

plain, and intelligible books ever written, containing proof in itself of its divine origin, and full of all knowledge that our hearts could wish to know or enjoy. I have found it a treasure which the world cannot purchase. It gives a calm peace in believing, and a firm hope in the future. It sustains the mind in adversity, and teaches us to be humble in prosperity. It prepares us to love and do good to others, and to realize the value of the soul. It makes us bold and valiant for the truth, and nerves the arm to oppose error. It gives us a powerful weapon to break down Infidelity, and makes known the only antidote for sin. It instructs us how death will be conquered, and how the bonds of the tomb must be broken. It tells us of future events, and shows the preparation necessary to meet them. It gives us an opportunity to hold conversation with the King of kings, and reveals the best code of laws ever enacted.

This is but a faint view of its value; yet how many perishing souls treat it with neglect, or, what is equally as bad, treat it as a hidden mystery which cannot be known. Oh, my dear reader, make it your chief study. Try it well, and you will find it to be all I have said. Yes, like the Queen of Sheba, you will say the half was not told you.

The divinity taught in our schools is always founded on some sectarian creed. It may do to take a blank mind and impress it with this kind, but it will always end in bigotry. A free mind will never be satisfied with the views of others. Were I a teacher of youth in divinity, I would first learn their capacity and mind. If these were good, I would make them study the Bible for themselves, and send them out free to do the world good. But if they had no mind, I would stamp them with another's mind, write bigot on their forehead, and send them out as slaves! William Miller 1842.

Speaking of his own implementation of these methods Miller says

I then devoted myself to prayer and to the reading of the word. I determined to lay aside all my prepossessions, to thoroughly compare Scripture with Scripture, and to pursue its study in a regular and methodical manner. I commenced with Genesis, and read verse by verse, proceeding no faster than the meaning of the several passages should be so unfolded, as to leave me free from embarrassment respecting any mysticism or contradictions. Whenever I found any thing obscure, my practice was to compare it with all collateral passages; and by the help of CRUDEN, I examined all the texts of Scripture in which were found any of the prominent words contained in any obscure portion. Then by letting every word have its proper bearing on the subject of the text, if my view of it harmonized with every collateral passage in the Bible, it ceased to be a difficulty. In this way I pursued the study of the Bible, in my first perusal of it, for about two years, and was fully satisfied that it is its own interpreter. I found that by a comparison of Scripture with history, all the prophecies, as far as they have been fulfilled, had been fulfilled literally; that all the various figures, metaphors, parables, similitudes, etc. of the Bible, were either explained in their immediate connection, or the terms in which they were expressed were defined in other portions of the word, and when thus explained, are to be literally understood in accordance with such explanation. I was thus satisfied that the Bible is a system of revealed truths, so clearly and simply given, that the "wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." William Miller 1842.



William Miller's 14 Principles of Interpretation



"The word of God is to be our study. We are to educate our children in the truths found therein.

It is an inexhaustible treasure; but men fail to find this treasure because they do not search until it is within their possession. Very many are content with a supposition in regard to the truth. They are content with a surface work, taking for granted that they have all that is essential. They take the sayings of others for truth, being too indolent to put themselves to diligent, earnest labor, represented in the word as digging for hidden treasure. But man's inventions are not only unreliable, they are dangerous; for they place man where God should be. They place the sayings of men where a 'Thus saith the Lord' should be." Christ's Object Lessons, page 109.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' John 3:3. He may conjecture and imagine, but without the eye of faith he cannot see the treasure. Christ gave His life to secure for us this inestimable treasure; but without regeneration through faith in His blood, there is no remission of sins, no treasure for any perishing soul." Id. Page 112

"I perceived how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue." William Tyndale

"Do you know who taught the eagles to find their prey? Well, that same God teaches His hungry children to find their Father in His Word." William Tyndale

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In studying the Bible, I have found the following rules to be of great service to myself, and now give them to the public by special request. Every

rule should be well studied, in connection with the scripture references, if the Bible student would be at all benefited by them.

1: Every word must have its proper bearing on the subject presented in the Bible.

PROOF

Matthew 5:18.

2: All scripture is necessary, and may be understood by a diligent application and study.

PROOF

2 Timothy 3:15, 16, 17.

3: Nothing revealed in the scripture can or will be hid from those who ask in faith, not wavering.

PROOF

Deuteronomy 29:29. Matthew 10:26, 27. 1 Corinthians 2:10. Philippians 3:15. Isaiah 14:11. Matthew 21:22. John 14:13, 14. 15:7. James 1:5, 6. 1 John 5:13, 14, 15

4: To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know; then let every word have its proper influence, and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in an error.

PROOF

Isaiah 28:7-29. 35:8. Proverbs 19:27. Luke 24:27, 44, 45. Romans 16:26. James 5:19. 2 Peter 1:19, 29.

5: Scripture must be its own expositor, since it is a rule of itself. If I depend on a teacher to expound it to me, and he should guess at its meaning, or desire to have it so on account of his sectarian creed, or to be thought wise, then his guessing, desire, creed or wisdom is my rule, not the Bible.

PROOFS

Psalms 19:7, 8, 9, 10, 11. 119:97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105. Matthew 23:8, 9, 10. 1 Corinthians 2:12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Ezekiel 34:18, 19. Luke 11:52. Malachi 2:7, 8.

6: God has revealed things to come, by visions, in

figures and parables, and in this way the same things are oftentimes revealed again and again, by different visions, or in different figures, and parables. If you wish to understand them, you must combine them all in one.

PROOFS

Psalms 89:19. Hosea 12:10. Habakkuk 2:2. Acts 2:17. 1 Corinthians 10:6. Hebrews 9:9, 24. Psalm 78:2. Matthew 13:13, 34. Genesis 41:1-32. Daniel 2:7 and 8. Acts 10:9-16.

7: Visions are always mentioned as such.

PROOFS

2 Corinthians 12:1

8: Figures always have a figurative meaning, and are used much in prophecy, to represent future things, times and events; such as mountains, meaning governments; beasts, meaning kingdoms. Waters, meaning people. Lamp, meaning Word of God. Day, meaning year.

PROOFS

Daniel 2:35, 44. 7:8, 17. Revelation 17:1, 15. Psalm 119:105. Ezekiel 4:6.

9: Parables are used as comparisons to illustrate subjects, and must be explained in the same way as figures by the subject and Bible. Mark 14:13 See explanation of the ten virgins, Miller's Lectures, Number 16.

10: Figures sometimes have two or more different significations, as day is used in a figurative sense to represent three different periods of time. MWV1 21.8 If you put on the right construction it will harmonize with the Bible and make good sense, otherwise it will not.

PROOFS

Ecclesiastes 7:14. Ezekiel 4:6. 2 Peter 3:8.

11: How to know when a word is used figuratively. If it makes good sense as it stands, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, then it must be understood literally, if not, figuratively.

PROOFS

Revelation 12:1, 2. 17:3-7.

12: To learn the true meaning of figures, trace your figurative word through your Bible, and where you find it explained, put it on your figure, and if it makes good sense you need look no further, if not, look again.

13: To know whether we have the true historical event for the fulfilment of a prophecy. If you find every word of the prophecy (after the figures are understood) is literally fulfilled, then you may know that your history is the true event. But if one word lacks a fulfilment, then you must look for another event, or wait its future development. For God takes care that history and prophecy doth agree, so that the true believing children of God may never be ashamed.

PROOFS

Psalms 22:5. Isaiah 45:17, 18, 19. 1 Peter 2:6. Revelation 17:17. Acts 3:18.

14: The most important rule of all is, that you must have faith. It must be a faith that requires a sacrifice, and, if tried, would give up the dearest object on earth, the world and all its desires, character, living, occupation, friends, home, comforts, and worldly honors. If any of these should hinder our believing any part of God's word, it would show our faith to be vain. Nor can we ever believe so long as one of these motives lies lurking in our hearts. We must believe that God will never forfeit his word. And we can have confidence that he that takes notice of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our head, will guard the translation of his own word, and throw a barrier around it, and prevent those who sincerely trust in God, and put implicit confidence in his word, from erring far from the truth, though they may not understand Hebrew or Greek.

These are some of the most important rules which I find the word of God warrants me to adopt and follow, in order for system and regularity. And if I am not greatly deceived, in so doing, I have found the Bible, as a whole, one of the most simple,