

# The Seven Golden Rules of Bible Interpretation

*Long Version (detailed)*

Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation, especially of the Scriptures. Namely, the methods and principles used for interpretation. In this case, we are using *'The Seven Golden Rules of Bible Interpretation'*, which is a modern rendition distilled from the knowledge obtained and discerned from the Torchbearers. These seven rules were first published in 2019, as part of The Torchbearer Series.

There are two primary methods for studying hermeneutics. The actual explanation or interpretation of the biblical text based upon evidence is called *exegesis*, while *eisegesis* is based upon a subjective process of making the text mean anything that one wants it to mean.<sup>1</sup> *The Seven Golden Rules of Bible Interpretation* follows a strict exegesis process, for which we trust that the ancient Torchbearers would have used the same criteria and methods to understand the Bible correctly.

We will also be excluding the *Genre Principle*, which is often misapplied and offers nothing to better comprehend the biblical text. The idea behind the Genre Principle is to group the different books of the Bible into categories so as to determine what each book of the Bible has to offer, which are entirely subjective. For example, the Book of Psalms is often placed in the genre category of poetry versus the prophecy genre. However, Psalms contains many prophecies of Christ's birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection that are too numerous to list here.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, it is a book of poetry as well as prophecy. All the books of the Bible can fall into multiple genres, which have spawned numerous genre lists that many scholars call by different names. The Genre Principle, if it is considered at all, should only be considered as a very basic guide.

**1st Rule: Rule of Inspired Text:** Only use *inspired text* to study and understand the Bible, anything less is not Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16). In English, God's inspired text can be found in the form of the Authorized King James Bible, which was translated by forty-seven of the world's best and most faithful translators, who obtained and used the pure Hebrew and Greek text. This text was transmitted through an unbroken chain-of-custody from diverse groups throughout Europe, like the Waldenses, known collectively as the Early Christian Torchbearers (see *'The Torchbearer Series'* by Peter D. Arvo for evidence and details). God's supernaturally inspired text can only be spiritually discerned by a believer (1 Corinthians 2:14). God promised to preserve his Word and did (Psalm 12:6-7, 78:1-8, 105:8, 119:89, 119:111, 152, 160, Proverbs 22:20-21, Ecclesiastes 3:14, Matthew 4:4, 5:17-18, 24:35, Luke 16:17, John 10:35, Colossians 1:17, 1 Peter 1:23-25, 1 Kings 8:24, Titus 1:2, Hebrews 10:23). Note: We specifically recommend the Authorized King James Bible (Cambridge-type of 1920+).

**2nd Rule: Rule of Literal Interpretation:** Take every word or phrase at its primary, usual, dictionary meaning from the historical time period in which it was written, except if the facts of the immediate context indicate a deeper, hidden, or symbolic meaning when studied in light of related passages and fundamental truths. This literal interpretation is not to be confused with legitimate known figures of speech in the Bible such as metaphors, similes, parables, allegories, etc.<sup>3</sup> An example of a metaphor is Proverbs 13:14: "*The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*"

**3rd Rule: Rule of Context:** Words and phrases must be taken within the context of its verse, adjoining verses, and the context of the entire passage radiating outward. The exception to this rule is that many prophetic verses are only unlocked and comprehended by locating its corresponding key located elsewhere within the entire Bible. For example, the fiery brass serpent set upon a pole in Numbers 21:8-9 is explained by John 3:14-15.

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**4th Rule: Rule of First Mention:** Often, the first mention of a word can define what the word means for the rest of the Bible. It is important to remember that this is not always the case, especially for words that have more than one meaning. For example, Genesis 1:3-5 defines the word *light*, which has a primary meaning of *illumination* and several secondary meanings, including the definition *that which is good*. Another example is the first mention of wine in the Bible found in Genesis 9:21, since wine has more than one primary meaning, as defined in several old dictionaries, such as *The Royal Dictionary by Abel Boyer 1702*,<sup>4, 5, 6, 7</sup> we can't use the Rule of First Mention in this case. The Rule of First Mention also often sets forth the first instance of a prophetic pattern to take place. For examples of this, see the '*End of the Bride and Bridegroom Mystery*' document and '*End of the Bride and Bridegroom Mystery Chart*' by Peter D. Arvo.

**5th Rule: Rule of Non-Contradiction:** No part of the Bible may be interpreted so as to contradict another part, because it is a tightly integrated information system with each book interconnecting and authenticating another book.<sup>8</sup> Nor can any part contradict God's perfect holy character. To test your understanding, replace every instance of a word or phrase in the entire Bible with what you believe it means and it should result in perfect comprehension without contradicting anything. If not, then you must re-evaluate your understanding of the word or phrase. This process will also typically yield additional details to the word or phrase. Perceived contradictions and misunderstandings can also occur when a single event is perceived as different multiple events, or similarities between multiple events are perceived to be a single event. For example, one event or two: Luke 21 '*Before these*' Matthew 24 '*Then...*'? One event or two: Matthew 20:29-34 '*two blind men and two Jerichos*' Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43 '*one blind man and one Jericho*'?

**6th Rule: Rule of Culture:** The Bible was originally written within specific cultures, mostly Jewish, at particular periods in the past. The pure Hebrew and Greek text were then translated into English by forty-seven King James Translators and completed in 1611 A.D. The meaning of various words, phrases, stories, customs, and festivals cannot be fully comprehended without prior knowledge of the culture. If a dictionary is used, it necessitates a dictionary dating closer to the King James time period<sup>9, 10, 11, 12</sup> and using a good source for ancient Jewish traditions and customs.<sup>13</sup> Keep in mind, the best and most authoritative source to fully apprehend words and phrases from the Bible is by using the Bible itself. For example, Firstfruits is mentioned in Exodus 23:19 as part of Jewish custom and a yearly festival, which directly relates to Jesus as the Firstfruits and who was raised during Firstfruits in 1 Corinthians 15:20.

**7th Rule: Rule of Single Interpretation:** Every verse in the Bible has only one single interpretation, although that verse may have multiple applications. No single interpretation can be held valid without the validation of another person, since no Scripture is of private interpretation (2 Peter 1:20), and as such it is strongly recommended no Bible translated by a single person should ever be used. This rule however does not imply that a correct Bible interpretation should be determined by a majority vote.

**Summary:** Many may recommend using a resource like *JewishEncyclopedia.com*, originally assembled in 1909, for the purpose of reading about Jewish traditions and customs, but we personally recommend against this. Certain parts are not accurate, and there isn't time or space here to go through specific examples of this. Christ warned about some of the manmade traditions of the Pharisees (see Mark 7:3-9 and the '*Jewish Drift Chart*' by Peter D. Arvo) just as the Early Torchbearer Christians warned others when Rome started to merge paganism with the Christian faith and created new non-Christian traditions based upon half-truths. We feel a better resource for Jewish traditions is to use the book, *Dr. William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible in 9 Volumes*.<sup>14</sup> It is always wise to test all things to see if they are true.

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- <sup>1</sup> Got Questions Staff. “What is the difference between exegesis and eisegesis?” *GotQuestions.org*. 2019. <https://web.archive.org/web/20190121211053/https://www.gotquestions.org/exegesis-eisegesis.html> (accessed January 2019).
- <sup>2</sup> Got Questions Staff. “Which psalms predict the coming of Jesus Christ?” *GotQuestions.org*. 2019. <https://web.archive.org/web/20181010124245/https://www.gotquestions.org/Psalms-Jesus-Christ.html> (accessed January 2019).
- <sup>3</sup> In *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated*, by E. W. Bullinger. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898.
- <sup>4</sup> In *The Royal Dictionary In two parts - First French and English*, By Abel Boyer, p.579. 1702. <https://books.google.com/books?id=XURTEb4FB-AC&pg> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120214200/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacmldTgDANC6TwH\\_qRFchEzwVAswElPeGh7ppE\\_kKyxL6t52aKcYIRWgLDYVklMXartulEguMbnPkiHMhOcVqJPFKG6rXXjUczVEQFW4v2fRY\\_DLU6kC3B24HVFN8fPklKKibr132qgm9neIPmNpicBisVIPIdL2x1c4z7Apye3nxCMz-Tqhd8DOiniZdgSrlQueldkg56HVcQ1CbvYhTJI4GIOBNxb743S1g8sifA0nakRKyi-LQrXEcRTH5ceP17RBd1Tp-J8powUu\\_M8kRNTCE5CJvNO3InVVUv2YHPyEVYnl](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120214200/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacmldTgDANC6TwH_qRFchEzwVAswElPeGh7ppE_kKyxL6t52aKcYIRWgLDYVklMXartulEguMbnPkiHMhOcVqJPFKG6rXXjUczVEQFW4v2fRY_DLU6kC3B24HVFN8fPklKKibr132qgm9neIPmNpicBisVIPIdL2x1c4z7Apye3nxCMz-Tqhd8DOiniZdgSrlQueldkg56HVcQ1CbvYhTJI4GIOBNxb743S1g8sifA0nakRKyi-LQrXEcRTH5ceP17RBd1Tp-J8powUu_M8kRNTCE5CJvNO3InVVUv2YHPyEVYnl)
- <sup>5</sup> In *John Kersey’s Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum or A General English Dictionary*, by John Kersey, p.697. London: J. Wilde, 1708. <https://books.google.com/books?id=0VoJAAAAQAAJ> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120193557/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QaeoSsAVldSoWq5ZmmW09L0hmHW6tU-TtIT\\_\\_QQkH5KFcxKq-cfRec9-fEw1Yh3snczMi5sEIYhbxl672BjKPDY5LascNY7ry8QRB8AF-zjxE9IHAwJET2f9DWJG04VgyKIVRZ-8LO44EFEiG6KSEvtaiSdWv-o3CBjIizMYivegbaO7WeOO\\_XKzQJmgkRNRMHcZuNMWeZwpROCg0jjVZBgNeZRRfTk1aF9R1gkZaanwyE7wkhXfgdZzV5gV3jWFBUhCI2pP4vTvfh8KcdwGOA30NIoITw](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120193557/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QaeoSsAVldSoWq5ZmmW09L0hmHW6tU-TtIT__QQkH5KFcxKq-cfRec9-fEw1Yh3snczMi5sEIYhbxl672BjKPDY5LascNY7ry8QRB8AF-zjxE9IHAwJET2f9DWJG04VgyKIVRZ-8LO44EFEiG6KSEvtaiSdWv-o3CBjIizMYivegbaO7WeOO_XKzQJmgkRNRMHcZuNMWeZwpROCg0jjVZBgNeZRRfTk1aF9R1gkZaanwyE7wkhXfgdZzV5gV3jWFBUhCI2pP4vTvfh8KcdwGOA30NIoITw)
- <sup>6</sup> In *Benjamin Marin’s Lingua Britannica Reformata or A New English Dictionary*, by Benjamin Marin, p.700. London: J. Hodges, 1748. <https://books.google.com/books?id=aqlbAAAAQAAJ> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120200130/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5Qac5-Icjn40MbVK7o38qmvL6jV97aBSjJ2Q-6LUc-aZzn0Ae64GA24VY81AARXD6\\_y2L3gVDcNOQdoL6hCjotVpqYkGOIKHnKqMTi0RJWED83cQGaxbkGoEr\\_tnx4g3uqaEA90vQNPpopXvzlg9EjkJO9Ht\\_GvswYDYeySsZNgHJCgrW1fafk1e41512KQZ-HTchnM3ToQkaPbZDahW6diCHZ617cvLaJqOVrPrRVfDeufXIK373svcbFWGbvN4LcklXqi0m3XfUHYKopGyaYNoC54i-Iw](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120200130/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5Qac5-Icjn40MbVK7o38qmvL6jV97aBSjJ2Q-6LUc-aZzn0Ae64GA24VY81AARXD6_y2L3gVDcNOQdoL6hCjotVpqYkGOIKHnKqMTi0RJWED83cQGaxbkGoEr_tnx4g3uqaEA90vQNPpopXvzlg9EjkJO9Ht_GvswYDYeySsZNgHJCgrW1fafk1e41512KQZ-HTchnM3ToQkaPbZDahW6diCHZ617cvLaJqOVrPrRVfDeufXIK373svcbFWGbvN4LcklXqi0m3XfUHYKopGyaYNoC54i-Iw)
- <sup>7</sup> *Nathan Bailey’s New Universal English Dictionary of Words and of Arts and Sciences*, by Nathan Bailey, p.652. London: W. Johnston, 1760. <https://books.google.com/books?id=NgdgAAAAcAAJ> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120203128/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacwR6JOyZrLrCfDy pLOW2LTBC6ffpJrTq7qf29OxvE-poUdLAWQqeTrKkidbuEMBMLwCELeAfVEW9pumPEpYIClkHeeaLJ-xON13QTIiQxSpumuMC0DIp1MjpwNKPBIHIOAaFoem0IXvfpZmd7A84MoQUfTiEf6V3UT12win3OQF2jIIgsqxBvmx\\_nG8xvM6IY0Jyflw9cdkckBfKJgcpTM442pQMEYGHnOikl7LwKpGm5XgEHhtor7Nf-b948E9iahLYNQ7yEBO8kN5iqcwCrZpv5EfZUB1dH4U0rnkct3WED20](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120203128/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacwR6JOyZrLrCfDy pLOW2LTBC6ffpJrTq7qf29OxvE-poUdLAWQqeTrKkidbuEMBMLwCELeAfVEW9pumPEpYIClkHeeaLJ-xON13QTIiQxSpumuMC0DIp1MjpwNKPBIHIOAaFoem0IXvfpZmd7A84MoQUfTiEf6V3UT12win3OQF2jIIgsqxBvmx_nG8xvM6IY0Jyflw9cdkckBfKJgcpTM442pQMEYGHnOikl7LwKpGm5XgEHhtor7Nf-b948E9iahLYNQ7yEBO8kN5iqcwCrZpv5EfZUB1dH4U0rnkct3WED20)
- <sup>8</sup> Gary Bates and Lita Cosner. “Can you answer: How did we get our Bible?” *Creation Ministries International*. August 2013. <https://web.archive.org/web/20180831204935/https://creation.com/how-did-we-get-our-bible> (accessed August 2018).
- <sup>9</sup> *The Royal Dictionary In two parts - First French and English*, By Abel Boyer. 1702. <https://books.google.com/books?id=XURTEb4FB-AC&pg> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120214200/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacmldTgDANC6TwH\\_qRFchEzwVAswElPeGh7ppE\\_kKyxL6t52aKcYIRWgLDYVklMXartulEguMbnPkiHMhOcVqJPFKG6rXXjUczVEQFW4v2fRY\\_DLU6kC3B24HVFN8fPklKKibr132qgm9neIPmNpicBisVIPIdL2x1c4z7Apye3nxCMz-Tqhd8DOiniZdgSrlQueldkg56HVcQ1CbvYhTJI4GIOBNxb743S1g8sifA0nakRKyi-LQrXEcRTH5ceP17RBd1Tp-J8powUu\\_M8kRNTCE5CJvNO3InVVUv2YHPyEVYnl](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120214200/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacmldTgDANC6TwH_qRFchEzwVAswElPeGh7ppE_kKyxL6t52aKcYIRWgLDYVklMXartulEguMbnPkiHMhOcVqJPFKG6rXXjUczVEQFW4v2fRY_DLU6kC3B24HVFN8fPklKKibr132qgm9neIPmNpicBisVIPIdL2x1c4z7Apye3nxCMz-Tqhd8DOiniZdgSrlQueldkg56HVcQ1CbvYhTJI4GIOBNxb743S1g8sifA0nakRKyi-LQrXEcRTH5ceP17RBd1Tp-J8powUu_M8kRNTCE5CJvNO3InVVUv2YHPyEVYnl)
- <sup>10</sup> *John Kersey’s Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum or A General English Dictionary*, by John Kersey. London: J. Wilde, 1708. <https://books.google.com/books?id=0VoJAAAAQAAJ> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120193557/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QaeoSsAVldSoWq5ZmmW09L0hmHW6tU-TtIT\\_\\_QQkH5KFcxKq-cfRec9-fEw1Yh3snczMi5sEIYhbxl672BjKPDY5LascNY7ry8QRB8AF-zjxE9IHAwJET2f9DWJG04VgyKIVRZ-8LO44EFEiG6KSEvtaiSdWv-o3CBjIizMYivegbaO7WeOO\\_XKzQJmgkRNRMHcZuNMWeZwpROCg0jjVZBgNeZRRfTk1aF9R1gkZaanwyE7wkhXfgdZzV5gV3jWFBUhCI2pP4vTvfh8KcdwGOA30NIoITw](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120193557/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QaeoSsAVldSoWq5ZmmW09L0hmHW6tU-TtIT__QQkH5KFcxKq-cfRec9-fEw1Yh3snczMi5sEIYhbxl672BjKPDY5LascNY7ry8QRB8AF-zjxE9IHAwJET2f9DWJG04VgyKIVRZ-8LO44EFEiG6KSEvtaiSdWv-o3CBjIizMYivegbaO7WeOO_XKzQJmgkRNRMHcZuNMWeZwpROCg0jjVZBgNeZRRfTk1aF9R1gkZaanwyE7wkhXfgdZzV5gV3jWFBUhCI2pP4vTvfh8KcdwGOA30NIoITw)
- <sup>11</sup> *Benjamin Marin’s Lingua Britannica Reformata or A New English Dictionary*, by Benjamin Marin. London: J. Hodges, 1748. <https://books.google.com/books?id=aqlbAAAAQAAJ> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120200130/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5Qac5-Icjn40MbVK7o38qmvL6jV97aBSjJ2Q-6LUc-aZzn0Ae64GA24VY81AARXD6\\_y2L3gVDcNOQdoL6hCjotVpqYkGOIKHnKqMTi0RJWED83cQGaxbkGoEr\\_tnx4g3uqaEA90vQNPpopXvzlg9EjkJO9Ht\\_GvswYDYeySsZNgHJCgrW1fafk1e41512KQZ-HTchnM3ToQkaPbZDahW6diCHZ617cvLaJqOVrPrRVfDeufXIK373svcbFWGbvN4LcklXqi0m3XfUHYKopGyaYNoC54i-Iw](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120200130/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5Qac5-Icjn40MbVK7o38qmvL6jV97aBSjJ2Q-6LUc-aZzn0Ae64GA24VY81AARXD6_y2L3gVDcNOQdoL6hCjotVpqYkGOIKHnKqMTi0RJWED83cQGaxbkGoEr_tnx4g3uqaEA90vQNPpopXvzlg9EjkJO9Ht_GvswYDYeySsZNgHJCgrW1fafk1e41512KQZ-HTchnM3ToQkaPbZDahW6diCHZ617cvLaJqOVrPrRVfDeufXIK373svcbFWGbvN4LcklXqi0m3XfUHYKopGyaYNoC54i-Iw)

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<sup>12</sup> *Nathan Bailey's New Universal English Dictionary of Words and of Arts and Sciences*, by Nathan Bailey. London: W. Johnston, 1760. <https://books.google.com/books?id=NgdgAAAacAAJ> or [https://web.archive.org/web/20190120203128/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacwR6JOyZrLrCfDypLOW2LTBC6ffpJrTq7qf29OxvE-poUdLAWQqeTrKkidbuEMBMLwCELeAfVEW9pumPEpYICLkHeeaLJ-xONl3QTiIQxSpumuMC0DIp1MJpwnKPBHIHYOAaFoem0IXvfPzmD7A84MoQUfTiEf6V3UT12win3OQF2jIIgSqxBvmx\\_nG8xvM6IY0Jyflw9cdkcKBfKJgcpTM442pQMEYGHnOIk17LwKpgM5XgEHhtor7Nf-b948E9iahLYNQ7yEBO8kN5iqewCrZpv5EfZUB1dH4U0rnkct3WED20](https://web.archive.org/web/20190120203128/https://books.googleusercontent.com/books/content?req=AKW5QacwR6JOyZrLrCfDypLOW2LTBC6ffpJrTq7qf29OxvE-poUdLAWQqeTrKkidbuEMBMLwCELeAfVEW9pumPEpYICLkHeeaLJ-xONl3QTiIQxSpumuMC0DIp1MJpwnKPBHIHYOAaFoem0IXvfPzmD7A84MoQUfTiEf6V3UT12win3OQF2jIIgSqxBvmx_nG8xvM6IY0Jyflw9cdkcKBfKJgcpTM442pQMEYGHnOIk17LwKpgM5XgEHhtor7Nf-b948E9iahLYNQ7yEBO8kN5iqewCrZpv5EfZUB1dH4U0rnkct3WED20)

<sup>13</sup> *Dr. William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible in 9 Volumes*, by Dr. William Smith. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1868-1896.

<https://archive.org/details/BibleDictionary.williamSmithEditor.HackettAbbotFullerEtc.American/page/n7> (accessed January 2019).

Note: We use and recommend Sir William Smith's dictionary, which having been raised by English nonconformist puritan parents may have provided him a more sanctified view of things, but that doesn't mean that his information is perfect, or those who contributed to his work, and thus recommend comparing this information to other trust worthy sources.

<sup>14</sup> *Dr. William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible in 9 Volumes*, by Dr. William Smith. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1868-1896.

<https://archive.org/details/BibleDictionary.williamSmithEditor.HackettAbbotFullerEtc.American/page/n7> (accessed January 2019).

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