

Jean Ross: Good morning, friends, and welcome to "Sabbath School Study Hour," coming to you here from the Amazing Facts' studio offices in Sacramento, California. We'd like to welcome all of those joining us across the country and around the world, part of our extended Sabbath School class. And a special greeting to our regular Granite Bay Church members that usually come and attend our Sabbath school in person, but because of the virus pandemic, they aren't able to be here. We know you are tuning in, and we pray that you'll be blessed as we study our lesson together.

Now, we want to let those of you who are joining us know about our free offer today. And I believe this is the first time we're offering this. This is something new to "Amazing Facts," it is a study guide to help you in your Bible reading plan. And we'd be happy to send this to anyone who calls and asks. The number is 866-788-3966, and ask for offer number 872, and we'll be happy to send this to you. You'll receive this in the mail, and it'll actually show you what the reading plan is for the entire year. So, you can keep this in your Bible, you can open it up, you can see what day you're on and what passage of the Scripture you need to read. And if you follow this guide, you'll read through the whole Bible in 12 months or one year. So, this is a great resource, and we hope you'll take advantage of that.

Today, our lesson dealing with the Bible is lesson number seven, and it's entitled "Language, Text, and Context," a very important study. But Pastor Doug, before we get to our study, let's start with prayer.

Doug Batchelor: Amen.

Jean: Dear Father, once again, we thank You that we're able to gather together and open up Your Word studying about the Word. And Father, we know there is power in the Bible. But in order for us to correctly understand the Bible, we always want the Holy Spirit to come and guide our minds, our hearts, so we invite Your presence in a special way. Be with us here in the studio and also be with those who are joining us around the world, that You might also speak to their hearts as we open up Your Word, for we ask this in Jesus's name, amen.

Doug: Amen.

Jean: Well, Pastor Doug, an important and an exciting lesson, we're talking about languages and context when studying the Bible.

Doug: Yeah, this is--it's really so exciting to consider. The main theme is, how do we understand the Bible? If the Bible is the message of God to us, clearly there are some misunderstandings out there because you've got one Bible, the Bible says one Lord, one truth, one baptism, there's one Jesus. And yet you have hundreds of major denominations that say they're Christian, they'll read the passages and they come up with different ideas. Why does that happen?

Jean: Well, you know, I think one of the key things that's brought to view is context. We need to recognize that the Bible is written in a particular context, and we need to see what the Bible says about a particular subject through its entirety. We don't want to build a doctrine on just one verse. And that sort of leads into our memory text that we're going to be talking about, Deuteronomy chapter 31, verse 26. And this is coming from the New King James version, it says, "Take the book of the law and put it beside the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it might there be a witness against you."

Now, a little bit of the context, this is God speaking to Moses when Moses was instructed to build the tabernacle. And the most holy place of the sanctuary or the tabernacle contained the Ark of the Covenant. And there were some things that were put in the ark, and then there things that were put next to the ark. The things in the ark, you got the Ten Commandments written on two tables of stone. We've got the rod that budded, Aaron's rod. We've got a bowl of manna inside the ark. But on the outside of the ark in sort of a--you might say a little bag or a pocket of some kind was the law. And when it talks about the law, Pastor Doug, we're not just talking about the Ten Commandments here. When it says, "Put the law next to the ark," what is that law?

Doug: Well, some have wondered, "Was this just the book of Deuteronomy?" that actually where you find this verse. And we do have that story in where Josiah during the--Hilkiah the priest was cleaning out the sanctuary and they found the book of Moses, the book of the law. They wondered, was this the book of Deuteronomy? Did it include the whole Torah, the five books of Moses beginning with Genesis? It's hard to say. In both cases, the quotes that were taken were from Deuteronomy, and so it may have been that specifically Deuteronomy, which was the repeating of the law, the summary of their experience, that was to be put there as a witness against them. Paul refers that in Colossians too, when he said, "There was a law that was nailed to the cross that was witnessed against them." And—

Jean: I think it also--Paul says handwritten oracles.

Doug: Yeah.

Jean: So, it was handwritten, it didn't include the Ten Commandments, which was God written.

Doug: And that was in the ark, the handwritten part that contained the levitical laws and the ordinances was in a pocket outside the ark. But yeah, and so, you know, it's so important for us to understand how to approach the Bible. God wants the truth to be understood. I think one reason there's so much misunderstanding is because the truth of God's Word sets people free. And so, if there is any document that the devil is seeking to confuse and confound, it is the Scriptures. And so, the devil's got so many people out there that are wolves.

You know, Paul said, "Be careful because after my departure, grievous wolves will come in among you." And that they'd be teaching things to draw away disciples after themselves. And we've seen a lot of the misinterpretations of the Bible, all right, they come from, you know, cultish leaders that are trying to--they've got an agenda. But if you read the Bible for what it's--let me throw in a story real quick. This helps illustrate it.

So, I'm living up in the mountains, I'm reading the Bible, don't know much about Christianity. I'm reading pretty much by myself. I learned the Sabbath truth, I learned the truth about the state of the dead, and so I haven't committed my life to the Lord yet. I'm wondering about these things. I'm going to church on Sunday, but I've learned the Sabbath truth. But I'm convicted every Sunday, I said, "This is not the seventh day." While this is happening, I'm driving down the road selling sandwiches. I work for a company, they're out of business now, called Darsan. We sold premade sandwiches to the 7-Elevens. And I'm delivering sandwiches in the desert.

There's this African-American gentleman walking down this desert highway by himself with a bag, and it's 100 degrees out. So, I pull over and I say, "Would you like a ride?" He says, "Absolutely." He hops in and he goes, "Praise the Lord," because it's an air conditioned van. And I said, "Are you a Christian?" He said, "Yes." He said, "Are you?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Praise the Lord." And we don't drive for 60 seconds before he says, "Do you know what day the Sabbath is?" Well, that's an awful odd question to ask me right while I'm driving down the road and I am convicted about keeping the Sabbath day. I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well, what day do you go to church?" I said, "Sunday." He said, "You know what day the Sabbath is?" I said, "Saturday." He said, "Praise the Lord."

And I started talking to this guy, and I was so intrigued by--he knew all the things I'd been studying. So, I said, "Are you a Seventh Day Adventist?" He said, "A what?" I said, "Seventh Day Adventist." He said, "Never heard of them." And I stopped, we stopped and I bought him lunch, we talked together. He had a bag full of books that he had been reading on prophecy, and he had been reading the same books, he'd been reading like Daniel and the Revelation and these different things. The Lord was leading him down the same path, but he's reading the Bible and coming to the same conclusions.

And I got--I was really convicted and convinced that day that if people are seeking--Jesus said if you're seeking and you're open, He will give you the understanding. He said, "If any man is willing to do My will, he will know of the doctrine whether it be of God." And so, we don't have to worry about everybody say, "Well, you've got your truth, I've got my truth." There is one absolute truth. God is trying to tell us

something in the Bible. It can be understood. Don't let the confusion in Christianity discourage you.

Jean: Amen. Talking about that, some of those who are watching, you might have some questions. And we're going to try and take some live questions in our lesson study time today. If you have a question, just go ahead and make a comment on Facebook, and they'll be emailing those comments to us, and we'll try to take some of them. Pastor Doug, we have a question that just came in, it kind of ties in with the story that you told. Here is somebody that is looking to know what the Bible teaches, and Lorraine is asking, "Is there a specific time when Sabbath begins and ends?"

Doug: Yeah, now using what we learn in this lesson, how do you figure it out? Do you flip a coin? Do you do a survey of different churches? What does the Bible say? The Bible's very clear, it says, "From even unto even," that's sundown to sundown, "you shall celebrate your Sabbaths," all right? So, that's one verse. Then you go in the New Testament, it says, "And after the Sabbath, after the sun had set, then they brought all the sick to Jesus to be healed." Because even then, they were concerned about His healing on the Sabbath. So, the Sabbath begins and ends not at 12 midnight, that's Roman timing, not at sunrise. But when the sun goes down, that was when they marked the beginning and the end of the day. And in Genesis, it says, "The evening and the morning."

Jean: Right, so the first--the dark part of the day was the first part, and the light part of the day was the second part of the 24-hour period. Usually, we think of it the other way. We think the light part first, but no, the day began at sunset. So, from the Bible, the Sabbath is Friday evening at sunset, and it goes all the way through till Saturday evening at sunset. That would be the biblical Sabbath.

Now, in our lesson, we're talking about how to interpret the Bible. And it's interesting to note that there are about 6,000 languages that are in the world today. And of these, the Bible has been translated in its entirety into about 600 of these languages. The New Testament has been translated into more than 2,500 languages. Now, when we say 6,000 languages, it doesn't mean that that's the only language that those people understand. Many of those who speak some of these 6,000 languages, they might have a second language that they understand. So the Bible, for the most part, is available in all of the main languages that are spoken around the world.

Doug: Karen and I were in New Guinea, I think we've been there twice now. And of those 6,000 languages, 800 of them are in New Guinea. All the people are divided by very steep mountains and valleys, and they just spent generations kind of developing their own variations. But they understand each other by speaking a certain pigeon English. And so, the Scriptures are translated in a language that most New Guineans understand.

Jean: Now, of course, we take the Bible for granted. Today in English, I don't know how many translations and versions there might be in the English language, but it wasn't always the case. Matter of fact, just less than 1,000 years ago, 600, 700 years ago, it was difficult for the average person to find a copy of the Bible in Europe. But really thanks to the Reformation, the printing press, and just the explosion of missionary activity that we see especially in the early 1800s, the Bible now is available just about to anyone who is wanting to discover truth, wanting to seek the Lord through reading His Word. And we can be grateful for that, really the Reformation had an important part to play in the translating of the Bible in all these different languages.

Doug: That's right. Oh, go ahead.

Jean: Yeah, just lead to our next section here, if you're following along with your lesson, we're looking at Sunday. And Sunday's lesson is "Understanding the Scriptures." We have a key passage of Scripture in 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 16. And it says, "All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God." Now, Pastor Doug, some people have asked, what does this inspiration mean? I think the word "inspiration" there means God-breathed.

Doug: Yeah. Yeah, the Lord through the Spirit, He gave life to His Word, and using human instrumentalities who might incorporate their vocabulary and experience, but the message was the

message of God He gave through them.

Jean: It almost seems like the same breath of life that brought life to Adam when God formed him out of the clay, that same breath, that spirit is present in the Word of God. That as we read, there is life found in it. So, 2 Timothy says all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God. It's profitable for doctrine, that would be of teaching. It is for reproof, telling us where we are going wrong. Also for correction, how do we get on the right path. And for instruction in righteousness or right doing. And then I like verse 17, "That the man or the woman of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Sometimes, Pastor Doug, people say, "Well, how do you know that everything in the Bible--maybe there's some important parts that are missing that's not in the Bible that we really need?" Well, this verse says everything we need spiritually to be complete, to be a fully mature Christian, is found in the Scripture, is found in the Bible.

Doug: Yeah, I always like to keep it simple. And I love the Bible verses that keep it simple. It's like in Micah, where he says, "He's shown the old man what is good, and what does the Lord require of thee? Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with your God." Well, there's three things, you can break it down to two things. Love the Lord with all your heart, love your neighbor. If we have the principles right, then everything else goes right.

But the Bible then breaks things down. The love your God, love your neighbor, Ten Commandments. But then you start going through the laws in Leviticus and in Exodus, it goes into more detail about what does it mean to love God and to love your neighbor. And it says, "Well, if you're--even if your enemy's ox wanders off, bring it back. That's how you love your neighbor." And so, it continues to get broader, wider, more detail, more specific. And you know, Jesus, the Sermon on the Mount, of course He goes into beautiful detail. And what He's really doing is Christ is expounding on the principles of Moses's law using the principles of love. You know, he said, "You've heard it say, you know, you're not to kill. So, I say don't even be angry with your brother without a cause," you know?

Jean: Commit murder in your heart, yeah.

Doug: And so, the Scriptures just continue with the main principle, love, God is love. And it continues to fan out like that.

Jean: Now, we do have a question that Jean has emailed to us, and the question is regarding the book of Job. And she asks, "Is the book of Job literal or is it a parable?"

Doug: Well, we think the book of Job is literal because it gives the very specific names. These individuals lived in the area of Edom and you do find their names appearing other times in the genealogy of Esau. So, we have every reason--and the context of the story, the specifics. Now, there's incredible poetry in the way that Job is written. Job was probably the first book that was written by Moses. And, but it really--the whole great controversy is in the book of Job, so I don't think it's just a parable. There are certain allegory lessons in Job, but it's a real story, just like there's an allegory in the experience of Joseph. Joseph really lived, but Joseph's life was somewhat an allegory of Christ, sold by his brothers, yet he forgave. The experience of Job shows the battle between Christ and Satan, where you've got a person's heart is the battleground. And so, it's a very real story, but there's a lot of lessons in there.

Jean: Do we have any idea, Pastor Doug, as to the timeframe when the story of Job might've taken place?

Doug: Based on how long Job lived, you look at Abraham's, you know, father lived about 200 years. And Job, he probably lived just shortly after the time of Esau because you've got Isaac is living 185 years. It talks about the length of their lives in the wording, the vocabulary. You know, probably he's living I'm guessing 100, 150 years after Esau is pretty close.

Jean: Close to the time that Israel was or the children of Israel were in Egypt, sometime during there.

Doug: And so, Moses may have gotten some of that story from his father-in-law.

Jean: Yeah, yeah, very interesting. All right, so when we're talking about the Bible, we find that the Bible gives us three clear emphasis or guidelines. First, it witnesses to us of God's work, what God has done throughout human history. It reveals to us the way of salvation. I think that's the most important part of the Bible, shows us how we can be saved. It also thirdly then instructs us in the ways of righteousness. How do we live as Christians? How do we live a life that brings honor and glory to God? So, these are the three main themes that you can find throughout the Bible. It talks about God's dealing with nations and individuals in history. It talks about how it can be saved and how we can live a righteous life.

Doug: Yeah, absolutely. One of my favorite verses in the Bible, well, if you go to Deuteronomy chapter 32, here, you know, Moses is at the end of his life. He's written at this point the book of Job, Exodus, Leviticus, Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy. I got my order wrong there, but he's got--you got those six books. He's about to die, he's going to climb a mountain and die, God has told him. And he says in chapter 32, "Set your heart on all the words that I testify among you today, that you shall command your children to be careful to observe them, all the words of this law." And that word there means the Torah. "For it is not a futile thing for you because it is your life. By these words you will prolong your days in the land you cross over Jordan to possess."

This is a life and death issue that they understood. You can't do them if you don't understand them. So, understanding the teaching of the Bible, rightly interpreting the Bible is life and death. And then I love--and this isn't in the lesson, but it's one of my favorite verses in the Bible, Deuteronomy 5:29. It says, "Oh." I like that word, "Oh." It's kind of like John 3:16, "So, God so loved the world." And here God says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all of My commandments always, that it might be well with them and their children forever." It says, "Forever that they might love Me, keep My commandments," not some of them, "all of them for their good and their children." And that's really what He said also in Deuteronomy 32.

Jean: Now, a lot of the Old Testament has to do with the nation of Israel. And people have wondered, well, why do we have so much about Israel? You got the whole Old Testament, you got the prophets speaking to Israel primarily, and it just seems like a focus on a nation. Well, I think Paul gives us a very good answer to this in Romans chapter 3, verse 1 to 2. And he's talking to the Gentile believers, but he's also talking to some Jewish believers. He says, "What advantage then has the Jew? Or what profit has circumcision?" Then he says in verse 2, Romans 3, "Much in every way, chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God."

So, why do we find so much emphasis on Israel in the Old Testament? Well, God was giving His will, His Word through the Jewish nation. They were to be His missionaries to take the gospel to the whole world. Now, of course, the New Testament times that God has a spiritual Israel, those who believe in Christ, they become part of spiritual Israel. What is our mission today? Well, similar to the mission of those living before Christ came, that is to prepare the world now for the second coming of Jesus. In the Old Testament, they were to prepare the world for the first coming. Our work now is to prepare the world for the second coming.

Doug: Jesus makes a stunning statement when He's talking to the woman at the well. She starts to argue with him about, "Well, you know, should we worship on Mount Gerizim?" And the Samaritans believed in the five books of Moses. And Moses had said, "When you enter the Promised Land, you're to go to Mount Gerizim and declare the blessings and the cursings." Mount Ebal, Mount Gerizim. And so, they thought, "We've got Scripture for this." And you know, Jesus of course said, "Well, it's Jerusalem." Because in Samuel, that was the place that was chosen for David to build the temple. And Jesus said, "Salvation is of the Jews."

In other words, the Jewish nation, God had given to them to be the guardians of the oracles of truth. It didn't mean God was saving every Jew. Certainly there was good and bad in every people. God told Israel, "I'm not saving you because you're better than other nations." He said, "In fact, you're a stubborn and a stiff-necked people." He probably would've said that if He had saved Scandinavians or Australians. It doesn't matter who it was, human hearts are the same pretty much everywhere. But He needed to

take a nation. He chose Abraham because of his faithfulness, his descendants. They would be the ones to be the recipients, the guardians of the Word, and that they would then declare that Word and announce the Messiah when he came. And at Pentecost, really it was Jews announcing the Messiah to Jews, who then took it to every nation.

Jean: Right. And we have a question that came in, it's a little off the subject, but it's kind of an interesting question, so I'm going to ask it. Venus is asking, "What is the significance of Aaron's walking stick in the ark of the--in the ark of God or the Ark of the Covenant?" Why did God instruct Aaron to put his walking stick or Moses to put Aaron's walking stick in the ark, where the Ten Commandments is? You can't think of anything more holy or sacred than the Ten Commandments, but what is Aaron's rod doing there?

Doug: You know, the patriarch of a clan, they were the kings, the nomads back then. And the staff was really the authority, it was sometimes used for discipline. You'll remember that when Judah wanted to give a pledge to Tamar that he was going to send the money, he gave his staff, which was a big mistake. And whenever they did a miracle in the days of Noah--or Moses and Aaron, they threw down the staff. It represented authority. Well, one day, some leaders, I think it was Naboth and Abirim, they were challenging the authority of Moses. And he said, "I want the 12 leaders of Israel to bring their staffs."

Well, these were the patriarchs of each tribe. And God did a miracle for--they brought their staffs and put them in the--in the tabernacle. And overnight, the staff of Aaron, it put forth shoots, leaves, blossoms, and bore almonds in 24 hours. And here this dead stick came to life and bore fruit. They all recognized that is a miracle. And they all had unique insignias on their staff of their tribes. And so, it was a symbol of authority. And that's why it says, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me," Psalm 23. So, the rod of Moses or Aaron, it's interchangeable. Being put inside the ark, it meant that God speaks through and he designates leadership.

Jean: Yes, and of course Aaron was the priest, the levitical priest, it was in the family. And that was part of the controversy that arose. It says, "Well, why are you just the one that does the work of the priest?"

Doug: We're also holy.

Jean: We're also holy. We're a whole nation of holy people. And God said, "No, I've chosen the tribe of Levi to do a special work in the priesthood." It's also interesting that you have a dead stick that in the sanctuary suddenly buds and brings forth fruit. Likewise spiritually, without Christ, we're dead. But connected to Christ, we're able to produce fruit, and that would be the fruit of the Spirit.

Doug: Come alive, that's right.

Jean: A life that brings glory to God. Monday, the title of the lesson there is entitled "Words and Their Meaning." And for us to correctly understand the words in the Bible, it's helpful for us to study their usage in other parts of the Bible.

Doug: Yeah, and looking where--I think it was Dr. Leslie Harding who taught for years at the Andrews Seminary. He said one of the best ways to understand how to interpret a word in the Bible is look at the first time the word is introduced. It sort of becomes a template for other times you find those words. So, that's one principle. And then compare it with other verses where the word is used. Now, I think you've got some examples there for we're going to look at the word "mercy" and then "shalom." Why don't you take mercy and I'll do shalom?

Jean: Yeah, the word "mercy." Of course, we find it throughout the Bible, but just a couple of passages that give us a broader understanding of God's mercy, 1 Kings chapter 3, verse 6. Solomon is praying and he said, "You show great mercy to Your servant David, my father." And that, of course, is at the dedication of the temple. And you can see in the life of David how God revealed His mercy time and time again when David would make a mistake and he'd repent, God would show mercy. And God used him in a mighty way to build up the nation of Israel and to prepare for the building of the sanctuary.

You've got Psalm 66, verse 20, "Blessed be God, who has not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me." You know, Pastor Doug, I think one of the most favorite phrases or most common phrases that's

found in the Psalms is the phrase "his mercy abides forever." His mercy abides forever. So, God is a God of mercy, and we can see that even in Old Testament times. And then Micah chapter 7, verse 20, "You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, which He has sworn to your fathers from days of old." So, there we find God giving mercy to those who trust in Him, those who follow His commandments.

Doug: Yeah, and that's I think the key that you said, followed His commandments. In those verses you read, 1 Kings 3:6, it says, "Mercy in truth." You go to Psalm 57, verse 3, it says, "He'd send His mercy and His truth." And then you just read another one where it talked about--it's Micah 7, it said, "Mercy to Abraham and truth, truth to Jacob and mercy to--" So, one way God connects His mercy is the Word of truth. He's showing mercy and truth. I said I'd let you teach and I jumped in, I couldn't help myself.

Jean: No, that's good.

Doug: I'm sorry. And then we've got a famous word. You know, people around the world know the word "shalom." And I heard someone say once that one of the best ways to understand shalom for the Jew is to understand aloha for the Hawaiian. So, aloha was it's hello, it's goodbye, it's love. And now shalom is a little different, of course, than that, but it is a word that has many meanings. When you greet someone you say shalom. And when you say goodbye, you say shalom. Jerusalem is named City of Peace, Jeru-Shalom. You've got even Absalom was the son of peace. Solomon, his name is similar also to the word "shalom." It was--it was a greeting of blessing that was incorporated.

And when God said--and this is very famous, many people know the Levitical blessing. You find it in Numbers 6:24 through 26, said, "This is the blessing to put on my people. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace." And it ends with that word "shalom." And the Lord--Psalm 29:11, "The Lord will give strength to His people. The Lord will bless His people with peace." Now, for the Jew who spent many years wandering, they never could settle down it seems like, and then they were slaves for years. Their longing of their heart was to settle down, every man to be under his vine and his fig tree, to have springs of water, and to live in peace. And so, it's a picture of heaven, but it's also a picture of the peace.

Jesus is called the prince of peace. And Isaiah 9:6, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. The government will be on His shoulder. His name will be called wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace." So, Jesus is the essence, he embodies that peace.

And one more thing while we're talking about words, when you're--you know, big word is love when we're talking about words. And I think just in the Greek, not even going to the Hebrew, there are four words that are used for love. And you've got eros, and that's more like a romantic love, it's where we get the word "erotic." It was a romantic love. Phileo, and that meant a brotherly love, where you have--you know, it was William Penn, he established Philadelphia, he wanted it to be the city of brotherly love. Then you have storge, that meant an unconditional or a family, a familial love. And then the famous one is the agape, the sacrificial, the emphatic love, where you're feeling for another one, a self-sacrificing love. Now, you had the example there in John--

Jean: Yeah, it's an amazing example that you find in John chapter 21 of how in the original Greek, different words are used for love. It's a fairly well known story. This is after the resurrection, where Jesus met with the disciples by the sea of Galilee. And Peter, along with all the other disciples, are there. And after that had breakfast together, Jesus asked Peter--and this is John chapter 21, verse 15. Jesus said to Peter, "Simon son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"

Now, you'll remember Peter had said before the crucifixion, "Though all men shall desert Thee, I'll never leave You. I'm ready to die for You." Now, of course, you know what happened. Peter did deny Jesus, so Jesus says, "Peter, do you love Me more than these?" more than the other disciples. Now, the word that Jesus uses here for "do you love Me?" he uses the word "agape." And as you say, Pastor Doug, that is the love of God. That is this unselfish, self-sacrificing love. Peter responds to what Jesus says and says, "Yes Lord, you know that I love You." But he doesn't use the word "agape," he uses the word for brotherly

love, philos.

And it's kind of interesting that each time Jesus asked, he said, "Do you agape Me?" Peter responded and said, "Lord, I philos Thee. I, you know, brotherly love. The best human love that I can have, I give to You. But my love does not come close to Your love for me." And Jesus asked twice, "Peter, do you agape Me?" And Peter says, "I philos You." And then the third time, Jesus says, "Do you philos Me?" Peter says, "Yes Lord, I philos You." So, it's as if Jesus is trying to draw Peter's understanding to His love. "And do you know how much I love you?" is in essence what Jesus is saying. So, you can find that by looking at the original words, and it just brings a whole lot more meaning to the Word of God.

Doug: Yeah. And just jump in if you get a question from someone. In the next section, it talks about repetition, word patterns, and meanings. And it's very helpful to know that there was no punctuation in the Hebrew. So, when you're reading--as well as the Greek, actually. And so, they had different ways of creating emphasis starting and stopping. There's no problem if you understand and you read Hebrew to know what the text is saying. But one of the ways, you know, we when we say something--and it's interesting today where everybody texting everybody, we've kind of created a whole new language.

But you know, instead of saying, "This is so funny, I just couldn't help myself," you just say LOL, that means I laughed out loud. And so, we've got these abbreviations. Or you just put an exclamation mark. You might just say exclamation mark and we know that's emphasis. One of the ways they would emphasize something is through the repetition of words. And maybe you could read, for instance, Genesis 1:26, Pastor Ross.

Jean: You know, before I read that, just you're reminding me of something. Today, we speak with texting and different--like you said, different things mean different things. LOL is supposed to be laugh out loud, but I guess a teenage girl was texting her mother and telling her about something sad that had occurred. And the mother responded with LOL. And the daughter said, "Mom, that's not the appropriate response." Well, the mother thought LOL was love--lots of love, thank you. Yeah, lots of love. And the daughter's saying laugh out loud. So, if you don't understand the context, you can get yourself in trouble, you can be misunderstood. And of course, knowing the right meaning of the words and the context in the Bible also makes a difference.

Doug: Oh yeah, big difference.

Jean: Now, in Genesis chapter 1, verse 27—

Doug: Twenty-six and twenty-seven, yeah.

Jean: Twenty-six? Talks about God created man in his own image. "In the image of God created him, male and female He created them." Now, the word there for man is Adam. And of course, that's the name of the first man that was created. But we find Adam also meaning man or mankind, as well as the individual Adam, which is kind of interesting. Then you also brought up about Adam being connected to the ground or the earth.

Doug: Yeah, it's a similar word for in Hebrew Edom, where, you know, the Edomites, it was this red porridge that was given. And Edom and Adam--and some people say, "What race was Adam?" And I heard one scholar say, well, he was Indian. I said, "Well, how do you say that?" He said, "Well, red, yellow, black, and white." You know, they used to say the American Indians were red. Well, they weren't really red, they used to put some clay on them that made them look that way. But the word really is red or ruddy. And it says that about David, it says he was ruddy. And that word there meant that he kind of had a rosy or glowing complexion. So, who knows? Adam might have been kind of a magenta or I don't know.

Jean: But you have Adam meaning mankind, also the name of an individual. Now, that's kind of significant. When we go to the New Testament, you read in Romans chapter 5, verse 5, "But the free gift is not like the offense, for if by one man's offense," that would be Adam, "many die, so much more the grace of God and the gift by one man, Jesus Christ." And Jesus is called the second Adam. So, in the first

Adam comes death because of sin. In the second Adam, we have life in Jesus.

Doug: Right. And going back and talking more about the context of how you read those things, if you look for instance in--when it talks in Genesis about God created man in his own image, in the image of God created him, male and female created He them." So, you're looking at God as making them, plural. So the word "Adam" there means humanity, mankind. But then it says, "This is the genealogy of Adam in the day that God created man. He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female," so that's still talking about Adam means humanity. This is Genesis 5:1. Then it says, "And Adam lived 130 years, and he begat his first son." Adam there, does it mean humanity? Or well, it could be Adam and Eve because they're both the same age, aren't they? But then later it says that he lived 930 years and he died.

Now, it's probably talking about the individual Adam. So, that's why it's so important to read the context. Going back to the repetition that you emphasize things, you'll notice that when--the verse you just read, it says God created, created, created. And this is back in Genesis chapter 1. Says, "Let Us make man in our image. And so, God created him. In the image of God He created him, male and female He created them." If we ever have any doubts about the origin of humanity, the Jew is saying God created, God created, God created in His own image. So, it's really an insult to Bible truth to say that, you know, man evolved from some primordial soup because then you're calling God, you know, a rock or primordial soup. God in a fiat way created man, and it's very important.

Jean: Now, talking about repetition, in the original language, they didn't have capitalized or exclamation mark. But if they wanted to emphasize something, as you said, Pastor Doug, they would repeat it. Probably one of the most beautiful verses that you find in the Old Testament is Isaiah chapter 6, verse 3. It's talking about these angels who are in the very presence of God. And they have six wings. With two wings they cover their feet, with two wings they cover their faces, with two wings they fly. And their constant cry is, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts, the earth is filled with your glory." Here are the angels saying, "Holy, holy, holy," in the very presence of God. Some have seen in that holy for the Father, holy for the Son, holy for the Holy Spirit, sort of a triune holiness that we find described in the Bible.

So, it's emphasis. And of course, often you read Jesus saying, "Verily, verily," if you're looking at the King James version. Or, "Verily, verily I say unto you." Again, it's providing emphasis by repeating.

Doug: If a child is walking down a path and the parent says, "Be careful. Child, be careful." But if the parent says, "Be careful, be careful," they're going, "Oh, that repetition." If the parent says, "Be careful, be careful, be careful," kid's going, "Oh." I mean, so we even understand that repetition and emphasis can be just, you know, increasing the intensity. So, when the angels say God is holy, but when they say He is holy, holy, and then they say He is holy, holy, holy, the three really was like an eternal emphasis. That it's complete and full as it can be, the holiness of God.

Jean: Pastor Doug, we've got a question that's come in from Nancy. And you're talking about the importance of reading something in its context, she's asking, "What about Mark 7, where Jesus purged all meat? What does this mean?" I guess she has a friend that's saying, well, we can eat anything now because of Mark chapter 7, where Jesus purged all meat, where He says don't call anything unclean, or it's not that which goes into the mouth that defiles the man.

Doug: Yeah, this is a verse that has been misunderstood, and it's actually unfortunate that the--they're probably looking at the New International Version. The translators there--and one of the things we've learned as we've been studying how to interpret the Scriptures, Bible readers come to the Scripture with certain presuppositions, with certain bias. And some people have a bias, an assumption when they come to reading the New Testament. And they assume that, yeah, Jesus declared all foods clean.

This was what you call a parenthetical statement, where it actually is saying when Jesus said, "It's not what goes in your mouth that defiles you, but what comes out." Because what goes in your mouth is eliminated in the ditch, purging all meats. There's a certain purging influence of the digestive system. Jesus is talking about if you eat food without ceremonially washing your hands, that is not what defiles a

person. He said it's not what goes in your mouth, but what comes out of your mouth. And the words that you speak, reflecting what's in your heart, that's what's defiling. If a child eats without washing their hands, most of us have somehow survived childhood, where that often happened. He said that's not what defiles a heart. So, no particular food is ever mentioned.

The NIV translators took a great liberty here, they took a parenthetical statement, where it said, "Thus purging all foods." They then translate that in saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean. I have had friends from other denominations, they will freely admit that is not in the Greek. So, it's not even in the original text. It is a very unfortunate liberty that the translators took there. That is not found in the original text. You don't find it in the King James, New King James, New American Standard. But it's confused a lot of people. And what's the verse again? female: It's in verse 20.

Doug: It's verse 20, yeah, 19 and 20 is where you're going to find that in Mark chapter 7.

Jean: All right, thank you, Pastor Doug. We have another question that somebody has sent in. And again, we thank you for all of the questions that's come in. This person is asking, is tithe and offering only applied to money? Do we pay tithes and offerings only for money?

Doug: Another good place where we can apply the Bible hermeneutics. When Jesus--or when Malachi says, God in his Word, in chapter 3 of Malachi, he says, "Bring all the tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house." But when they went to the feast, if they didn't want to carry wagonloads of grain or sheep, it says you can convert that to money and carry the money. It was much easier and smaller, and pay your tithe when you come to the feast using money. So, it could be done using agricultural tithe, if they would literally bring to the sanctuary or to the synagogue where they happened to meet in their tribal area to help cover the costs for the Levites. Or they could go to the national feast, they would convert it to money. It could be either one.

Jean: Somebody asked--else is asking Pastor Doug about why is there so many genealogies that we find in the Old Testament? And they're speaking specifically here about Chronicles, where it says so and so begat so and so. Why is that so important?

Doug: I used to wonder that. And I was reading through the Bible and I would just struggle through saying these names. And it was always embarrassing for me when I got into ministry and I tried to read the names. And I'll just give you a little tip while we're at that point. I spent years listening to the Bible on tape, driving, going to sleep at night, every night listening to Alexander Scourby, who read the Bible with just perfect diction. So, I don't know how he did it, but his pronunciation.

And there's a few other programs where they--the Bible readers read with just extraordinary pronunciations, very accurate. Hearing him say those names made it much easier for me to start repeating those names in years that followed. But I used to think, why all the chronologies? Then as you start going through the different characters in the Bible like we just talked about Job, reading the chronology of Esau, I said, "Aha, some of these friends of Job appear in this chronology." And it helped you understand where the story took place, who he's talking to, who their ancestors were. And it tells about Jesus being the Messiah. You look at the chronology in Luke that goes all the way from Jesus back to Adam, it's one of the most extraordinary in the Bible that Jesus is the Son of God. And so, it tells that Jesus would be the Son of David. You've got the chronology of Jesse and the tribe of Judah because it says the Messiah would come through that. So, a lot of it is so we can trace the chronology of the Messiah when He came.

Jean: Absolutely. Thursday's lesson talks about books and their messages. And of course, you have 66 books in the Bible. Divided up into different categories, you have prophetic messages through some of the prophetic books like Isaiah, Jeremiah. There are some books that are described as being a compilation, where you've got, for example, Psalms, which is compilation of songs. Then you got Ecclesiastes, a compilation of different sayings. You've got historical books like 1 and 2 Kings and Chronicles. And then you've got letter books. Many of the New Testament books are letters. Paul wrote a lot of letters. The book of Revelation is really a letter to the seven churches. So, different categories of

books, and that's helpful to bear in mind when you're studying a particular book in the Bible.

Doug: Yeah. Now, Revelation is a letter that was deliberately given to be read in many churches, so it's a little more comprehensive. It's really for the church even today 'cause it's for many churches. Whereas when Paul writes a letter to the 1 Corinthians and he's giving special counsel for a particular problem, or in 2 Corinthians, he's talking about a problem in 1 Corinthians, you then have to say, "What is the culture? What's the historical context? What's going on in that city? What was the problem he's addressing?" Then reading and understanding those teachings, it's important to get the context of the town, the history, the culture.

Like you and I get questions all the time about 1 Corinthians 11, where it talks about a woman not praying unless her head is covered. And people say, "Well, is that something we're to apply today, that no Christian woman should pray publicly unless her head is covered?" Well, reading the context of what was happening in Corinth at that time, we realize that was really more of a tradition. And he's saying, you know, we need to be respectful of that tradition in that context. And even later in the own--in that same book, I forget where in the chapter, what verse it is, he says, "But we have no such tradition." He uses the word "tradition."

Jean: Contentious, but we don't have such tradition. So, dealing with the specific situation it sounds like that was taking place at the church. And maybe that's why we don't want to build a doctrine on just simply one verse. In the mouth of two or three witnesses. And unfortunately, there are some people, pastor, that'll take one verse and ignore the rest of the Bible as to what it's saying, and they'll build a whole theology out of one verse. And often, it's taken out of its context.

So, not only do you recognize that the Bible has different books written for different audiences at different times, we want to bear that in mind, but of course there are different writers, about 36 at least that we know of, 36 different authors that wrote different parts of the Bible. This is interesting, Pastor Doug. Some of the authorship is not given. Sometimes, you read Paul, it states that Paul wrote the book. Or in Revelation, John says he wrote the book. But there are books in the Bible where we're not quite sure who the person is that actually wrote the book. And here are some examples. For example, the book of Ruth, we're not quite sure who wrote Ruth. The book of Esther, you had an idea and I thought that was kind of interesting. Even though it doesn't say who wrote the book of Esther, but you thought maybe Mordecai.

Doug: Mordecai would have been intimately acquainted with the language and what happened in the palace on that occasion.

Jean: Right.

Doug: You wonder who in that story saw everything from all perspectives, and he was probably--so, we don't know, but.

Jean: The book of Job, even though it doesn't say specifically in the book, I think there's enough tradition and suggestions that that was probably written by Moses.

Doug: Stylistically, you look at the way Moses wrote and it's very similar. And he would've been acquainted with that story being related to Jethro.

Jean: Mm-hmm, there's a connection there. So, it's helpful to take into consideration. And another amazing thing about that is you've got authors with totally different backgrounds. And God used fishermen, and scholars, and all kinds of different people in giving us the Bible.

Doug: I'm so thankful. When you look at the four gospels of Jesus that God used Matthew, a tax collector. He used Mark, who's really Peter, a fisherman. Mark wrote it for Peter. You've got Luke, who's a Gentile, who's writing to an educated leader, Theophilus. And then John, who's that beloved disciple, evidently related somehow to the priesthood because he knew the family in the priesthood. And so, those perspectives really help us know Jesus better. Why don't you tell us about the free offer again before we run off the air?

Jean: Yes, we want to remind you if you just joined us, our free offer today is actually a study guide that'll help you in your reading of the Bible. If you'd like to receive our Amazing Facts Bible reading plan, you need to call the number 866-788-3966 and just ask for offer number 872. And we'll be happy to send this to you. You can take this simple, little guide, put it in your Bible, and it'll tell you each day the different passages you need to read if you'd like to read all the way through the Scriptures.

Announcer: Amazing facts, changed lives.

Male: We were going to church every other week. About 19 years old, things really start to make sense for me. I started to go to church for myself. And the pastor wanted to study with me. We came to the study about baptism. And I kind of just shrugged, put my head down, and I said, "I'm not ready." He looked me in the eye and said, "Jason, you'll never make yourself ready. You know, this is something you have to do." I put a lot of things behind me, the drinking and smoking, all that stuff stopped. All throughout the time when I'd been learning about God, it was just me and God.

Comes around up to about August and I meet this girl. About two years into the relationship, we're talking about marriage and everything. We didn't pray, we didn't study together, we were arguing a lot. But we were engaged. I started drinking again, and that was a slow downward spiral into different things, and my devotional life started really weaseling away. We broke up in 2008. It was heavy for me 'cause, again, being with somebody for that long, it's almost like a divorce. I started to fall back away even more.

I remember looking in the mirror, just looking at myself and saying, "What are you doing? How can you do this to God? He's brought you so far." And you know, God really heard my cry. There was a testimony telling at my church, and there's a call, and kids started getting up, a bunch of high school kids started getting up for calls of baptism. I'm back doing the PA system at this time, and I feel just like this urge, just my heart just started ripping out of my chest. And I just had this feeling just to go up. I get to the front and I meet the pastor with open arms. I realized that there's so much more to life than just living life for myself. And you know, falling away, it's not a necessity, but God can work through anything in the bad to make it the good, that's a promise He makes.

Announcer: Together, we have spread the gospel much farther than ever before. Thank you for your support.

Announcer: Amazing facts, changed lives.

Female: It wasn't my choice to be a Catholic. It was my parents' choice. My mom, she's very, very religious. My father, he was made the presidential trouble shooter during the martial law. I guess having seven kids would not be able to make my mother to be--you know, be there for each and every one of us. But what is really very hard for me was I was always told to be the ugliest, to be the darkest. You know, here in the Philippines, you're beautiful if you're white. But if you're brown or a little bit darker, which I was, you're ugly.

All of us had about seven maids, one for each child. The maids would say, "My baby," or the one she's taking care of, "is a lot better than yours," referring to me. I believed because I was ugly, I believed I was stupid. I believed I was good for nothing, so I attracted all the bad things in my life. I had to believe that God is fair, so I said maybe that's because I was bad in my previous lives. So, I believe in, of course, reincarnation. And when I was young, my mom told me that I could really see ghosts. I went into a lot of seance. And there was even a time when we did a ouija board. And then in front of me really--it really happened for the four of us, the glass, which is a wine glass, it just--you know, it just went up.

So, because this is my life, I do believe that I was attracted to the wrong man. There's anything that really happened very good was to have my two adorable children, but I was really abused in all areas, physically, emotionally, of course spiritually. And you will think, "Where is God?" I began to search, and unfortunately my church doesn't have a Bible study. So, I was able to go to a Baptist Bible study, and there I had a classmate, her name is Lu. She gave me the DVDs, and that is where I learned about Pastor Doug and "Amazing Facts."

That Baptist church saw my eagerness, so when I started asking for the Sabbath worship on a Saturday, they took me out. They even got a meeting and they said that I was a stumbling block, me and Lu, and that is how we left. Our friends are all from the Baptist and we love them dearly, but the truth cannot be compromised. So, that is when we started having a Bible study, every four o'clock at Club Filipino, and I invite all my friends. It pains me to think that I was really lost. Why is it that I'd find teaching through a foreigner, from Pastor Doug? What if nobody gave me the message? Because my growth happened because of the DVDs that I watch every night, every morning. And even my friends, who happened to have master degree, they say, "Why are you so much better? Maybe your teachers are good." Yes, my teachers are from the "Amazing Facts." I owe my salvation really to all the teachings that I've learned from your DVDs and from your books.

Doug: Friends, we're out here in the Pacific Ocean, not too far from the island of Fiji. And we're getting ready to look at some wonders in the deep. The Bible says God made the heaven, the earth, and the sea. And there are things under the sea that are beautiful that many people have never seen. Some folks might just skim along, snorkel on the surface. But if you want to see the real majesty of the ocean, you've got to go deeper.

Because people don't have gills like fish, we have to do something extraordinary to be able to breathe below the surface. And because you have to breathe all the time, we need this special equipment. In the same way, the Bible says a Christian needs to pray without ceasing. We need to always be breathing the atmosphere of heaven if we're going to live a Christian life in this world below.

Wow, what a wonderful world.