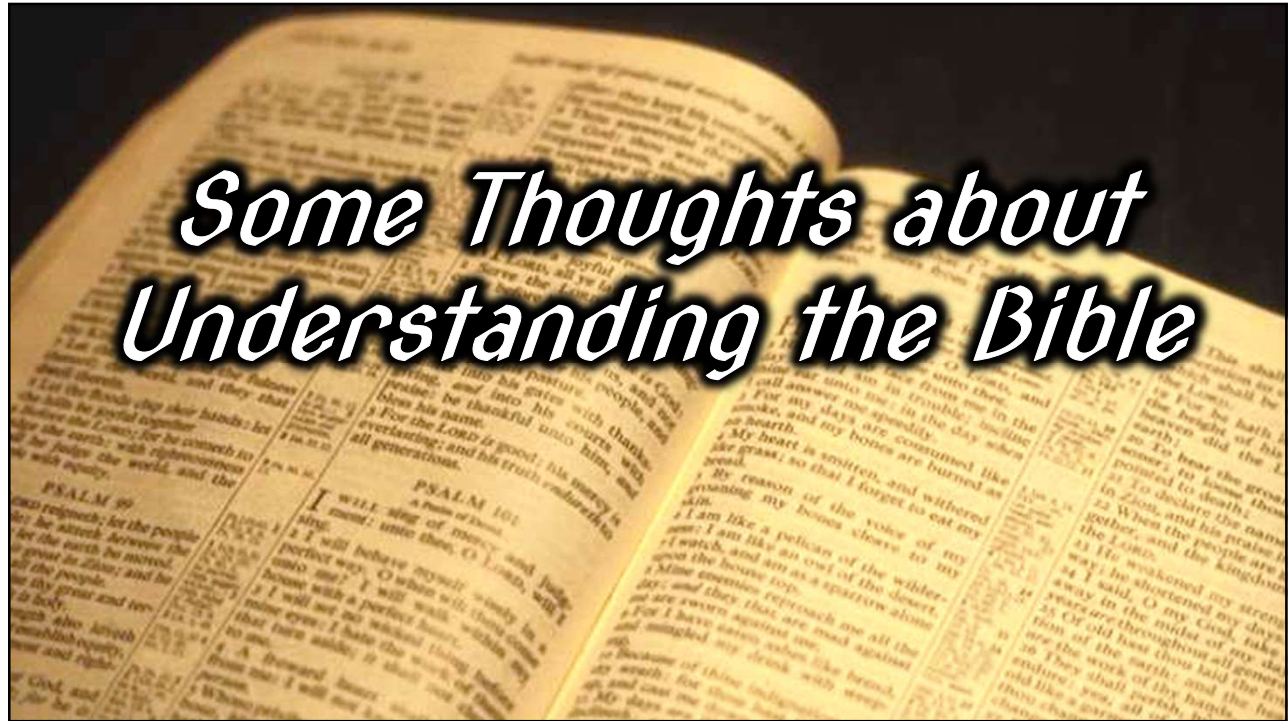


Richard G. Howe, Ph.D.  
Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Apologetics  
Past President, International Society of Christian Apologetics



*Does everything  
in the Bible apply  
to us today?*

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in the Bible apply  
to us today?*

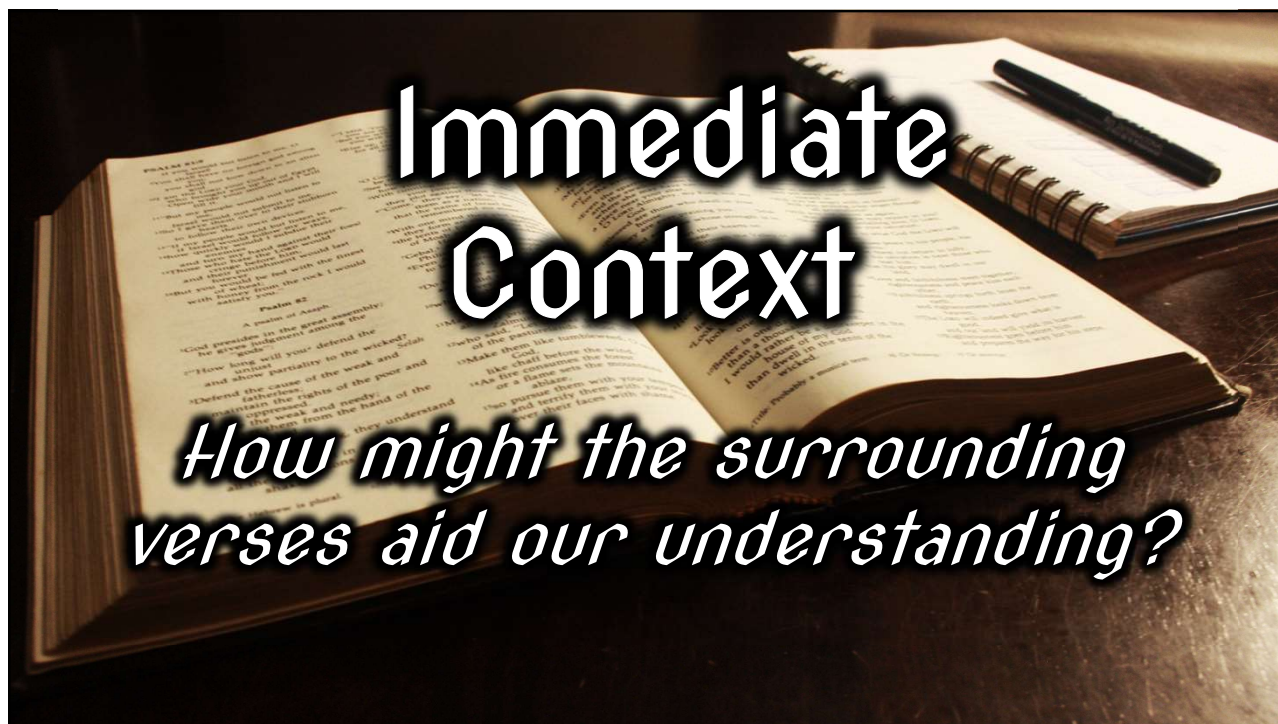
*What is the  
problem of  
moralizing texts?*

*What is the difference  
between Descriptive  
and prescriptive  
(normative) passages?*

*How are verses  
taken out-of-  
context?*

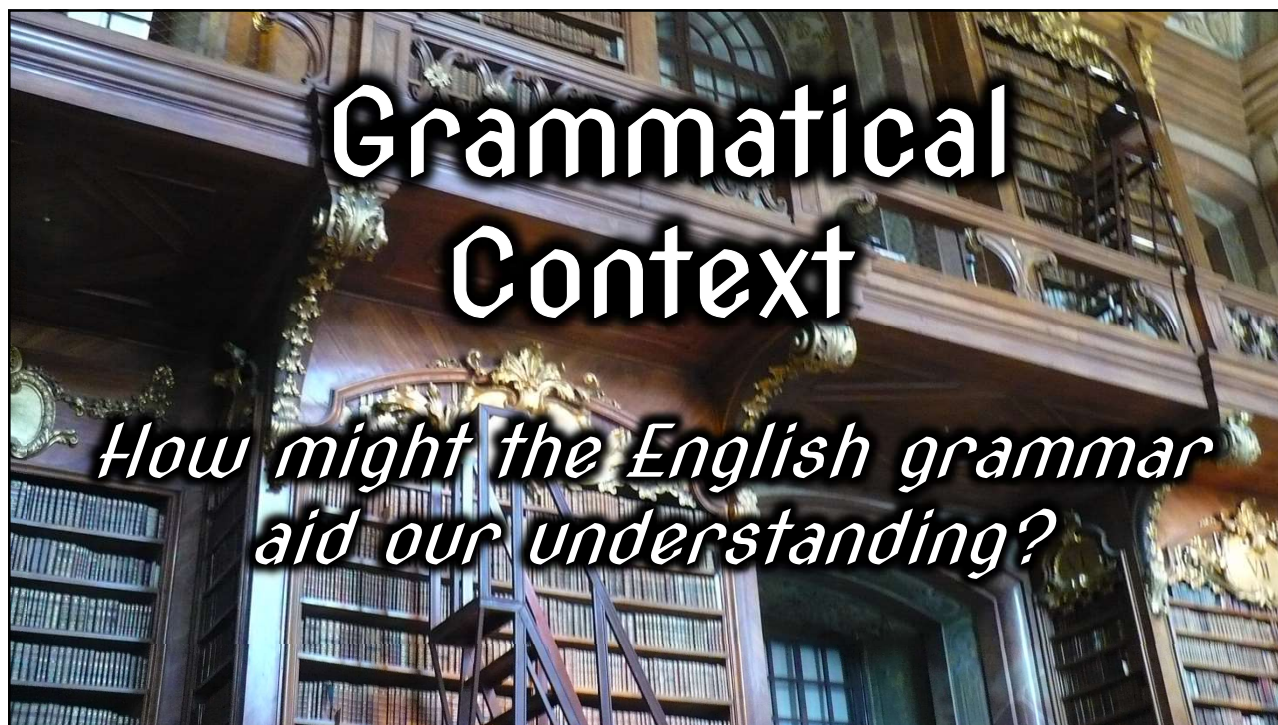


*Five Kinds of Contexts*



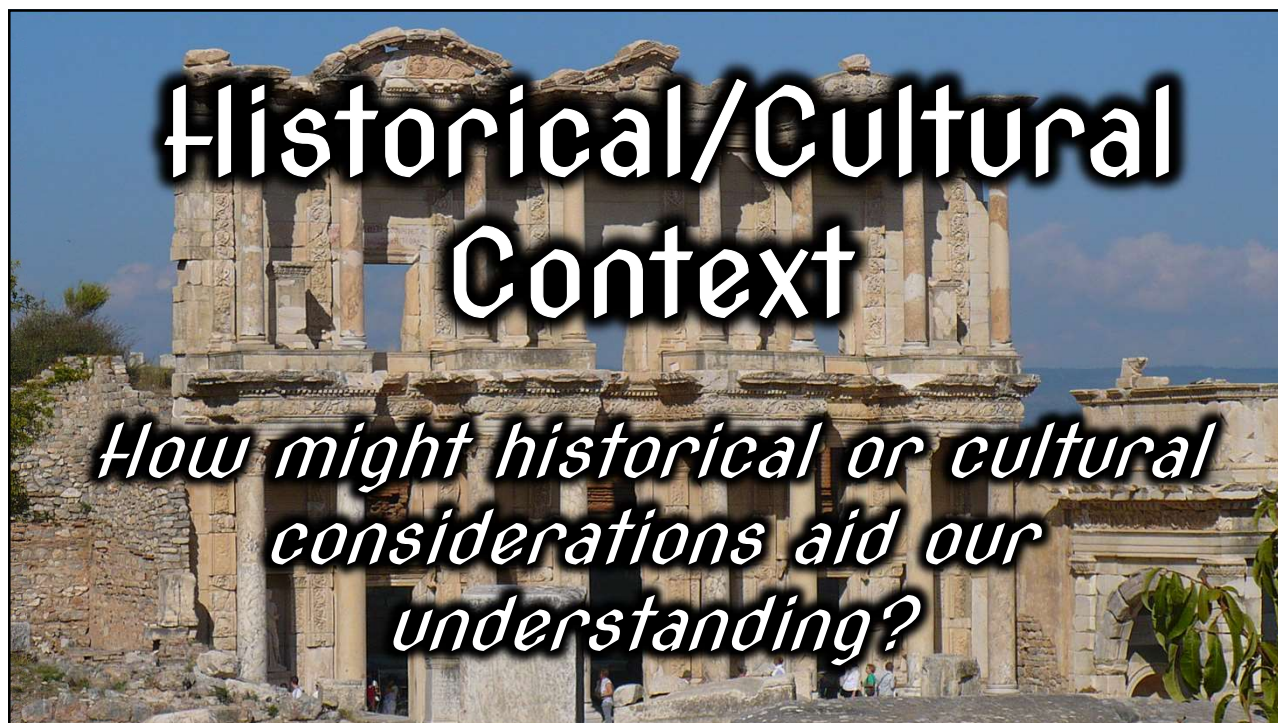
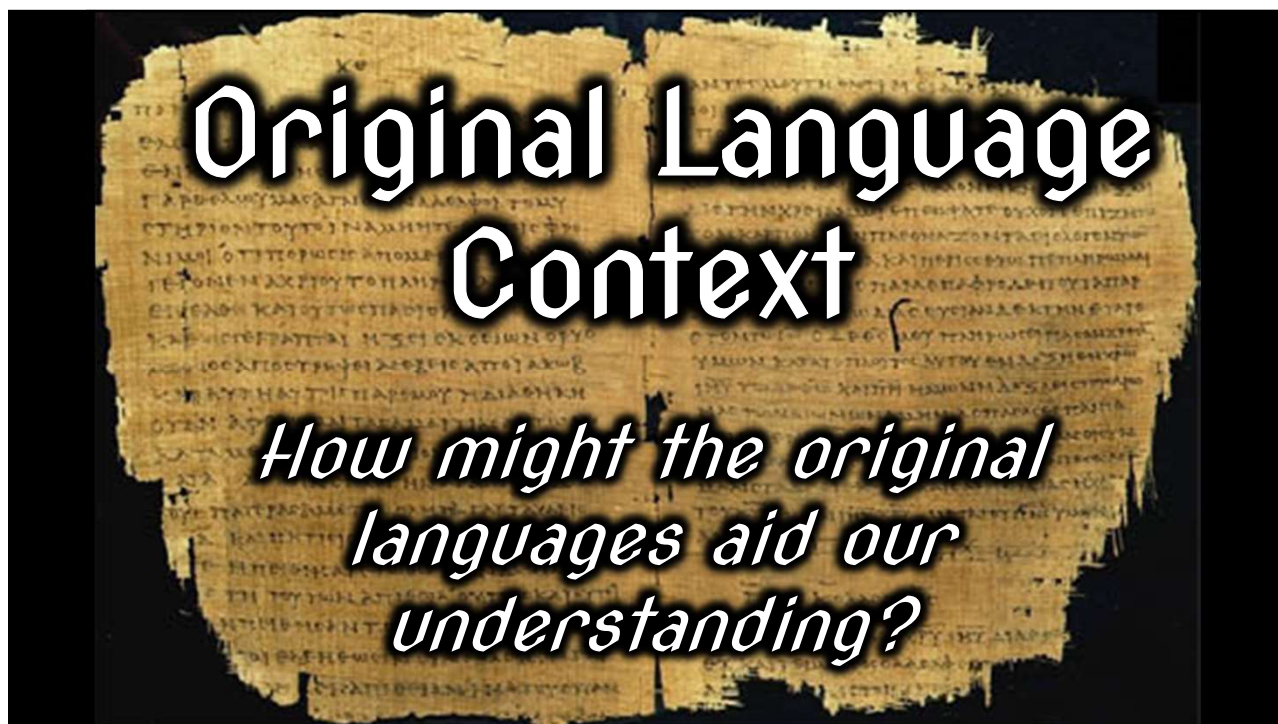
# Immediate Context

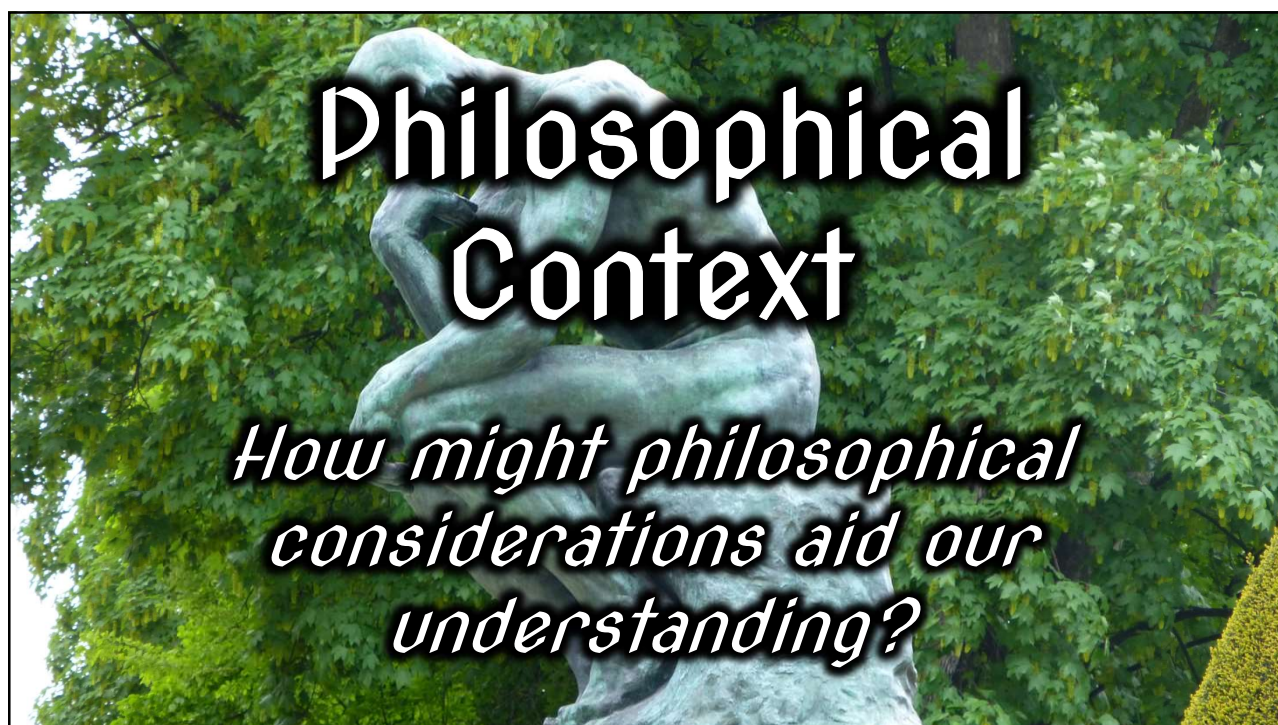
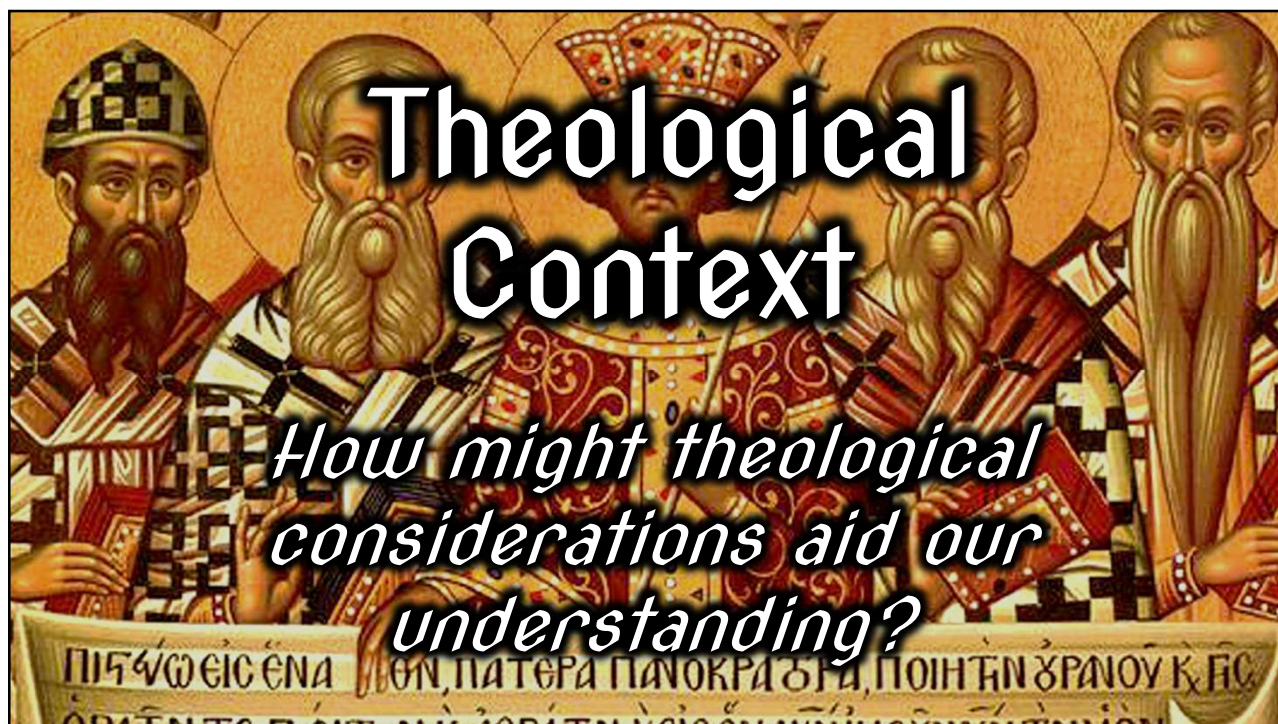
*How might the surrounding verses aid our understanding?*



# Grammatical Context

*How might the English grammar aid our understanding?*





## **Immediate Context**

*How might the surrounding verses aid our understanding?*

## **Grammatical Context**

*How might the English grammar aid our understanding?*

## **Original Language Context**

*How might the original languages aid our understanding?*

## **Historical/Cultural Context**

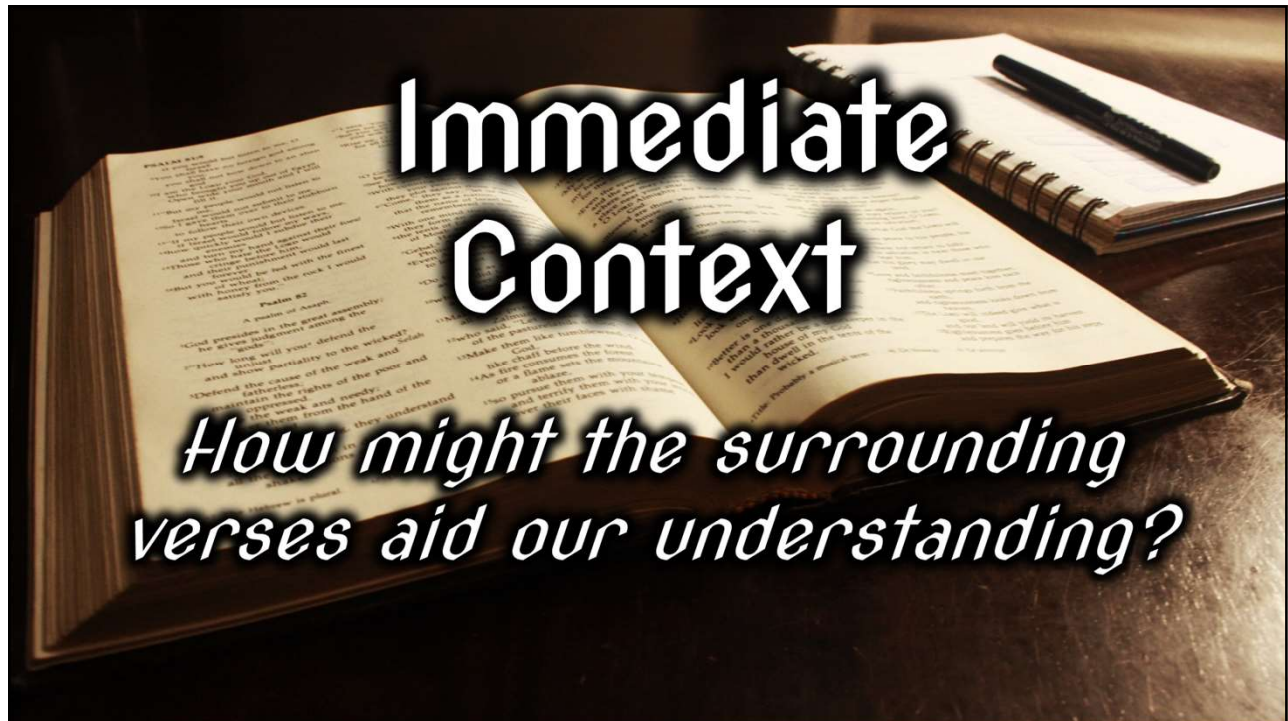
*How might historical or cultural considerations aid our understanding?*

## **Theological Context**

*How might theological considerations aid our understanding?*

## **Philosophical Context**

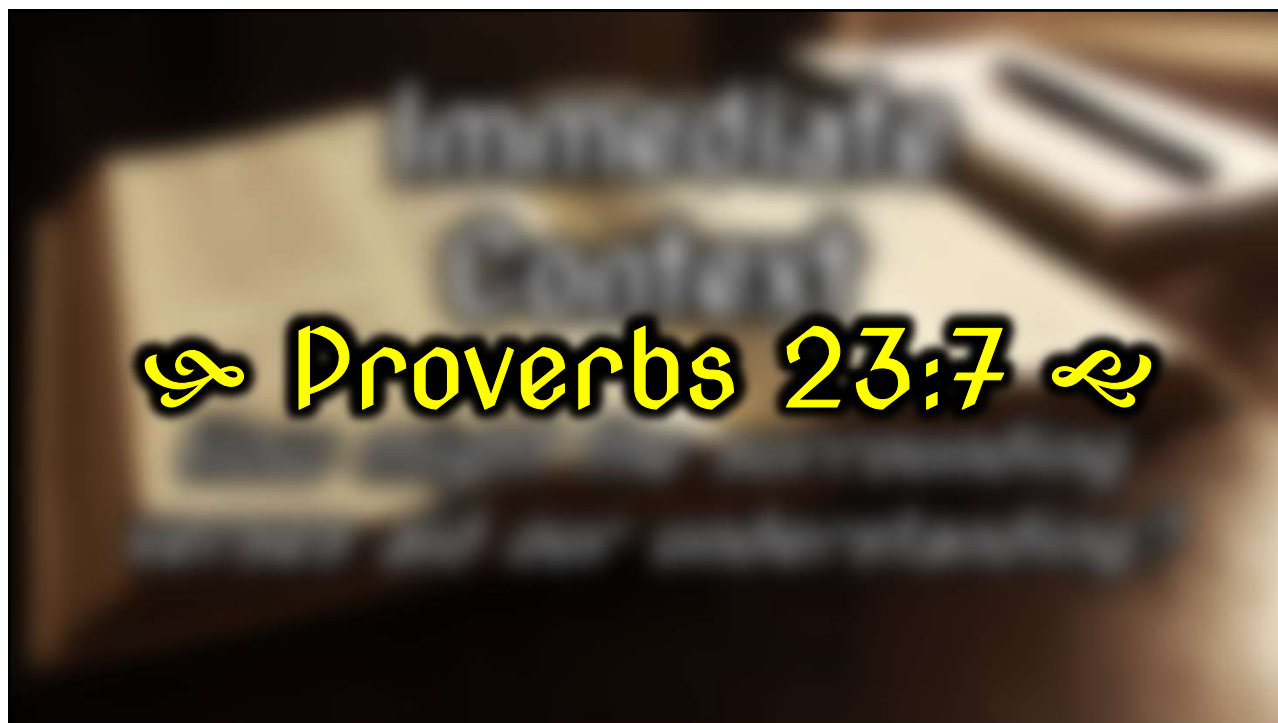
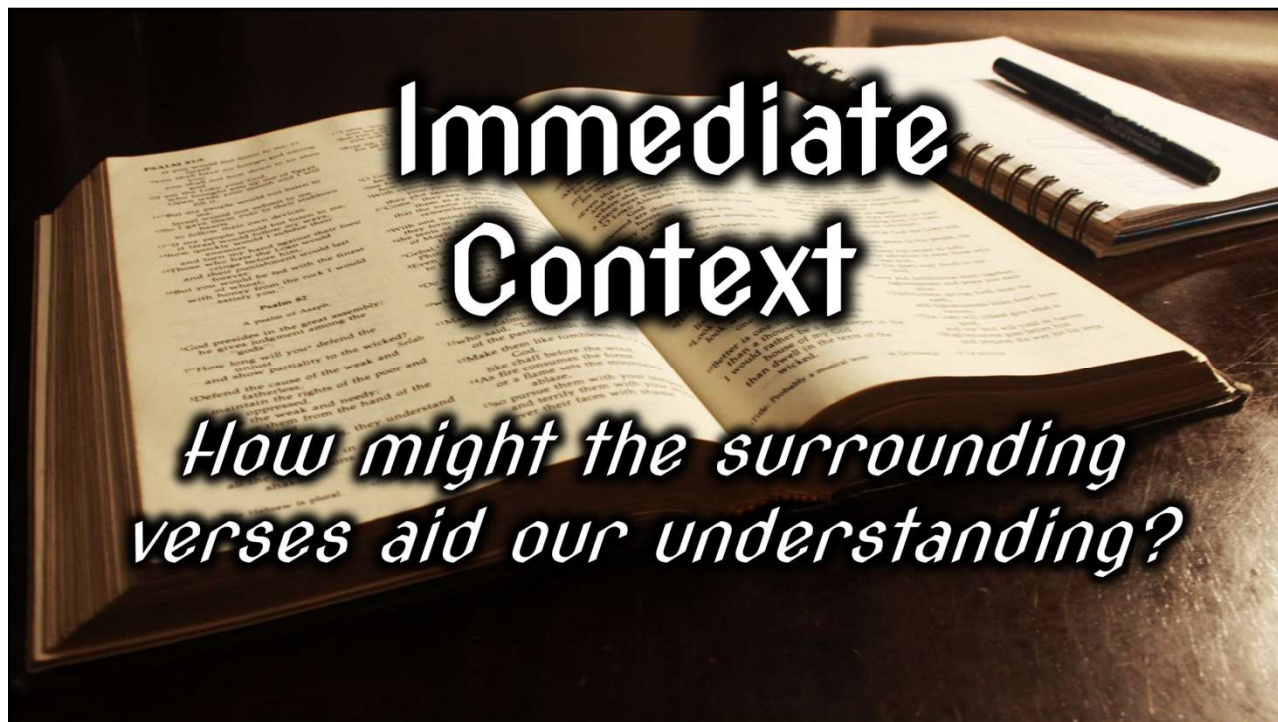
*How might philosophical considerations aid our understanding?*



## Isaiah 55:8-9

Isa 55:6-7 {6} Seek the LORD while He may be found,  
Call upon Him while He is near. {7} Let the **wicked**  
forsake **his way**, And the **unrighteous man**  
**his thoughts**; Let him return to the LORD, And He will  
have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will  
abundantly pardon. {8} "For **My thoughts** are not your  
thoughts, nor are your ways **My ways**," says **the**  
**LORD**. {9} "For as the heavens are higher than the  
earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My  
thoughts than your thoughts."



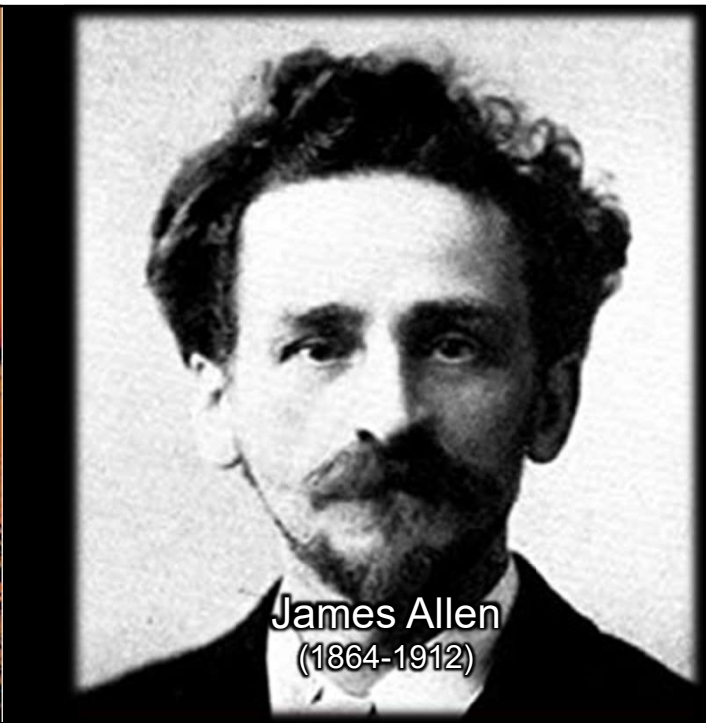
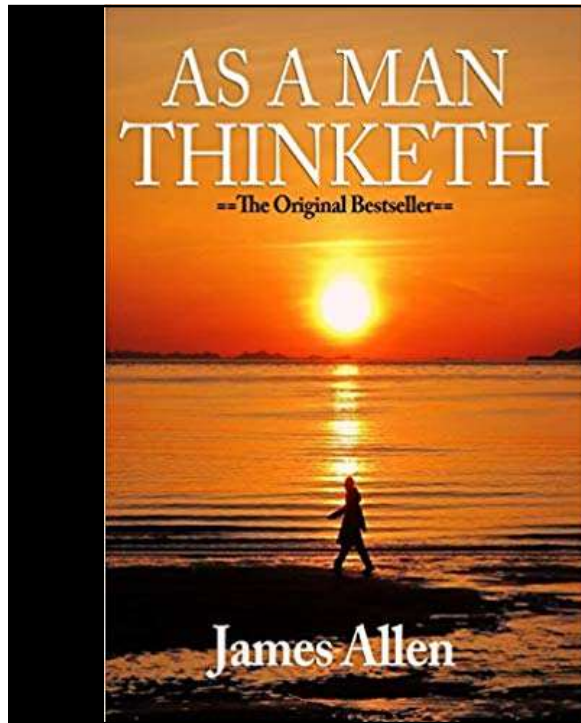


An open book is shown from a high angle, with a pen resting on the right page. The text is overlaid in white with a black outline.

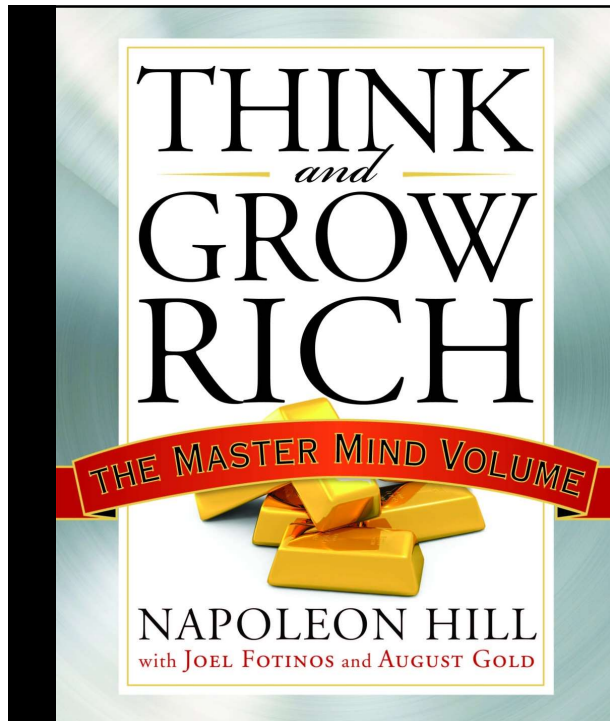
*"For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he."*

An open book is shown from a high angle, with a pen resting on the right page. The text is overlaid in white with a black outline.

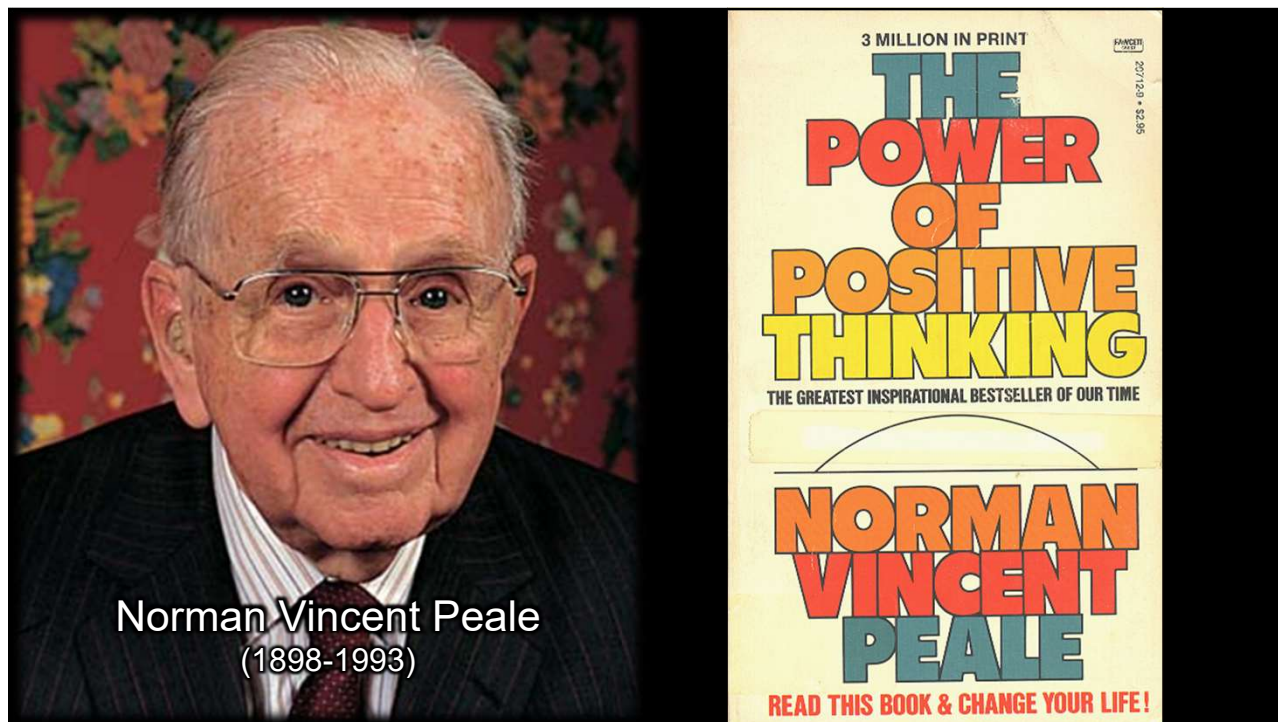
*"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."*



James Allen  
(1864-1912)



Napoleon Hill  
(1883-1970)



Norman Vincent Peale  
(1898-1993)

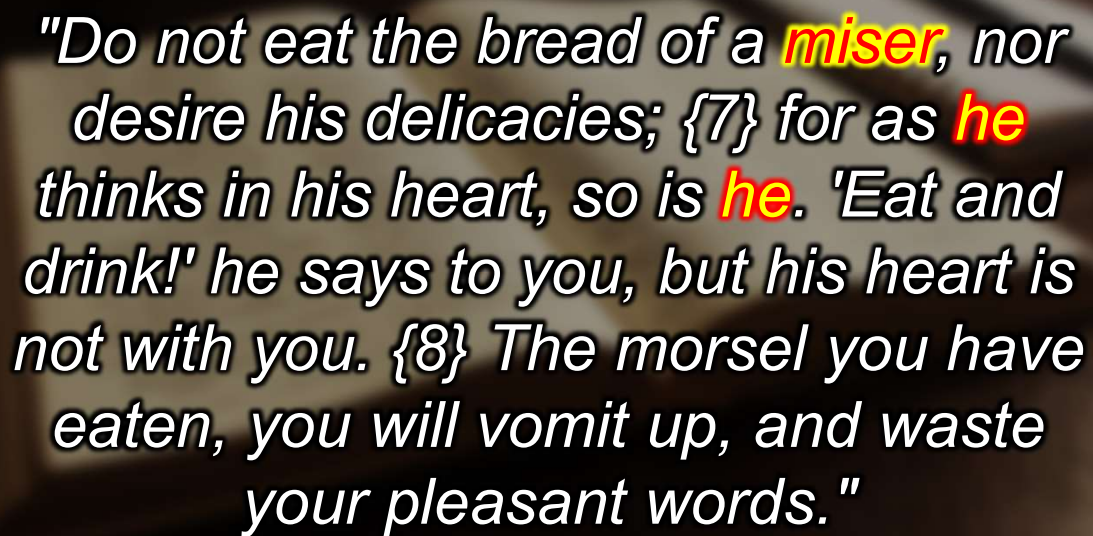


Howard Hendricks  
(1924-2013)

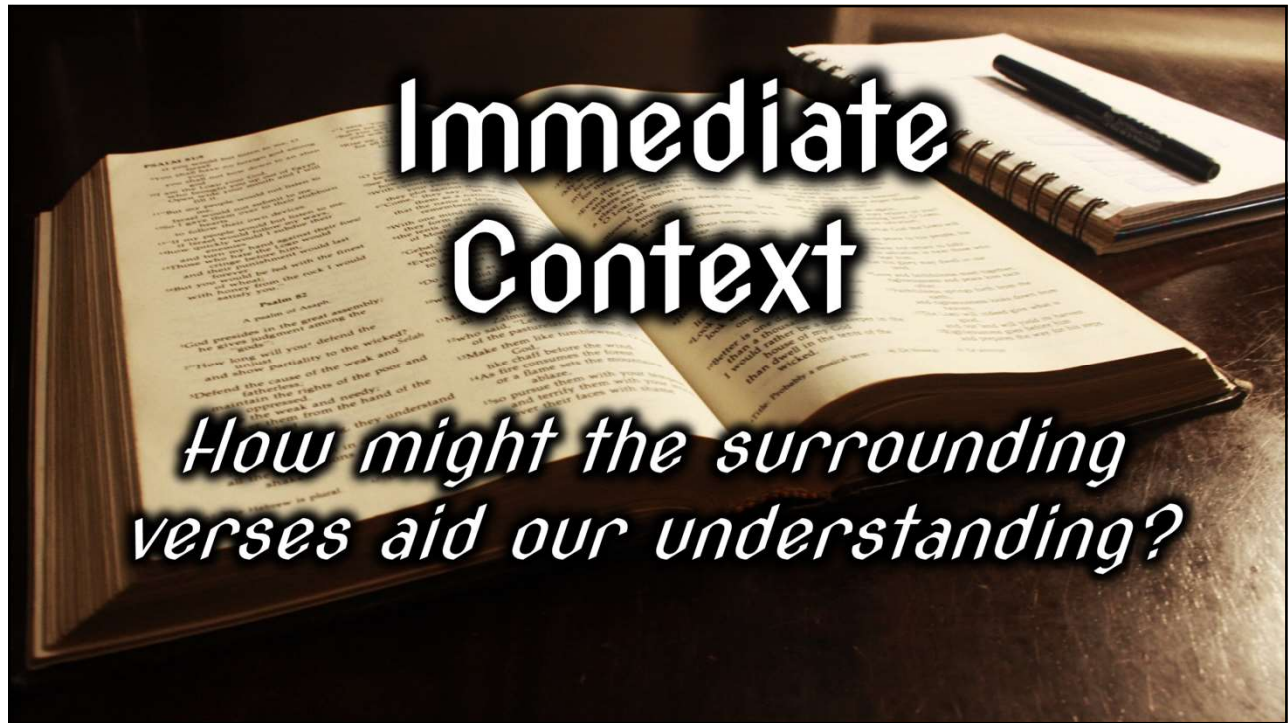
***"I find Paul  
appealing and  
Peale  
appalling."***



*"For as **he** thinks in his heart, so is **he**."*



*"Do not eat the bread of a **miser**, nor desire his delicacies; {7} for as **he** thinks in his heart, so is **he**. 'Eat and drink!' he says to you, but his heart is not with you. {8} The morsel you have eaten, you will vomit up, and waste your pleasant words."*



## ✧ Matthew 18:20 ✧

*"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."*

*"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. {16} But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that **'BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.'** {17} And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. {18} Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. {19} Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. {20} For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."*

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# Immediate Context

*How might the surrounding verses aid our understanding?*





✧ Jeremiah 29:11 ✧

*"For I know the thoughts that I think toward  
**you**, says the LORD, thoughts of peace  
and not of evil, to give **you** a future  
and a hope."*

*"I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you ..."* (v. 14)

❖ *"I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive. (v. 14)*

## Jeremiah 29:16-19

*"Therefore thus says the LORD ... concerning your brethren who have not gone out with you into captivity {17} ... I will send on them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like rotten figs that cannot be eaten, they are so bad. {18} And I will pursue them with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence; and I will deliver them to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth—to be a curse, an astonishment, a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them, {19} because they have not heeded My words, says the LORD, which I sent to them by My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; neither would you heed, says the LORD."*



## ☞ Jeremiah 29:11 ☞

*"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*



## ☞ Jeremiah 29:11 ☞

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## ✧ Jeremiah 29:20 ✧

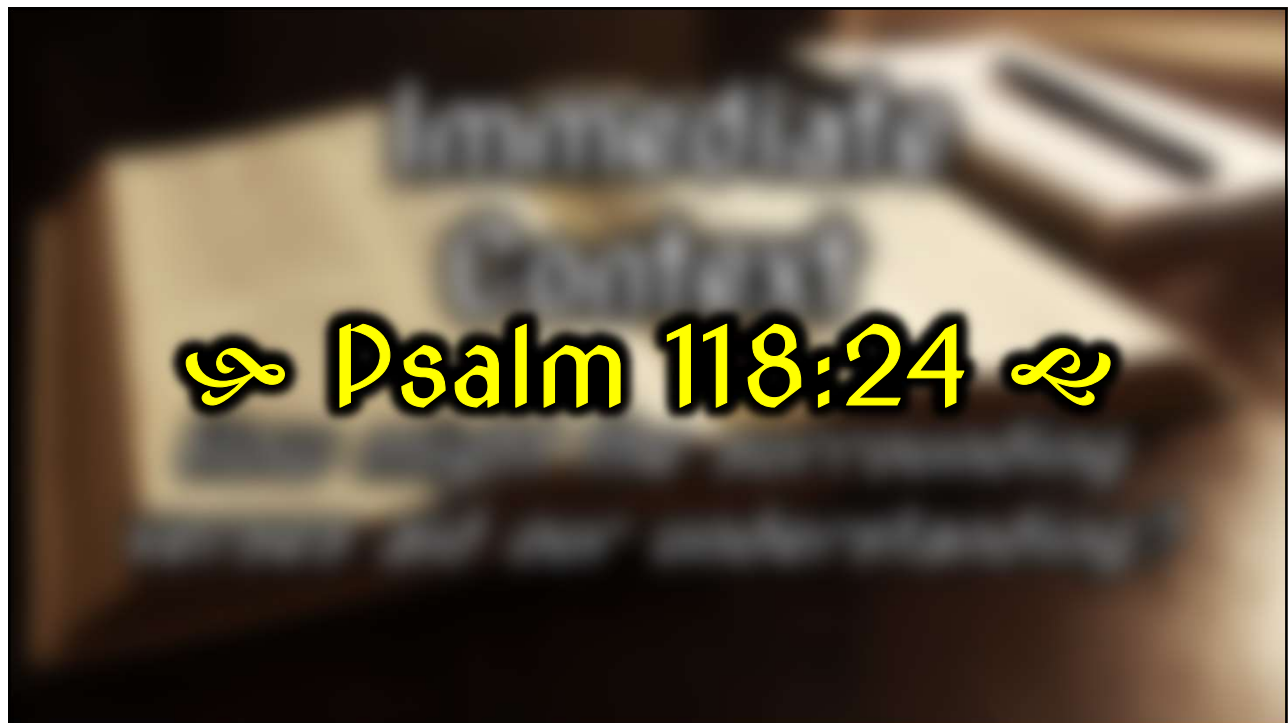
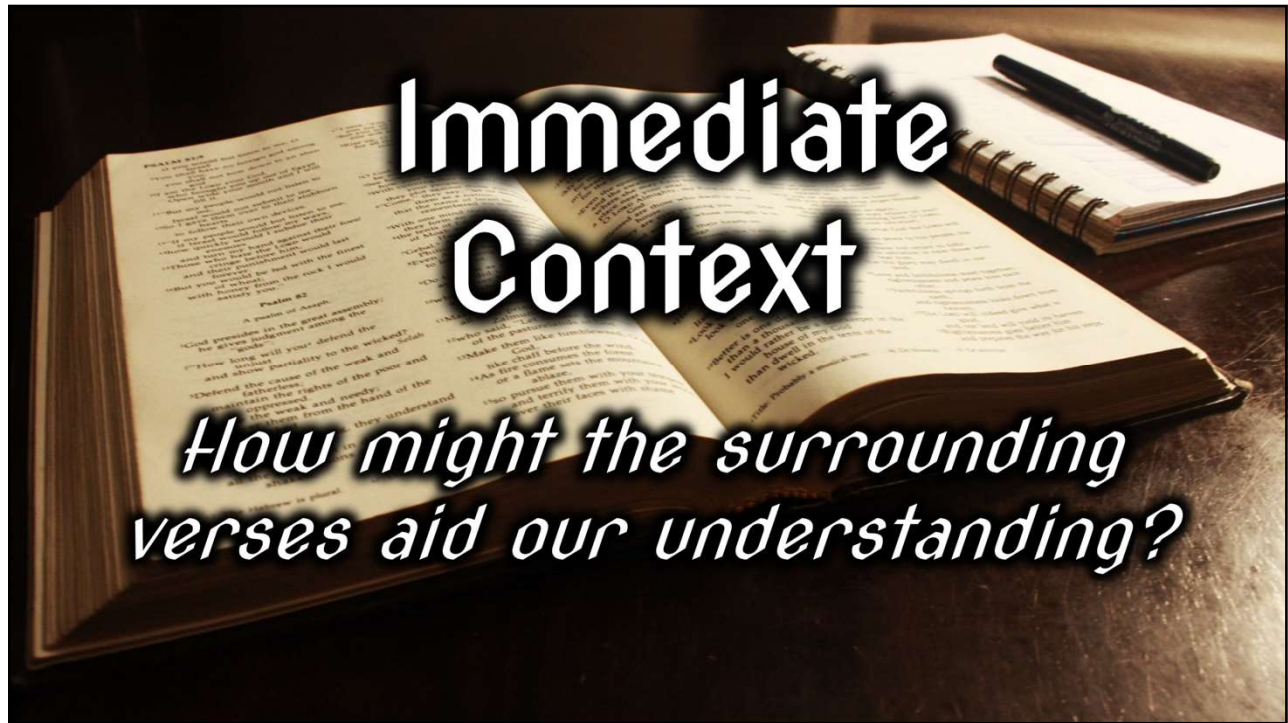
*"Therefore hear the word of the LORD, all you of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon."*

## ✧ Jeremiah 29:11 ✧

*"For I know the thoughts that I think toward **you**, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*

## ✧ Jeremiah 29:20 ✧

*"Therefore hear the word of the LORD, all **you of the captivity**, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon."*

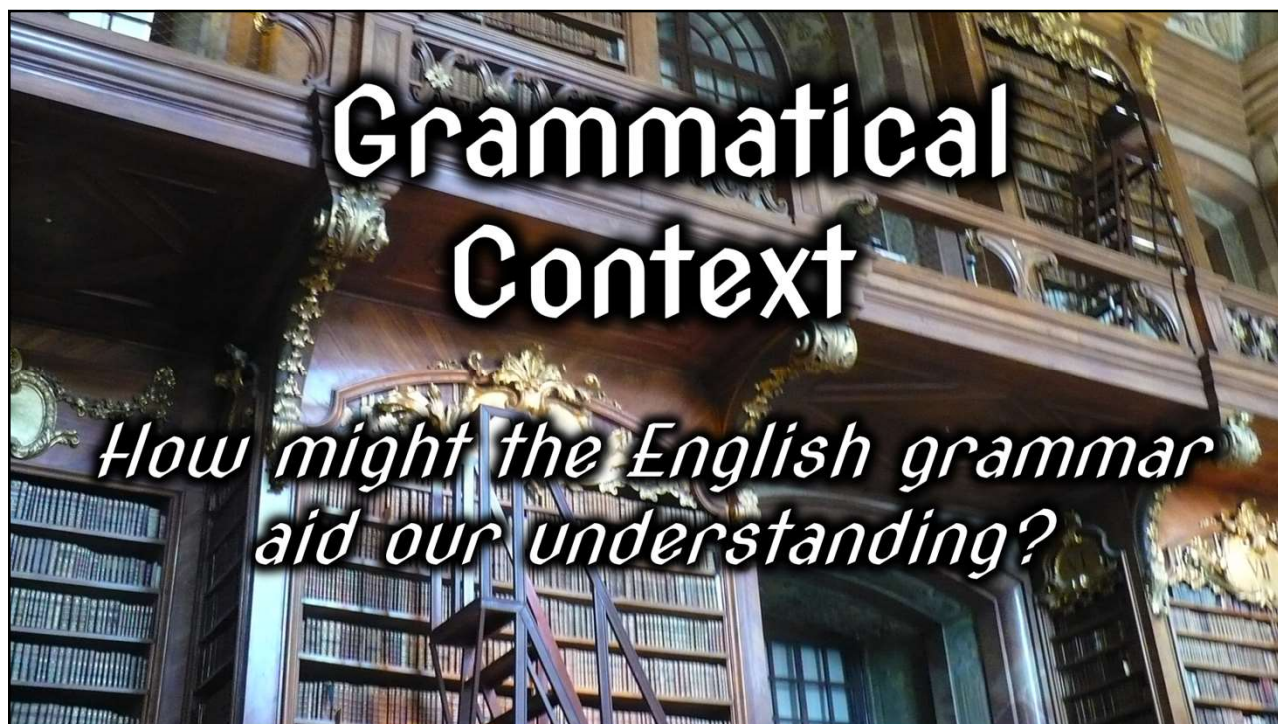


## 🌀 Psalm 118:24 🌀

*"This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it."*

## 🌀 Psalm 118:24 🌀

*{22} The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. {23} This was the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. {24} "This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it."*



# Grammatical Context

*How might the English grammar  
aid our understanding?*



∞ Romans 8:16 ∞

## ✧ Romans 8:16 ✧

*"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,"*

## ✧ Romans 8:16 ✧

*"The Spirit Himself bears witness **with** our spirit that we are children of God,"*

***What's the difference between these?***

*I sang a song **with** my wife.*

*I sang a song **to** my wife*



Deut. 17:6: *"Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of **two or three witnesses**; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness."*

Deut. 19:15: "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of **two or three witnesses** the matter shall be established.

Matt. 18:16: But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'BY THE MOUTH OF **TWO OR THREE WITNESSES** EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.'

2 Cor. 13:1: This will be the third time I am coming to you. "BY THE MOUTH OF **TWO OR THREE WITNESSES** EVERY WORD SHALL BE ESTABLISHED."

1 Tim. 5:19: Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from **two or three witnesses**.

Heb. 10:28: Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of **two or three witnesses**.

## Original Language Context

*How might the original languages aid our understanding?*

Original Language  
Context

∞ 2 Timothy 2:15 ∞

∞ 2 Timothy 2:15 ∞

*"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (KJV)*

## spoudason (σπούδασον)

### Study

- ❖ 2 person plural, aorist imperative of spoudadzō (σπούδαζω)
- ❖ meaning "be zealous or eager, take pains, make every effort"
- ❖ followed by the infinitive parastāsai (παραστήσαι)
- ❖ meaning "to present," in the sense of making or rendering oneself.

Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilber Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), s.v. σπούδαζω, παραστήσαι.

**Eph. 4:1-3:** "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, {2} with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, {3} endeavoring [**spoudadzontes**] to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**1 Thess. 2:17:** But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored [**espoudasamen**] more eagerly to see your face with great desire.

**2 Tim 4:9:** Be diligent [**spoudason**] to come to me quickly;

**Titus 3:12:** When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent [**spoudason**] to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

**Heb. 4:11:** Let us therefore be diligent [**spoudasōmen**] to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

NKJV: *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God ..."*

NASB: *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God ..."*

NIV: *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved ..."*

RSV: *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved ..."*



# Historical/Cultural Context

*How might historical or cultural considerations aid our understanding?*

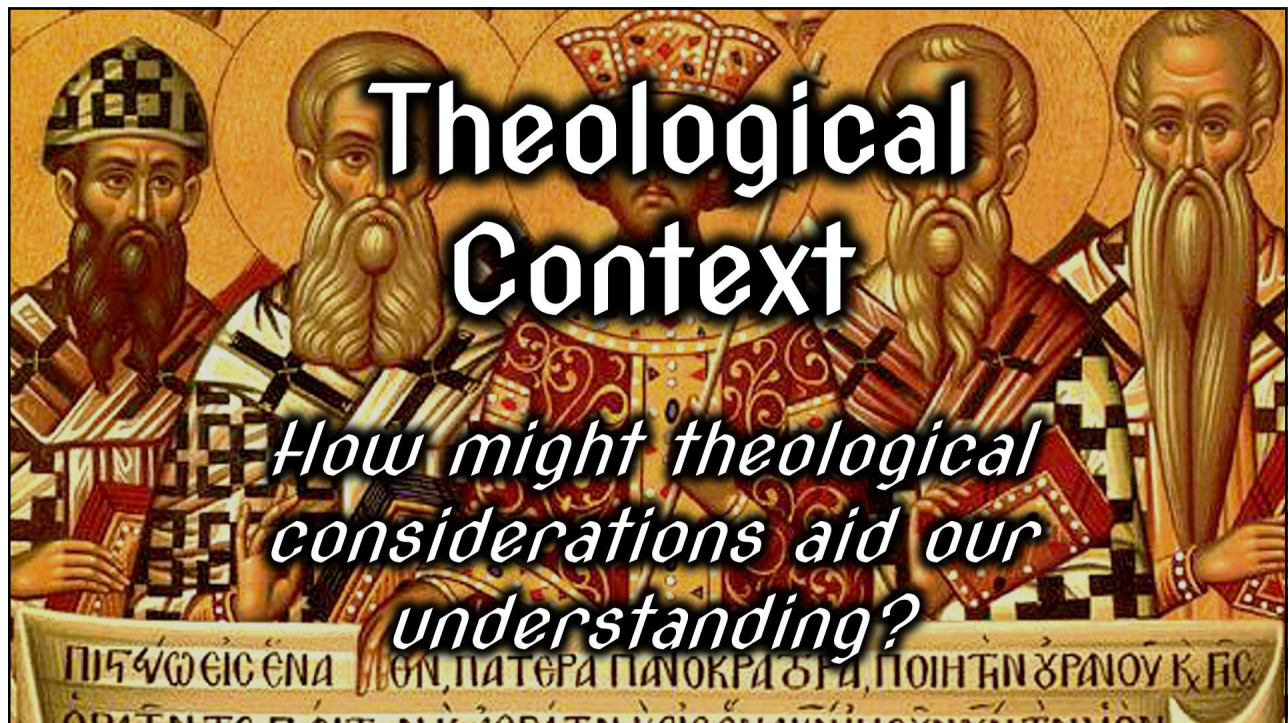
## ∞ Revelation 3:15-16 ∞

## ∞ Revelation 3:15-16 ∞

*"I know your works, that you are **neither cold nor hot**. **I could wish you were cold or hot**. {16} So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth."*

## ∞ Revelation 3:15-16 ∞

*"I know your works, that you are neither **cold** nor **hot**. I could wish you were cold or hot. {16} So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth."*



## Malachi 3:8-10

## Malachi 3:8-10

*"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. {9} You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. {10} Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it."*



## **Out of Context**

***Christians generally think of the tithe as 10% of their income and "worry" whether it should be 10% of the gross or the net.***

## **Context**

***There was more than one tithe in the Old Testament, together amounting closer to 30 to 35%.***

***"So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."***

***2 Cor. 9:7***

## **Out of Context**

***Just as the Jews, in withholding the tithe, were robbing "the whole nation," Christians who don't tithe are robbing their church.***

## **Context**

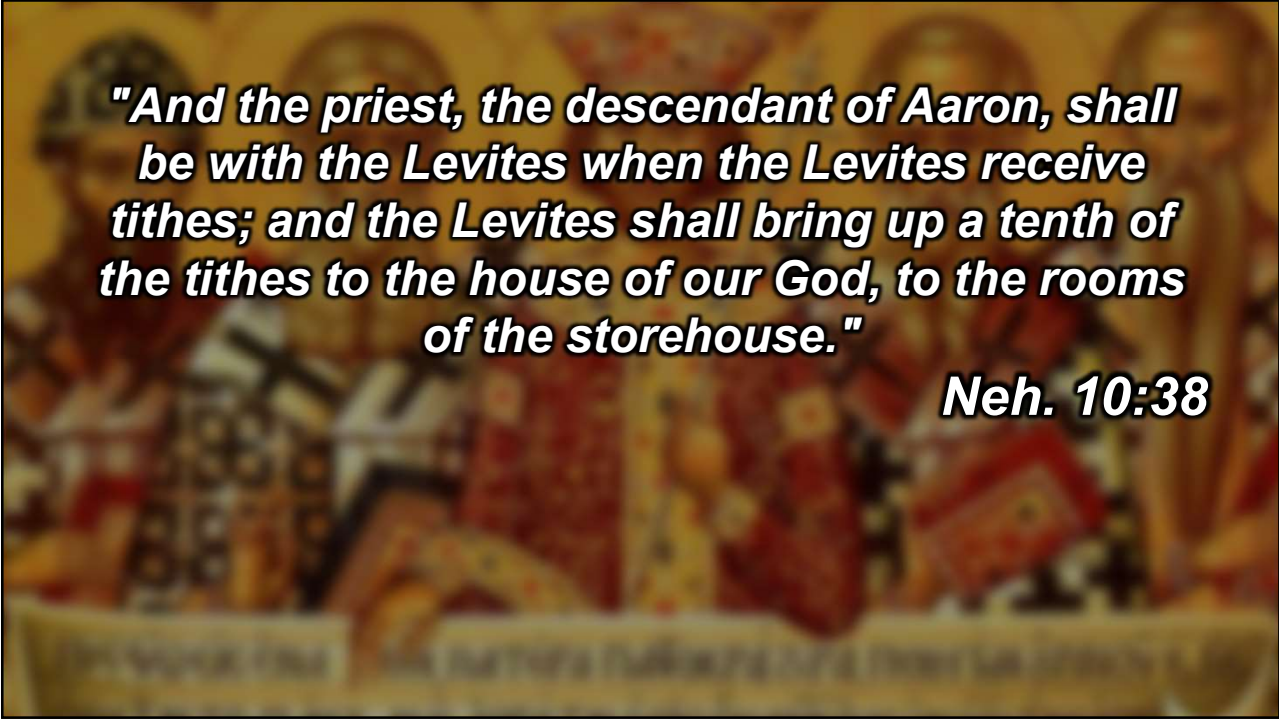
***In the New Testament, believers in this world are not a nation. Our citizenship is in heaven.***

***"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, {21} who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."***

***Phil. 3:20-21***

## **Out of Context**

***Just as tithing in the Old Testament was brought to the storehouse, so we should bring our tithe to our church.***



***"And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the rooms of the storehouse."***

***Neh. 10:38***

***"And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the rooms of the storehouse."***

***Neh. 10:38***

***"Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the storehouse."***

***Neh. 13:12***

## **Out of Context**

***Just as tithing in the Old Testament was brought to the storehouse, so we should bring our tithe to our church.***

## **Context**

***In the New Testament, the local church IS NOT a storehouse.***

## **Out of Context**

***Tithing in the Old Testament was for the support of the Levite priesthood, so we should tithe to support our pastoral staff.***

## **Context**

***In the New Testament, there is no priesthood governing the believer. Instead, every believer is a priest.***

***"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;"***

***1 Pet. 2:9***



# Philosophical Context

*How might philosophical  
considerations aid our  
understanding?*

☞ Genesis 3:8 ☞

## ✧ Genesis 3:8 ✧

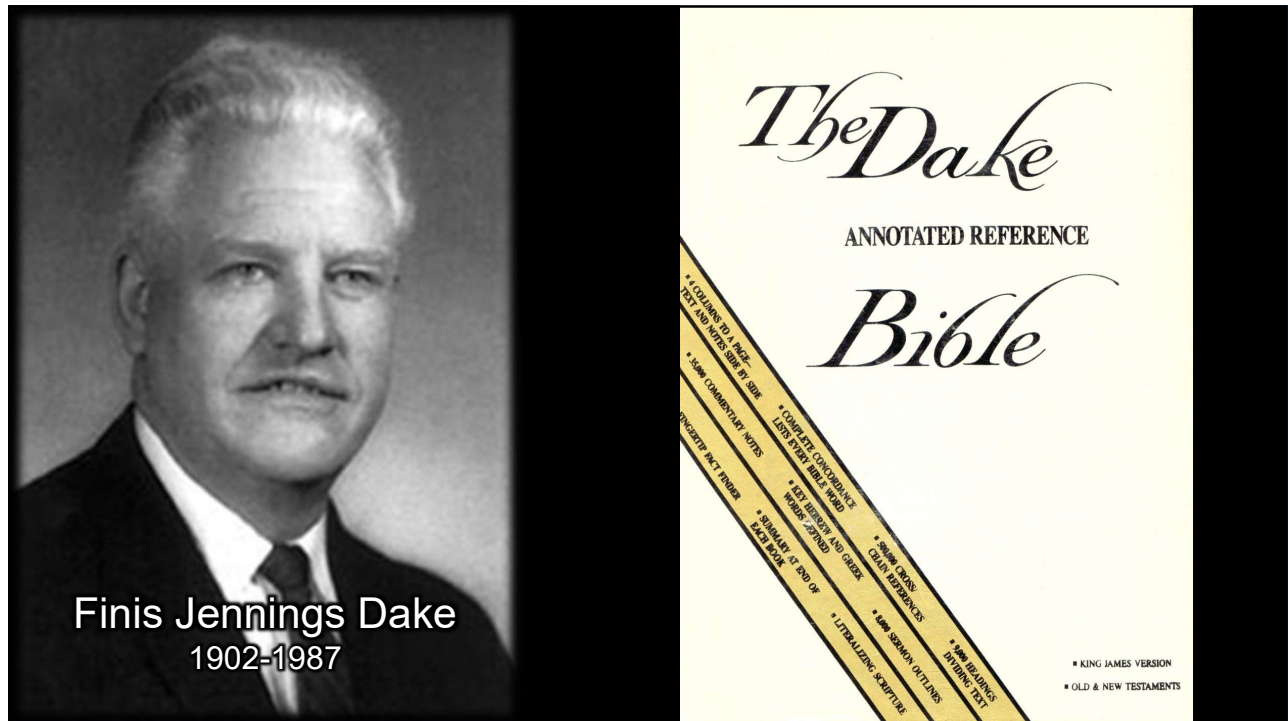
*And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*

## ✧ 2 Samuel 7:1-7 ✧

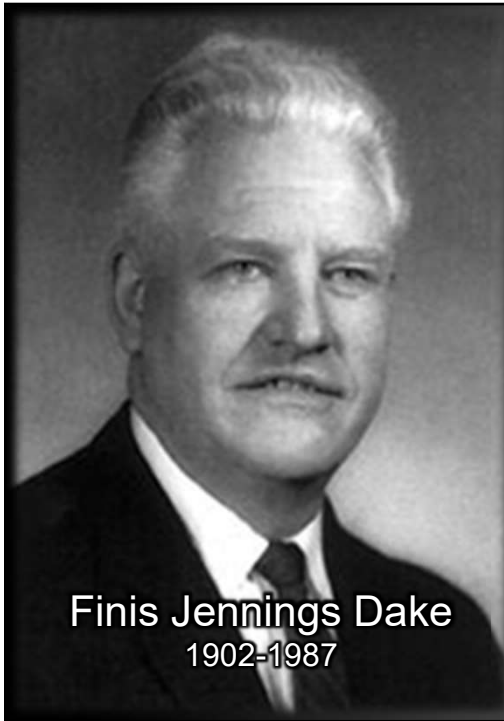
*Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, {2} that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains." {3} Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you." {4} But it happened that night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, {5} "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? {6} For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. {7} Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?' " "*

# Psalm 91:4

*He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.*

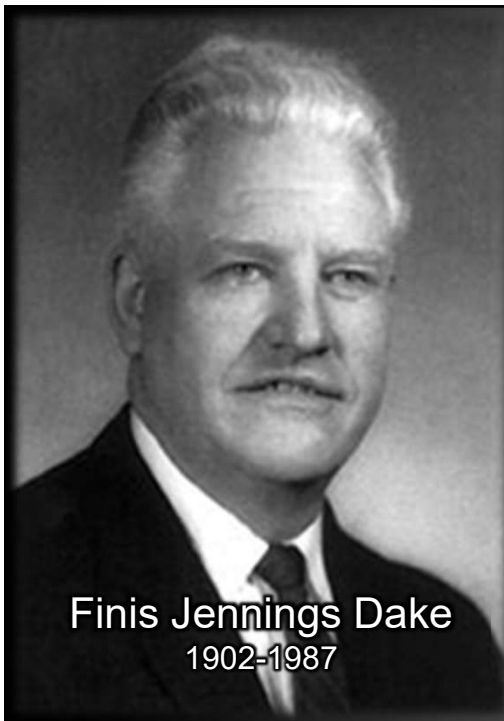






"God has a personal spirit body (Dan. 7:9-14; 10:5-19); shape (Jn. 5:37); form (Phil. 2:5-7); image and likeness of a man (Gen. 1:26; 9:6; Ezek. 1:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:7; Jas. 3:9). He has bodily parts such as, back parts (Ex. 33:23), heart (Gen. 6:6; 8:21), hands and fingers (Ps. 8:3-6; Heb. 1:10; Rev. 5:1-7), mouth (Num. 12:8), lips and tongue (Isa. 30:27), feet (Ezek. 1:27; Ex. 24:10), eyes (Ps. 11:4; 18:24; 33:18), ears (Ps. 18:6), hair, head, face, arms (Dan. 7:9-14; 10:5-19; Rev. 5:1-7; 22:4-6), and other bodily parts."

Dake, NT, p. 97.

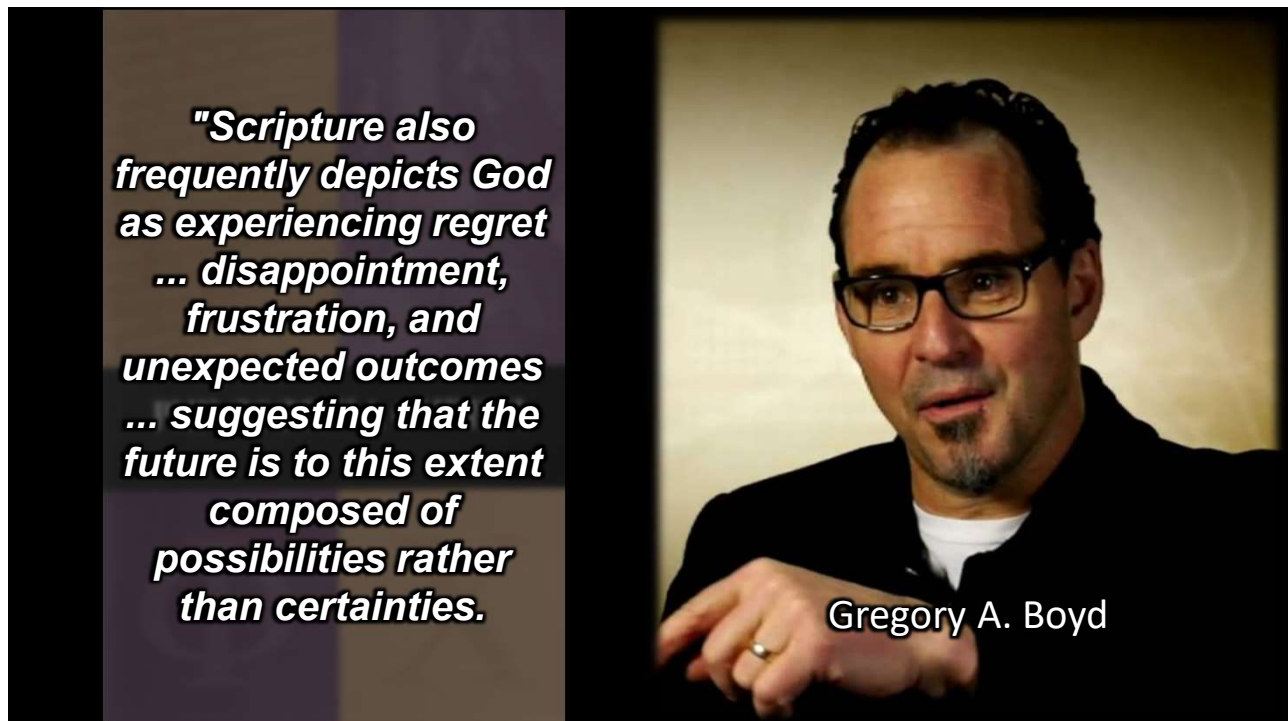


(Dan. 7:9-14; 10:5-19) (Jn. 5:37)  
(Phil. 2:5-7)  
(Gen. 1:26; 9:6; Ezek. 1:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:7; Jas. 3:9)  
(Ex. 33:23) (Gen. 6:6; 8:21) (Ps. 8:3-6; Heb. 1:10; Rev. 5:1-7) (Num. 12:8) (Isa. 30:27)  
(Ezek. 1:27; Ex. 24:10) (Ps. 11:4; 18:24; 33:18) (Ps. 18:6)  
(Dan. 7:9-14; 10:5-19; Rev. 5:1-7; 22:4-6)



PHILOSOPHIA CHRISTI

Gregory A. Boyd



*"Scripture also frequently depicts God as experiencing regret ... disappointment, frustration, and unexpected outcomes ... suggesting that the future is to this extent composed of possibilities rather than certainties."*

Gregory A. Boyd

***"It is, I submit, more difficult to conceive of God experiencing such things if the future is exhaustively settled in his mind than if it is in part composed of possibilities."***

[Gregory A. Boyd, "Neo-Molinism and the Infinite Intelligence of God," *Philosophia Christi* 5, No. 1, (2003):192]

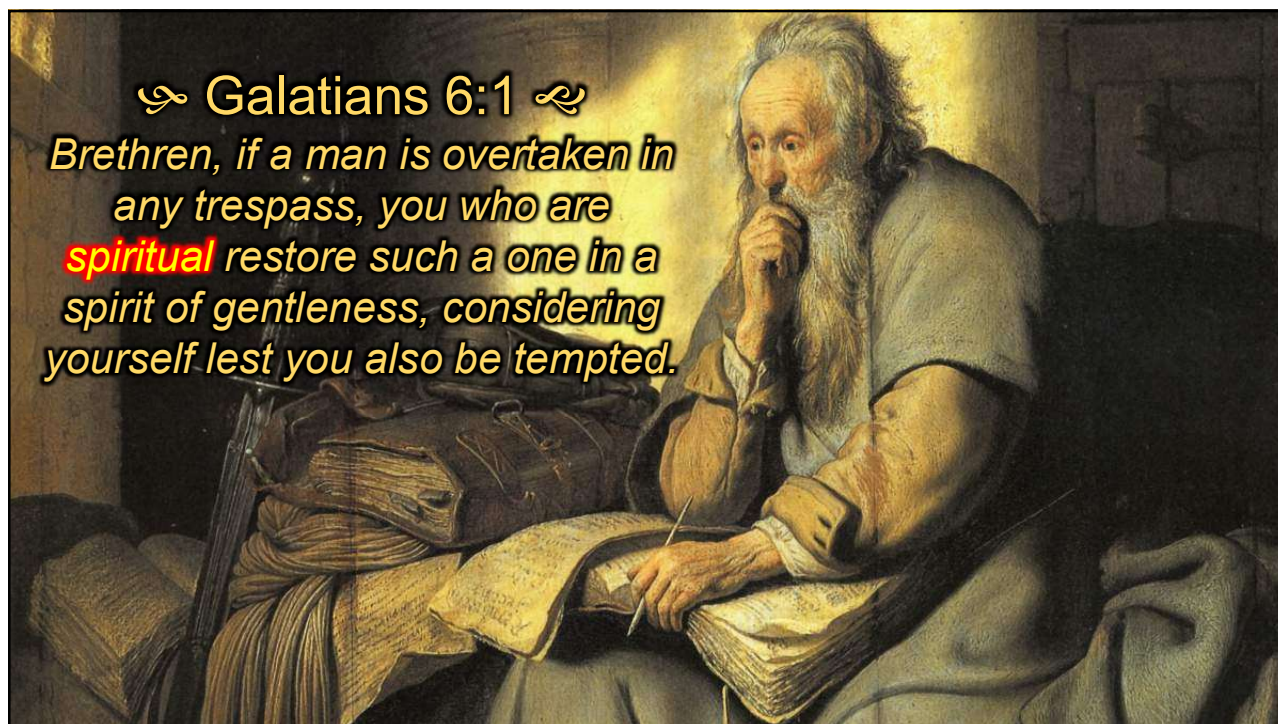


Gregory A. Boyd

**"And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,**

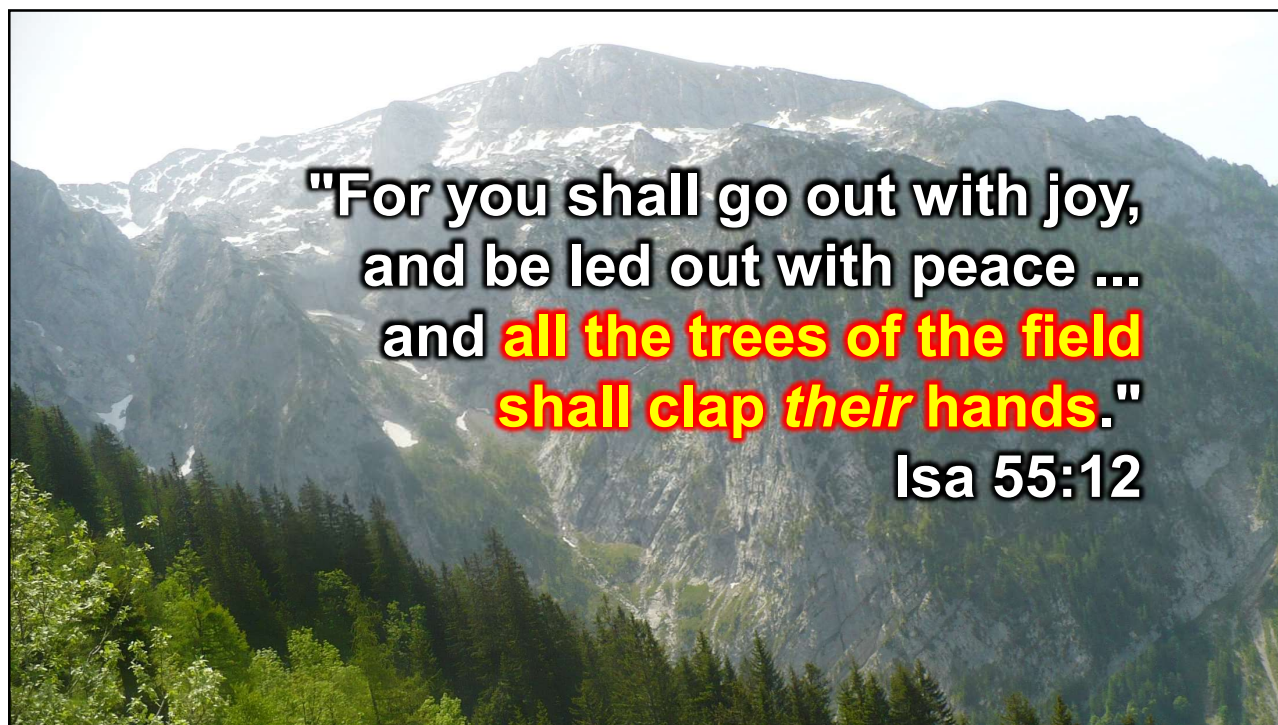
**and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden." Gen. 3:8**

**"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."  
John 4:24**



✧ Galatians 6:1 ✧

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are **spiritual** restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*



**"For you shall go out with joy,  
and be led out with peace ...  
and **all the trees of the field**  
**shall clap their hands.**"**

**Isa 55:12**

***"For since the creation  
of the world His  
invisible attributes are  
clearly seen, **being  
understood by the  
things that are made,**  
even His eternal power  
and Godhead ..."***

**Rom. 1:20a**

