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Bi 103 Synoptic Gospels

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Assignment 6

Define the following

1. Biblical context – Give an example.

Biblical context is studying the Bible passages and stories within their context. Taking verses out of context leads to all kinds of error and misunderstanding. Understanding context begins with four principles: literal meaning (what it says), historical setting (the events of the story, to whom is it addressed, and how it was understood at that time), grammar (the immediate sentence and paragraph within which a word or phrase is found) and synthesis (comparing it with other parts of Scripture for a fuller meaning). Context is crucial to biblical exegesis in that it is one of its most important fundamentals. After we account for the literal, historical, and grammatical nature of a passage, we must then focus on the outline and structure of the book, then the chapter, then the paragraph. These things refer to "context."

Taking phrases and verses out of context always leads to misunderstanding. For example, Galatians 5:4 -- Does "Falling from grace" mean that a person can lose his salvation? In the context of this passage, the apostle Paul was discussing the legalistic "Circumcision Party" and their attempt to bring the believers under the bondage of the Mosaic Law. He warned these believers that if a person seeks justification by God through human effort in obeying the Law, then he has rejected the way of salvation that God provided through the gracious gift of His Son, Jesus, he has departed from the way of grace or is "fallen from grace."

2. Monarchy – Give an example.

A system of government in which one person reigns, usually a king or queen. The authority, or crown, in a monarchy is generally inherited. The ruler or monarch is often only the head of state, not the head of government. Many monarchies, such as Britain and Denmark, are governed by parliaments. Queen Elizabeth II is an example of a monarchy, she presently rules over Britain.

3. Northern Kingdom – List Tribes.

The Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria about 722 BC. Most of the people were deported to ancient Assyria (2 Kings 17:6). Many of the Jews who remained in the land intermarried with people from Cutha, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim who had been sent by the Assyrian king to inhabit Samaria (2 Kings 17:24; Ezra 4:2-11). The tribes of the Northern Kingdom are Reuben,

Simeon, Levi, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, and Joseph (whose tribe was divided into the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh).

4. Southern Kingdom – List Tribes.

The Southern kingdom extended in the north as far as Bethel, while in the south it ended in the dry area known as the Negev. Its eastern and western boundaries were the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Jerusalem was its capital and it lasted from about 922-586 B.C. Judah was left suddenly independent when Rehoboam flatly refused to lighten the heavy load of forced labor and high taxation imposed on the Israelites by his father Solomon (1 Kin. 12:1-24). Upon Rehoboam's refusal, the ten tribes living north of Bethel promptly declared their independence. The tribes of the Southern Kingdom are Judah and Benjamin.

5. Palestine – List countries that are a part of the Palestine area?

The word Palestine derives from Philistia, the name given by Greek writers to the land of the Philistines, who in the 12th-century BCE occupied a small pocket of land on the southern coast, between modern Tel Aviv- Yafo and Gaza. The name was revived by the Romans in the 2nd-century CE in "Syria Palaestina," designating the southern portion of the province of Syria, and made its way thence into Arabic, where it has been used to describe the region at least since the early Islamic era. The State of Palestine is a de jure sovereign state in the Middle East claiming the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as the designated capital, Ramallah is its administrative center.

6. Babylon - Explain.

Babylon is the most famous city from ancient Mesopotamia whose ruins lie in modern-day Iraq 59 miles (94 kilometers) southwest of Baghdad. The name is thought to derive from bav-il or bav-ilim which, in the Akkadian language of the time, meant 'Gate of God' or 'Gate of the Gods' and 'Babylon' coming from Greek. The city owes its fame (or infamy) to the many references the Bible makes to it; all of which are unfavorable. In the Book of Genesis, chapter 11, Babylon is featured in the story of The Tower of Babel and the Hebrews claimed the city was named for the confusion which ensued after God caused the people to begin speaking in different languages so they would not be able to complete their great tower to the heavens.

7. Role of King Cyrus in Jewish history

Cyrus was the king of Persia, he reigned from 559–529 B.C.E. He holds a special place in the history of Israel. He is mentioned in the prophecies of Isaiah, in the Book of Ezra, and in the Book of Daniel 1:21; 6:29; 10:1. In these passages, he appears both as one destined to save Israel and to fulfill for it a certain mission on behalf of the God of Israel. Cyrus is to rebuild Jerusalem and restore the exilic community. He was chosen by God together with Darius as the instrument of His vengeance against Babylon.

8. Role of King Darius I in Jewish history.

Darius the Mede is first mentioned in the story of Belshazzar feast (Daniel 5). Belshazzar, king of Babylon, holds a great feast, during which a hand appears and writes on the wall: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN". Daniel interprets the words: Belshazzar has been weighed and found wanting, and his kingdom is to be divided between the Medes and Persians. That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean (Babylonian) king was killed, and Darius the Mede received the kingdom.

In the story of Daniel in the lions' den (Daniel 6), Daniel has continued to serve at the royal court under Darius and has been raised to high office. His jealous rivals plot his downfall, tricking Darius into issuing a decree that no prayers should be addressed to any god or man but to Darius himself, or suffer the penalty of death. Daniel continues to pray to the God of Israel, and Darius, although deeply distressed, must condemn him to be thrown into the lions' den. At daybreak, Daniel was still alive. Daniel tells him that his God sent an angel to save him. Darius commands that those who had conspired against Daniel should be thrown to the lions along with their wives and children.

Darius finally mentioned in Daniel 9. This vision of Daniel was about the end-time travails and triumph of the Israelites over their enemies. The mention of Darius is used as a chronological marker, placing the vision in "the first year of Darius son of Ahasuerus.

9. Alexander the Great (Who was he? What was his objective? What was his fate?)

Alexander the Great was a king of Macedonia who conquered an empire that stretched from the Balkans to modern-day Pakistan. Upon his father's death, Alexander moved quickly to consolidate power. He gained the support of the Macedonian army and intimidated the Greek city-states that his father had conquered into accepting his rule. After campaigns in the Balkans and Thrace, Alexander moved against Thebes, a city in Greece that had risen in rebellion, conquering it in 335 B.C., and had it destroyed. The objective of Alexander the Great was to become a monarch to be the best of the world; to control an empire, and to spread Greek culture. He simply wanted to be the ruler of the world. While considering the conquests of Carthage and Rome, Alexander the Great died of malaria in Babylon (now Iraq), on June 13, 323 B.C. He was just 32 years old.

10. Greek city-state.

Ancient Greece was not a country, it was a collection of city-states, each with its own personality and way of doing things. Five of the most powerful Greek city-states are Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Megara, and Argos. There were hundreds of city-states in ancient Greece, some small ones and some big ones with large populations. Each of these city-states had its own form of government and its own army, and even sometimes its own navy. However, the city-states of ancient Greece had many things in common. They all spoke the same language; they all believed in the same gods; they all worshiped in the same way; they all thought of themselves as Greeks. But they were loyal to their city-state. They banded together to fight outsiders.

