

“Herman” Who?

By Tyler King



God does
not dwell in
temples
made with
hands
(Acts 17:24)

The response of the Ethiopian eunuch when asked if he understood the scroll of Isaiah was, "How can I unless someone guides me." Within scripture, there are certain texts where special time and care is necessary in order to achieve proper understanding. For example, books like Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation carry with them what is called "apocalyptic literature." One doesn't have to venture far in these books before they start getting "hard to grasp." For the Ethiopian, the Isaiah scroll was this way. Literature styles such as "idioms," "poetry," and "didacticism" can often be hard to grasp!

The term, "*hermeneutics*" may get labeled as a boring word used among scholars, but that would be a discredit to the practice. In simplest forms, hermeneutics is the process of interpreting scripture. Without proper use of it, many will arrive at wrong conclusions of the inspired text. Some individuals bring their own "baggage" (assumptions) to scripture and allow themselves to inspire the text, rather than letting the text inspire them. Repeatedly in scripture we find people who devoted themselves to the studying of scripture:

Ezra - in chapter 7, verse 10, Ezra worked in three ways to learn God's Word. (1) He set his heart on it, (2) he did the law of the Lord, and (3) he taught the statutes. Ezra had an obligation to steer the people of God back to a good direction once out of captivity. This was accomplished through his diligence of study.

Solomon - credited with being the wisest person, he too had to study. Notice in Ecclesiastes 12:9 that he studied in order to teach others. Solomon also notes "much study is weariness of the flesh." There are many aspects to study in this life. That done "in and of itself" can physically drain a person. Likewise, diligent study of God's word can be wearisome. However, the hard work does *not* go without reward. Every time we strive to "dig deep" into God's word, we shall walk away blessed. Tired, but blessed!

Timothy - Paul understood there needed to be diligence involved when handling God's Word appropriately (see 2 Timothy 2:15). Timothy was also tasked as a preacher in the first century. It was a special obligation to spread the inspired writings of God in a right way. He had to be diligent!

Paul - Even in his dying moments, Paul still sought his books and parchments (2 Timothy 4:13). A diligent student never stops being a student. A life long learner of the scriptures is rewarding.

You might have noticed the repetition of a word used to describe these four men in the Bible. The word **diligence** is mandatory when seeking to understand the text. Going back to Acts 8, the Ethiopian man did not get frustrated and throw the scroll of Isaiah away. Rather, he invited Philip up into his chariot for a better understanding of the what he was reading. Maybe you and I come across a passage that makes absolutely no sense or maybe we've been wrestling with words in a specific book of the Bible. Don't throw it out and don't give up on the study! Be diligent, dig and dig some more! You'll find yourself blessed when you see Bible truths revealed. "Herman" would agree...



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