Registration	6:00 PM	Registration Tables Open
	Session I	6:30 PM	“Introduction to Biblical Context”
		7:45 PM	“Israel Geography - Part I” Break
	Session II	8:10 PM	“First Century Jewish Culture - Part I”
		9:20	“Overview of Contextual Resources”
9:30 PM		Dismiss	
<u>Saturday</u>	Registration	8:00 AM	Resource Tables Open
	Session III	8:45 AM	“Israel Geography – Part II - Flyovers”
		10:00 AM	Break
	Session IV	10:25 AM	“First Century Jewish Culture - Part II”
		11:40 AM	Stretch in Place
Session V	11:45 AM	“Overview of Paul’s Roman World”	
	1:00 PM	Adjourn	

Objectives

Becoming more proficient in “correctly handling the word of truth” II Tim. 2:15

- Equipping God’s people to read the Bible like those we meet in the Bible.
- Becoming more confident in discerning the original meaning of a passage.
- Becoming familiar with proven resources for understanding the Bible in its context
- Personal and corporate revival – Falling in love with God and His Word again!

About Preserving Bible Times

Preserving Bible Times (PBT) is a faith-based ministry with a vision for preserving and presenting Biblical Truth and meaning through integrating the Biblical text with its visual, historical, geographical, literary and cultural context. PBT’s strategy is to creatively assemble a “tool box” of Bible Times related images and contextual elements that will allow the Scriptures to increasingly come alive for 21st Century people as they did for those who first heard and read those words. These resources are shared in a variety of ways with Christian organizations to encourage believers and further equip teachers and preachers in the Body of Christ.

As a non-profit, 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt corporation, Preserving Bible Times depends on the contributions of like-minded people, as well as revenues from its “Bible in Context” resources to 1) research and write on the cultural, literary, historical and geographical context of the Bible, and 2) share these contextual materials in a variety of ways, e.g., print, video, digital, trips to Israel, Italy and Turkey with followers of Jesus Christ everywhere.

Context Always Matters

The Pursuit of Original Meaning

The Problem

- 21st Century Western world ≠ Near Eastern First-Century World of the Bible
- The Bible writers assumed their readers lived when, where and how they did. They had no need to explain what everyone knew and understood.

The Consequences of taking a Western approach to a Near-Eastern world:

- Often a 1-D reading of the text, not 3-D understanding of the text.
- Often miss much of the story...and therefore its purpose and implications.
- Can easily Westernize Jesus to make Him more comfortable to our paradigms.
- Miss the original meaning and therefore miss the epicenter of transformation.

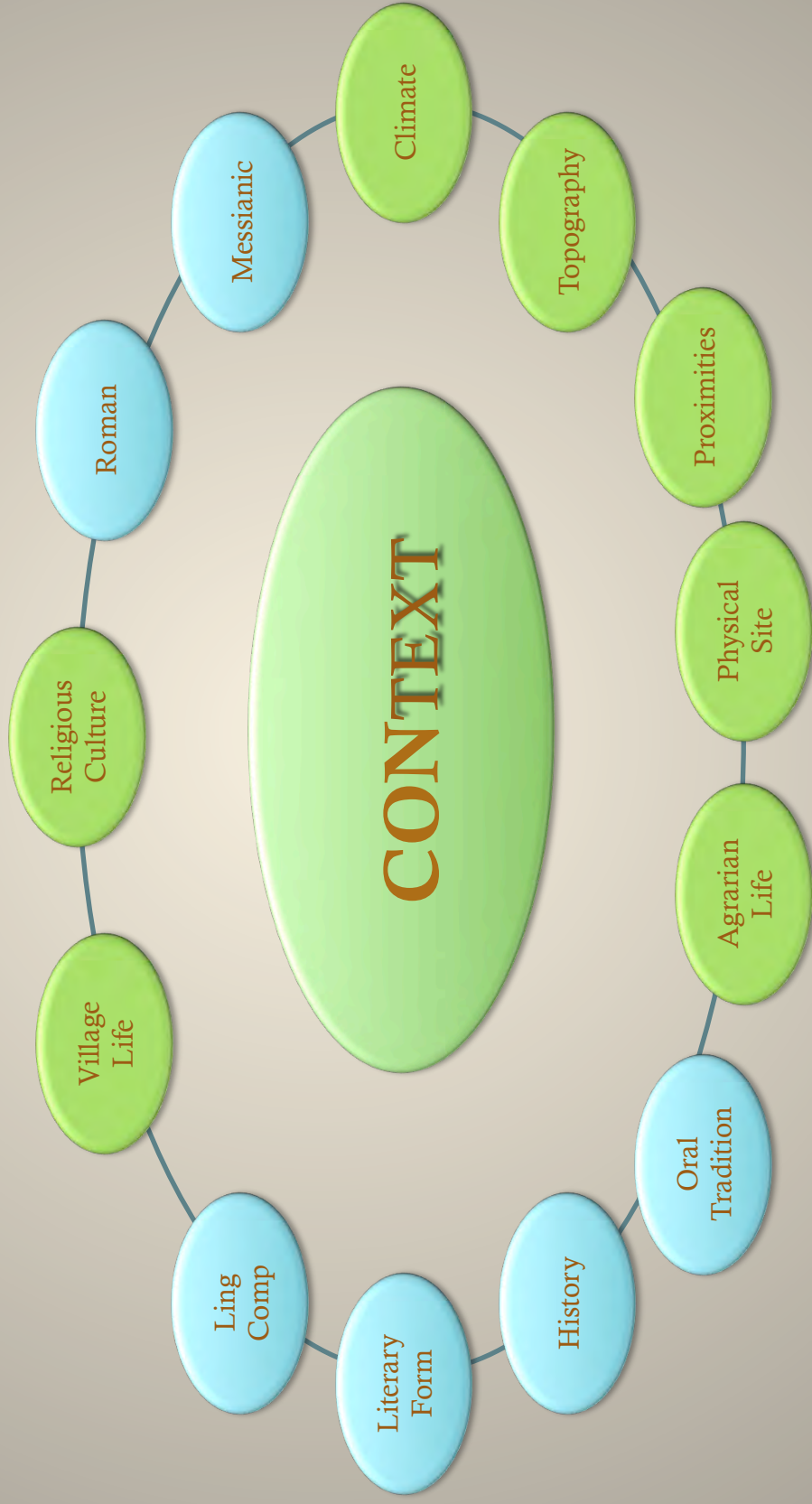
A Solution...Integrated Biblical Context

- Why Context Matters **Pages 3-5**
- **The “Science” of Theology** – Why Contextual Exegesis Matters **Page 6**

The Loom of Biblical Literacy: Weaving back together all the relevant contextual aspects of a passage – **geographical**, historical, **cultural**, literary and **visual** contexts.

- **Our Approach:** Provide geographical and cultural frameworks for engaging the Bible in its context.
- **Our Purpose:** Getting more miles per gallon of transformational impact from our Bible studies and Quiet Times.
- **Our Sequence:**
 - Geography I
 - Culture I
 - Geography II
 - Culture II
 - Not focusing (much) on literary and historical context
- **The Content:** What I Wished Someone Would Have Told/Shown Me!
- **Six Good Initial Interpretive/Exegetical Questions:**
 - Where are we? (A **geography** question) **This Weekend’s Emphasis**
 - What happened here before? (A **history** question)
 - What **cultural clues** are we given in the text? **This Weekend’s Emphasis**
 - What **literary issues** do we find in the passage?
 - What does the site look like?
 - What will this passage reveal to us about
 - Who God is?
 - What God cares about?
 - How God does things?
 - God’s adversary, the Mutiny, the Human Condition, and God’s Eternal Plan of Rescue and Restoration?

Understanding Original Meaning in Biblical Times



Middle Eastern Villager = 3-D Understanding

Contextual Issues of Today



Contextual Integration to Penetration to Transformation



Accurately Handling the Word of Truth!

A Helpful Remedy

The World and “Science” of Theology

Biblical
Theology

Systematic
Theology

Pastoral
Theology

Dogmatics

Apologetics



Interpretation: Hermeneutics & Exegesis



Integrated Contextual Exegesis



Manuscripts  Text

Connecting The Dots: Biblical Geography

(Mega Motifs – Umbrella Themes – 30,000 Foot Perspective)

We have forgotten that we read the Bible as foreigners, as visitors who have traveled not only to a new geography, but to a new century. We are literary tourists who are deeply in need of a guide. Gary Burge

A Land of Diversity and Contrasts: It is the Land of *Milk and Honey* DVDs & ST-10

- North (Dan) and South (Beersheva)
- East (Judean Wilderness) and West (Coastal Plain and Shephelah)
- Four very distinct eco-systems in a very small land!
 - Sub-tropical and Mountainous
 - Deserts and Swamps
- The diversity of the Land helps explain
 - How geography can shape spirituality
 - Where Gentiles decide to live
 - The wide variety of imagery used in the Bible – flora, fauna, animal

The Land is Often Part of the Passage

- The past is the prologue to the present passage – “*What’s Happened Before?*”
- Jesus always taught with visuals – Where He was is the visual!
- Examples:
 - Faith that moves mountains Mark 11:23
 - Bringing back to life of the widow of Nain’s son Luke 7:11

A Strategic Land Bridge in the Ancient Near East – Invasion Routes of Antiquity

- Cross roads of the World
- Land Bridge between three continents

Spiritual Bridge between Humanity and the Divine – The Podium

- This is where God has chosen to reveal Himself to us for
 - **Who He is...What He cares about...How He does things...**
 - Three great questions to ask of any passage

Exploring Geography (& History) – Part I

“The Land is the Fifth Gospel.” - Cyrus of Jerusalem 348 AD

Geography includes...

- Topography, Terrain, Geology, Climate, Proximities,
- Rainfall, Routes and Regions (3 R’s)

Setting the Stage...“The Land In-Between”

THE LAND – A Topographic Overview – The Three R's

Map Work -

Buffer Zones

Wilderness and **Jordan Valley Rift** protects the East

Sinai and **Negev** protects much of the South

Coastal Traders not interested in Conquest – protects West

Invasion Routes

1) 20 mile NE gap between Mt. Hermon and the Galilean Hills down the Jordan Valley from Aram/Syria

2) Coastal Plain from the South – Egypt

Rainfall, Climatic and Soil Issues

North, Central, South – many gradients

Judean Morning Dews in the spring and John 15:2

ST-4

Winter Rains and Summer Temperatures – Eat and sleep on the roof

EN-6

Trade Routes and Implications

Damascus to Egypt...International Highway, Via Maris (no Judean incursions)

Kings Highway (Western Jordan today)

From the Jordan Valley N/S Route

West (south of the Dead Sea) to the Coastal Philistines or

NW Via the Jezreel Valley to Coastal Cities of Tyre and Sidon

Implications:

Protect Trade Routes by Building Fortresses

Hazor (N), **Megiddo** (Jezreel Valley, **Beth Shean** (Harold Valley)

Arad (S), Lachish (SW)

Ideas About New Gods Enter the Land via Trade Routes

International Highway and the Vulnerability of the Northern Kingdom

Regions: Judea, Samaria, Coastal Plain, Perea, Galilee

Page 11

High Spots...**Central Ridge, Golan Heights, Mt. Carmel Ridge, etc.**

Mountainous (Hill Country_) Regions

Low Spots...**Sea of Galilee, Jordan Valley Rift, Dead Sea**

Valleys..., **Harod, Jezreel, Jordan, Elah, Sorek, Ajalon** (last three in Shephelah)

Coastal Plain Aerial Video – North to South

Gentle Judean Hills... Shephelah (Gentle Hills)

Judean Hill Country

Judean Wilderness

Samaritan Hill Country

Negev

Connecting The Dots: Biblical Culture

(Mega Motifs – Umbrella Themes – 30,000 Ft Perspective)

If you want to engage the Bible more you have to engage the world of the Bible more. - Dr Randall Smith

CASE HISTORY: Visitor at Midnight (Luke 11: 5-8) **EN-12**

A Very Different Worldview - They Don't Live and Think Like You Do! **MD-1**

- Social Norms: Reciprocity, Mandatory Hospitality, Honor/Shame
- Community outcomes transcend individual outcomes
- Agrarian world of shepherds, peasant farmers, vineyards, figs and olives
- The Bible's writers assumed you lived when, where and how they did.
- Hebrew Worldview ≠ 21st Century Western, Urban, Industrialized World view

The Clash of Cultures – the World of the Greco-Romans – **Caesarea Maritima, Caesarea Philippi (Banias), Scythopolis/Beth Shean** - The impact of the Greek worldview on Judaism

- Icons vs Aniconic, Polytheism vs Monotheism, Pleasure vs Piety, Individual vs Community, Philosophy (ideas) vs Behavioralism (deeds)

Diversity of First-Century Judaism

- Sadducees (**Temple**) and Pharisees (Synagogues – **Corizin & Capernaum**)
- Various Sects: Essenes (**Qumran**), Zealots (**Arbel Cliffs**), Herodians
- Observant (Religious) Jews – Peasants and Ordinary Priests
- Hellenistic Jews – Levi (Matthew) **EN-7**

The Contrast of Two Kings – Earthly King Herod and the Heavenly King Jesus

Herod the Great

Ruled by might
Ruled by taking
A King buried as a criminal
Projected Power
Built buildings and monuments
(**Herodian, Masada, Caesarea**)

Jesus

Ruled by Right
Ruled by giving
Died as a criminal who was truly was a King
Had all power and walked in humility
Built nothing but a few men

The Conflicts of Jesus:

- With (some of) the Pharisees
- With the Temple Aristocracy **St Peter en Gallicantu – Chaiaphas' House**
 - Sadducees + Jerusalem Pharisees + Elite Families = Sanhedrin
- With His Adversary (**Sea of Galilee Boat Crossing**) **EN-8/9**

Being a Disciple of Jesus is Daily Shock Therapy

EN & MD Various

Jewish Nationalism: Masada, Gamla, Arbel Cliffs, Golan Heights

Regions

Topography



GALILEE IN THE TIME OF JESUS

ECONOMY:

- Grapes
- Olives
- Dates
- Figs
- Pottery
- Wheat
- Fishing

- City
- Territory capital
- Mountain peak
- Travels of Jesus
- Roads

0 5 10 Miles
0 5 10 Kilometers



Jesus moves His ministry to Capernaum

Homeland of 3 disciples: Peter, Andrew, and Philip

Jesus preaches in the synagogue and the synagogue is reflected

Jesus raised to life a widow's son

Jesus turns water into wine

Comparing Making Disciples THEN with (most) Discipleship NOW

World of Making Disciples (THEN)

Hebrew Way – Doing, Action

More Concrete

Integrated Context is Understood

About Integration & Synthesis –
Keeping Things Together

“Believe” is a Verb – Something You Do

Emphasis on Consistent Behavior

Community More Important Than the
Individual – Sacrifice Personal Rights for the
Benefit of the Community

Concerned with Right Doing

Willingly Submissive to Rabbi’s Authority

Submit to Rabbi’s Interpretation

Willing to Wrestle with the Text for Long
Periods of Time

Focus on Developing Discernment

Memorized their Scriptures

Live Life in Community

Live Integrated, Holistic Lives

Desire to be A Disciple

Total Surrender to their Rabbi’s Interpretive
Authority for Living

Nothing is Hidden or Off Limits to
Rabbinic Scrutiny

Life Issue Oriented

Dialogue Intensive

Focused on Men

Western Discipleship (NOW)

Hellenistic Way – Thinking, Words, Ideas

More Abstract

Most Biblical Context is Missing

About Analysis, Categorization & Labels –
Breaking Things Apart

“Belief” is a Creed – Consenting to a Series of
Propositions

Much More of an Emphasis on Ideas

Individual More Important Than the
Community – Sacrifice Community Harmony for
Sake of Personal Interests

Concerned with Right Thinking

Submissive to No One, Except Myself

Create my own Interpretation of the Text

Preference for Quick, Simplistic Answers
Through Short Encounters with the Text

Lack of Critical Thinking Skills

Widespread Biblical Illiteracy

Functional Lone Rangers

Live in Dichotomized Spheres (Sacred/secular,
faith/work)

Often Content to Just “Believe” in Jesus

Partial, Elective Surrender to Jesus’ Authority as
Convenient

Much of our Lives is Hidden from Others

Conceptually Oriented

Information Transfer Intensive

Seems More Women are Being Discipled
Today than Men

Exploring Culture (& History)- Part II

Jewish Messianic Hopes

When He comes...Peace, Prosperity and Social Justice

Assumed to be a political/military motif

Messiah will reign from the Temple...Cleansing on Palm Sunday

Messiah will first be seen in the North – Is. 9 prophecy

The 70-year Restoration Cycle and Jesus in the Temple at age 12

Messianic Zealots

Restore Galilee for Jews/Messiah – Is. 61:5-7 is their job description **Luke 4**

Nazareth (probably) a hotbed of Messianic Zealots **EN-3**

That's why they are there

Galilean District Backdrop of Herod Antipas

John the Baptist Confrontation on Divorce; Jesus' Cousin who Immerses Him

Political Safety in Capernaum – Note the shrewdness of Jesus!

Acquired the social reciprocity/allegiance of the **Royal Official** **John 4:46+**

Acquired the social reciprocity/allegiance of the **Centurion** **Luke 7:6+**

Same for **Jarius** – President of the Capernaum synagogue **Luke 8:41+**

Religious Culture

Role of the Temple

Defines Judaism - monotheism

Unifies Judaism – All Jews no matter their orthodoxy come to Festivals

Where you go to get “Right” with God

The Righteousness (“Sin Management”) System – A Three-legged Stool **Ref**

1) Scrupulous Behavior

2) Ritual Purification baths when you do something “wrong”

3) **Temple Offerings and Sacrifices**

Then You are Right with God!

Implications:

Revisiting John the Baptist: Who Needs to Repent! **Ref**

Jesus and the Paralytic **EN-6**

Jesus and the Wedding at Cana **Ref**

Those ritual purification vessels

Observant Judaism

Pharisees

History/Diversity. Jesus - the *Hasidim* Miracle-Working Pharisee Rabbi.

Rabbis & Disciples **MD-2**

Purpose: Develop discernment on how to honor God in all the gray areas of life.

Wrestle with the Text & real life issues

No simple formulas, No easy answers. Only good questions.

Never in a Hurry – plenty of time for dialogue and debate.

Attributes of a Disciple **MD-2**
 Desire, Emulation & Willing Submission to Rabbi's Authority
 24/7 Transparency in Community
 Willingness to forgo all Prior Notions of "Right" and "Wrong"
Implications:
 Jesus' Disciples: In Need of a Total Detox!
 Something Things Have Not Changed!

Insiders and Outsiders – The Red/Green Graphic **Page 15**
 Mercy is Missing **Ref**

Synagogues: Pharisee controlled, "Worship Liturgy," Seat of Moses **EN-3**
Sadducees – Your Theology and Doctrine Matters!
Zealots – Misguided Zeal - and **Essenes** – Let's Withdraw and be Ascetic
Implications for Understanding the Beatitudes **Mt of Beatitudes** **ST-3**
 Pulverizing Foundational Paradigms of ALL Worldviews!
 Each Worldview Takes a Direct Hit!

Herod's Second Temple

The Scene **DVD**

Court of the Gentiles & the Royal Stoa
 Court of the Women, Court of Israel, Court of the Priests
 Holy Place & Holy of Holies
 Roman Presence...Antonio Fortress – NW Corner

Chief Priests/High Priest

Franchised High Priesthood – House of Annas

Thousand of Ordinary Priests – the Zechariahs **ZE-various**

Corruption of the Temple

It's Really Temple, Inc.
 The Wall Street of its Day
 Creative Deception: Moneychangers, Animal Sellers & Alms Boxes

Implications:

John the Immerser and his Protest Motif - Venue, Food and Clothes

OPTIONAL AS TIME PERMITS...

Village Life

Agricultural Motifs

Planting, harvesting, figs, olives, vines, breadmaking, shepherding

Marriage Customs: betrothal agreements, marriage feast

Travel Considerations

Walking 16-18 miles per day & overnight "inns" **ST-9**

Men and women's caravans and Jesus "lost" in the Temple in Luke 2

Fishing: Linen nets and night fishing **EN-4**

Vineyard Management (John 15:2) Lift up with a rock **ST-4**

Good Resources for Cultural Context:

Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*

Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*

K.C. Hanson & Douglas Oakman, *Palestine in the Time of Jesus*

John J. Pilch, *The Cultural Dictionary of the Bible*

Joel Green, et. al., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*

Kenneth Bailey, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*

Doug Greenwold's books showing how these cultural issues come alive and reshape our understanding of "familiar" passages: **EN** Encounters with Jesus, **ST** The Rest of the Story, **MD** Making Disciples Jesus' Way, **ZE** Zechariah and Elizabeth.

See the Preserving Bible Times Website for more good contextual resources:

www.preservingbibletimes.org

Go to FAQ, fourth question for additional helpful contextual resources

Helpful Resources for Geographical Context:

Dr. James Monson, *Regions on the Run*

Anson Rainey and Steven Notley, *CARTA's New Century Handbook and Atlas of the Bible*

Dr. James C. Martin, et. al., *A Visual Guide to Bible Events*

Dr. James C. Martin, et. al., *A Visual Guide to Gospel Events*.

Citation Reference Key

ST	<i>The Rest of the Story: A Closer Book at "Familiar" Passages</i>	BOOK
MD	<i>Making Disciples Jesus' Way: Wisdom We Have Missed</i>	BOOK
EN	<i>Encounters with Jesus: The Rest of Their Stories</i>	BOOK
ZE	<i>Zechariah and Elizabeth: Persistent Faith in a Faithful God</i>	BOOK
Ref	A Preserving Bible Times Monthly Reflection – see the PBT website	WEBSITE

What are Some Other Resources That I Can Use to Expand My Understanding of Biblical Context?

The answer to this question is harder than you might think. Part of the problem is that many Biblical experts tend to be experts in only one area of Biblical context, not the 15 or so areas of context that need to be integrated to recreate the whole picture. Few take all these contextual primary sources and then integrate them into a cohesive contextual picture. That's (in part) why Preserving Bible Times feels the calling to do what it does. Some of the resources that the PBT team draws upon, in addition to our own contextual resources, would include the following:

PRIMARY SOURCES

Danby, Herbert. *The Mishna Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes*. London: Oxford University Press, 1933

Josephus. *The Works of Josephus*. Trans. William Whiston, Peabody, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1953

Pritchard, James B., ed. *The Ancient Near East Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, Princeton: Princeton University, 1969.

COMMENTARIES ON PRIMARY RESOURCES

Classic Works

Edersheim, Alfred. *The Life and Times of Jesus The MESSIAH*, MacDonald Publishing Company, undated.

Jeremias, Joachim. *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 1st American Ed., Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1969.

Edersheim, Alfred. *The Temple. Its Ministry and Services as they were at the Time of Jesus Christ*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1997.

Archeology Resources

Finegan, Jack. *The Archeology of the New Testament*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, revised in 1992.

Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. *The Holyland: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, Fifth Edition, 2008.

Contextual Restoration Commentary on the Gospel of Luke (Superb)

Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke, The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1997

Contextual Restoration Commentary on John and the Passion of Jesus (Excellent)

Boice, James Montgomery. *The Gospel of John, An Expository Commentary, Volumes 1- 5*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1999

Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith

Wilson, Marvin O. *Our Father Abraham* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI 1989)

The Jewishness of Jesus

Tverberg, Lois and Spangler, Ann. *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI. 2009)

EXPANDED TREATMENTS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Middle Eastern Perspectives

Snodgrass, Klyne. *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2008.

Bailey, Kenneth. *The Cross and the Prodigal*, Concordia, St. Louis, 1973

Bailey, Kenneth. *Poet & Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes (Two Volumes in One)*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1983.

Bailey, Kenneth. *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 2008.

Bruge, Gary. *The Bible and the Land*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 2009.

Bruge, Gary. *Jesus, The Middle Eastern Storyteller*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 2009.

Martin, James C. *Exploring Bible Times: The Gospels in Context*, Bible World Seminars, Amarillo, Texas, 2003 (updated in 2007). Currently out of print.

Contextually Restored Passages

Greenwold, Doug. *Encounters with Jesus: The Rest of Their Stories*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, Columbia, Maryland, 2008. (Available from Preserving Bible Times)

Greenwold, Doug. *Those Prodigal Sons*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, Columbia, Maryland, 2014. (Available from Preserving Bible Times).

Greenwold, Doug. *That Good Samaritan*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, Columbia, Maryland, 2013. (Available from Preserving Bible Times)

Greenwold, Doug. *Becoming a Judean Shepherd*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, Columbia, Maryland, 2013. (Available from Preserving Bible Times)

Greenwold, Doug. *The Rest of the Story: A Closer Look at Familiar Passages*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, Columbia, Maryland, 2007. (Available from Preserving Bible Times)

Greenwold, Doug. *Making Disciples Jesus' Way: Wisdom We Have Missed*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, Columbia, Maryland, 2005. A contextual study of the what, when and how Jesus remade the Twelve with an emphasis on what's missing in Western discipleship today. (Available from Preserving Bible Times)

Greenwold, Doug. *Zechariah and Elizabeth: Persistent Faith in a Faithful God*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, Rockville, Maryland, 2004. A refreshing contextual study of Luke 1 that reflects on our own unforeseen journeys and God's loving purpose in it all. (Available from Preserving Bible Times)

Hansen, David. *In Their Sandals: How His Followers Saw Jesus*, Xulon Press, 2007.

Great Resource for the Gospels

Green, Joel B. et. al. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 1992.

Great Resource for Paul's Letters

Hawthorne, Gerald and Ralph P. Martin et. al. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 1993.

Bailey, Kenneth. *Paul through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in I Corinthians*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 2011.

Great Expositions on the Prodigal Son

Nouwen, Henri. *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*, Doubleday, New York, 1992.

Keller, Timothy. *The Prodigal God*, Dutton, New York, 2008.

MacArthur, John. *A Tale of Two Sons*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 2008.

Greenwold, Doug. *Those Prodigal Sons: Two Lost Sons and Their Father's Heart*, Bible-in-Context Ministries, 2014. (Available from Preserving Bible Times)

Visual Resources

Martin, James C., et.al. *A Visual Guide to Bible Events*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 2009. (excellent for visualization of Bible places)

Martin, James C., et.al. *A Visual Guide to Gospel Events*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 2010. (excellent for visualization of Gospel passages)

Dowley, Tim. *The Kregel Pictorial Guide to THE BIBLE*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2000. (very nice)

Thompson, J.A. *Handbook of Life in Bible Times*, Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, Ill., 1986.

Rainey, Anson and R. Steven Notley. *The Sacred Bridge: Carta's Atlas of the Biblical World*, Carta, Jerusalem, 2005

Rittmeyer, Leen and Kathleen. *The Ritual of the Temple in the Time of Christ*, Carta, Jerusalem 2002. (excellent summary of Temple context with wonderful visuals and good concise copy taken from Edersheim's book *The Temple*). Available from Preserving Bible Times.

Rittmeyer, Leen and Kathleen. *From Sinai to Jerusalem: The Wanderings of the Holy Ark*, Carta, Jerusalem, 2000. (overview of 1,000 years of the Old Testament from the perspective of the Arks movements). Available from Preserving Bible Times.

Richman, Chaim. *The Holy Temple of Jerusalem*, The Temple Institute, Carta, Jerusalem, 1997. (absolutely exquisite visuals of Herod's Temple at the time of Jesus). Available from Preserving Bible Times.

Excellent Resources for Biblical Geography

Monson, James. *Introduction to Biblical Geography: Region on the Run, Biblical Backgrounds*, Rockford, IL. (best introduction to biblical geography and the best geography maps for getting oriented to biblical times). www.bibback.com

Monson, James. *Geobasics in the Land of the Bible, Biblical Backgrounds*, Rockford, IL. (good overview of biblical geography and getting oriented to the Land). www.bibback.com

Helpful Bibles

New American Standard Bible, Side Column Reference Edition, Foundation Publications, Anaheim, CA 1996 (very helpful for remez identification).

Archaeological Study Bible, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2005

The NET Bible, First Edition, Published by The NET Bible Project, Dallas, Texas

Helpful Websites for Bible-in-Context Information

www.netbible.org and www.bible.org www.jerusalemerspective.com and www.egrc.net

www.followtherabbi.com and www.bibback.com

Some of Our Favorite Quotes

Making the Case for Context

The trouble with ignorance is that it picks up confidence as it goes along – Arnold H. Glasow

Those of us who know the Bible story well can suffer from knowing it well. – Alistair Begg

The authors of the Gospels have given us the parables of Jesus in first-century settings. To strip away those settings is to substitute our own. – Kenneth Bailey

The Gospel writers assumed their readers lived when, where and how they do. They have no need to explain what everyone knows. They just thought you knew. – Randall Smith

Any interpretation (of the parables) that does not breathe the air of the first century cannot be correct. That requires listening in a context not our own and presumes some familiarity with that context.
– Klyne R. Snodgrass

Context rescues truth from the “familiar.” – Kenneth Bailey

The NT (New Testament), after all does not come in the form of timeless aphorisms; every text was written in a given first-century time/space framework. Indeed the NT authors felt no need to explain what were for them and their readers common cultural assumptions. - Gordon D. Fee

When reading the Scriptures, we see what we know but do not always know what we see – Unknown

The Christian who is careless in Bible reading is careless in Christian living. – Max Reich

If I were the devil, one of my first aims would be to stop folks from digging into the Bible – J. I. Packer

A text without a context is a pretext for a proof text – Unknown

Reading the Bible through fresh eyes constantly reminds us of the depths that still remain to be discovered there. – Phillip Jenkins

There is no substitute for reading the Bible (in context); it throws a great deal of light on the commentaries! – Unknown (added)

I never saw a useful Christian who was not a student of the Bible – D. L. Moody

The Bible is an Eastern book. We see it through the colored glasses of Western culture. Much is lost. We miss the subtleties of humor and many of the underlying assumptions. We do not understand the ingrained attitudes that illuminate a story or illustration. Christ spoke to a Middle Eastern peasant people. Even most of the educated would have had their roots in that peasantry. What lies between the lines, what is felt and not spoken, is of deepest significance. – Kenneth Bailey

Village life was so deeply ingrained and so clearly understood at every level of that society that the customs reflected in biblical narratives did not usually have to be explained with the narrative. Widely known attitudes did not need to be articulated. Longstanding social customs required no explanation. Nevertheless, these unspoken but culturally understood ideas gave color and meaning to Jesus' stories. - John MacArthur

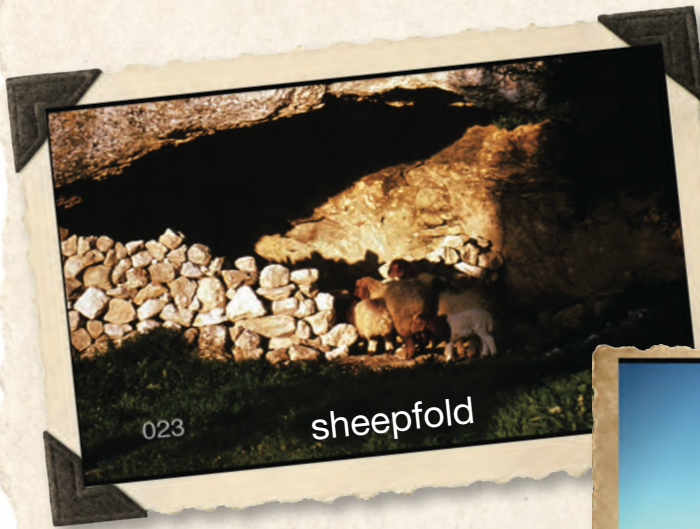
Most of us have never encountered some of the most common first-century social institutions, for example, patronage/clientage, household slavery, a resident foreign army. And conversely, first-century Palestinians would not share some of our most common institutional experiences, for example: voting, public education, free choice of spouses and careers. The challenge, then, is to imagine ourselves "into" the world of the people we encounter in the New Testament. This requires conceptualizing scenarios – ways of acting, thinking, valuing, perceiving, and structuring the world – appropriate to their life-world.
- K. C. Hanson and Douglass E. Oakman

All literature is born from within a cultural landscape. It will pick up themes and images from within that cultural landscape, use them generously, and build a framework from which stories can be told. This is no less true for the Bible. The land and its culture, not merely the history that happened there, are an indispensable aspect of the biblical story. - Gary M. Burge

At some point in ecclesiastical history, someone snatched away the inceptive Hebrew blueprint by which Jesus' movement was being constructed and replaced it with a non-Hebraic one. As a result, what has been built since is at best a caricature of what was intended. In many respects, it is downright contrary and antagonistic to the spirit of the original believing community. - Brian Knowles

An individualistic Christianity leads inevitably to an individualistic god. Those who have been suckled at the breast of American culture will not easily be weaned from the milk of individualism (and thus can miss much of the Gospel's community emphasis). - Don McCullough₁ (added)

The narrative of the New Testament from its beginning to end assumes the reader is familiar with the physical setting that served as a stage for the unfolding drama. – Anson Rainey & Steven Notley



sheepfold



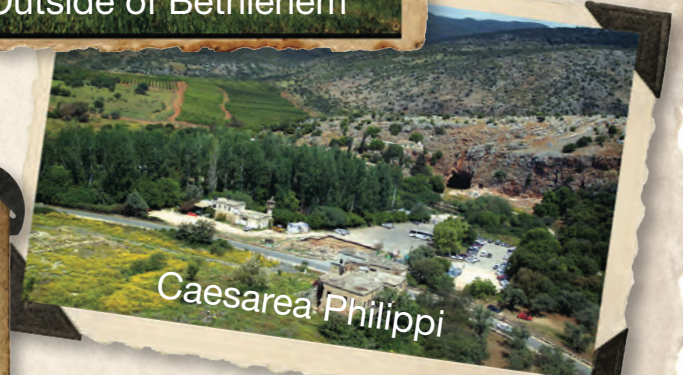
Arbel Cliffs and Pass



Caesarea Maritima



Herodian Outside of Bethlehem



Caesarea Philippi



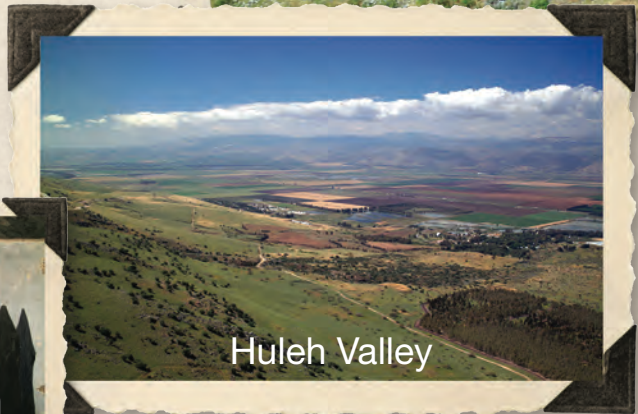
The Shephelah



Corizin



Capernaum



Huleh Valley



First Century Judean Peasant House Replica



Nazareth Ridge



Jericho



Jordan River Above the Sea of Galilee



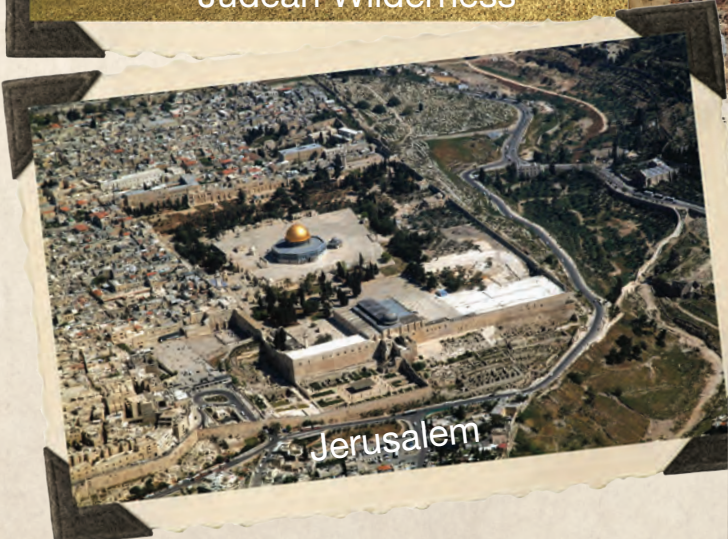
Northern Negev



Judean Wilderness



Qumran



Jerusalem



Wadi Qilt and Jordan Valley

The Bible: Its Land and Culture

Engaging the Bible in its Cultural and Geographical Context

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Dr. James C. Martin

Dr. Randall Smith

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Doug Greenwold

Steven Holloway

And Others

Themes: *Context rescues biblical truth from the familiar.*

– Dr. Kenneth Bailey

When reading the Bible, we see what we know but do not always know what we see.

– Unknown

If you want to understand the Bible more, you have to understand the world of the Bible more.

– Dr. Randall Smith

The text of the Bible is an image of the Land. It couldn't have been written anywhere but in Israel.

– Arie bar David