

Interpretation: Grasping the Text in Their Town

1. Context is King
 - a. Historical Context - The historical, cultural, and religious circumstances surrounding the original author and audience which influence the meaning of the passage
 - b. Literary Context - The genre, themes, and author's styles which surround the passage and determine how it should be read and interpreted.
 - c. Grammatical Context - The immediate context of a verse or passage which determines its meaning in relation to the structure of the paragraphs and sentences around it.
 - d. All of these contribute to the meaning of the text in "Their Town" and must be considered. Historical context is what we'll talk about this week.
2. Who was the Author?
 - a. Their Personality and Background - Amos 7:1-2, a Farmer
 - b. Their Immediate Circumstances - Philippians 4:13, from Prison
3. Who was the Audience?
 - a. Their Problems- 1 Corinthians 11:27 (context in 11:20-22)
 - b. Their particular culture - Hebrews 3:3, Offensive to a Jew!
4. What the world was like around them
 - a. Historical Setting: Nehemiah 2:1-3
 - b. The philosophical nature of the world - John 1:1 and Socrates' *logos*
 - c. The ancient nature of the world - 2 Peter 1:10 - not about election fraud
5. Other examples of verses dependent on Historical Context:
 - a. Jeremiah 29:11 - Spoken to a people facing God's discipline
 - b. Matthew 7:1 - "Judge" refers to the religious sense, as in justice rather than social judgment
 - c. Revelation 3:15-16 - Laodicean aqueducts
6. Resources to Help
 - a. Bible Handbooks
 - b. Study Bibles/Footnotes
 - c. Commentaries

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<u>Historical Context</u>	Literary Context	Grammatical Context
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1. Understanding the Author
 - a. Who were they?
 - b. What is their personality and background?
 - c. What situation are they in when they write?
2. Understanding the Audience
 - a. Who were they?
 - b. What problems were they facing?
 - c. What need was the author trying to fix?
 - d. What was unique about their culture?
3. Understanding the Biblical World
 - a. Knowing the Biblical Timeline and setting of the book
 - b. Knowing the prominent philosophical/Religious ideas of the time
 - c. Recognizing the fact that the bible is *ancient*, not contemporary
4. Resources to help
 - a. The rest of the book, and the whole Bible
 - b. Bible Handbooks
 - c. Study Bibles and Footnotes
 - d. Commentaries