



Biblical Hermeneutics:

The Interpretation of Scripture

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ~John 16:13

The Historical Adventist Method

Focuses on reading the Bible literally, except when context indicates that a selection is to be read figuratively. It recognized the divine-human nature of the biblical text insofar as God inspired human being with thoughts which they wrote down in their own words. Thus, it recognizes that specific words are not inspired, but the thoughts are. In recognition of the divine source of the thoughts of the Bible, this method recognizes that the Holy Spirit will guide the earnest seeker for truth when such a seeker asks for divine insight. (Compare John 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:14)

This method includes a strong emphasis on allowing the Bible to be its own interpreter, comparing Scripture with Scripture. It also includes the necessity of considering the context in which a passage is found. Thus an examination of the literary, historical and cultural context of a passage is important in discerning its meaning for us today, particularly on potentially divisive subjects.



While this method recognizes that God met man in the context of human culture, it also recognizes that the essential truths of the Bible transcend its cultural and functions as the Word of God for all cultures.

In interpreting apocalyptic prophecy, the keys to symbolism in the rest of Scripture and anchors interpretation of future events in the pattern of already fulfilled prophecy, in contrast to the futuristic method of interpreting prophecy, which allows for great latitude in interpreting prophecies of future events.