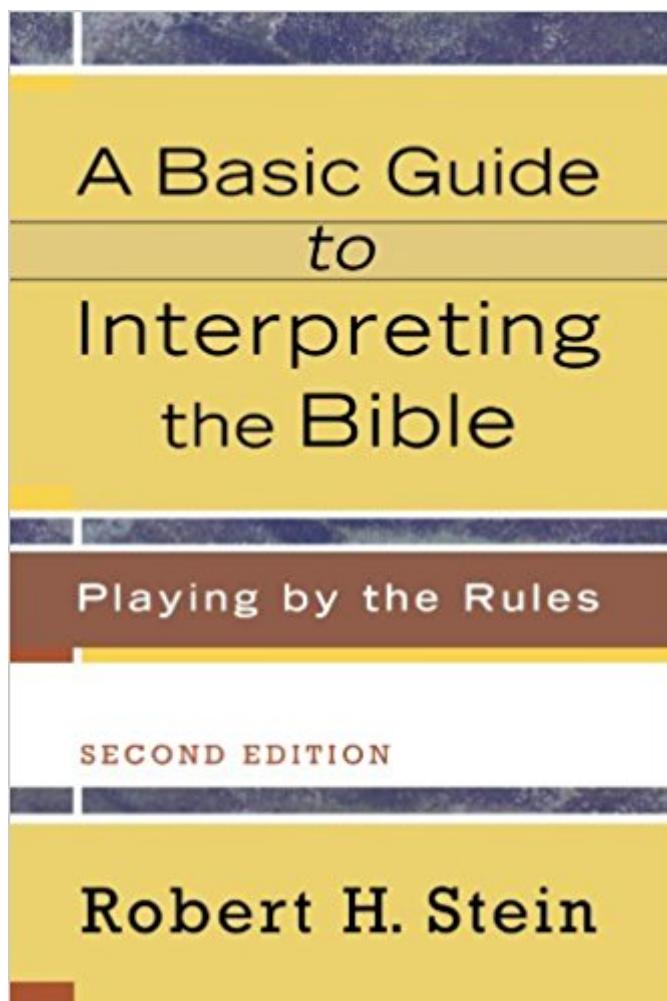


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# A Basic Guide To Interpreting The Bible: Playing By The Rules



## **Synopsis**

In this accessible guide to interpreting the Bible, senior New Testament scholar Robert Stein helps readers identify various biblical genres, understand the meaning of biblical texts, and apply that meaning to contemporary life. This edition has been completely revised throughout to reflect Stein's current thinking and changes to the discipline over the past decade. Students of the Bible will find the book effective in group settings. Praise for the first edition "Stein's work is both a fine introduction to the task of biblical hermeneutics for the novice and an innovative refresher for the veteran teacher or pastor."--Faith & Mission

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This accessible guide to interpreting the Bible helps students identify various biblical genres, understand the meaning of biblical texts, and apply that meaning to contemporary life. The second edition has been completely revised throughout. "Bob Stein is a wise and seasoned interpreter of Scripture, and these qualities are on full display in this wonderfully practical book on how to interpret the Bible. Readers will find here a sound hermeneutical approach that is applied to a variety of genres in the Scriptures. This is an ideal book both for university and seminary courses and for laypersons who desire a guide to understanding the Scriptures."--Thomas R. Schreiner, James Buchanan Harrison Professor of Biblical Interpretation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary "In lucid and engaging style, Robert Stein explores an author-centered hermeneutic for biblical interpretation. The reader benefits from clear definitions of key concepts and creative

examples of these concepts in action, as well as exercises that can be used to augment the learning process. An accessible introduction to a complex topic."--Jeannine K. Brown, professor of New Testament, Bethel SeminaryPraise for the first edition"The book is highly readable (no mean feat these days) and very suitable for use in colleges and congregational adult education; one might even consider using it as a supplemental text in a seminary course."--Rich Erickson, Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society"Stein's work is both a fine introduction to the task of biblical hermeneutics for the novice and an innovative refresher for the veteran teacher or pastor."--Jeffrey T. Riddle, Faith & Mission"Stein has provided a very useful guide to biblical interpretation. While written for people first learning to study the Bible, it contains a wealth of information for more advanced students."--DÃƒÂ©nal O'MathÃƒÂ©na, Ashland Theological Journal

Robert H. Stein (PhD, Princeton Theological Seminary), now retired, most recently served as senior professor of New Testament interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He previously taught at Bethel Seminary. A world-renowned scholar of the Synoptic Gospels, he is the author of several books, including *Mark* in the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*, *Luke*, and *Jesus the Messiah*.

Stein seeks to provide a clear, adequate, and correct hermeneutical framework in order to help readers understand and apply biblical texts to their own life. In chapters one through four Stein introduces and defines his hermeneutical philosophy, its terms, its literary forms, and the role of the Spirit in interpretation. In chapters five through fourteen, Stein details the characteristics of each genre, along with the principles for interpretation corresponding to each genre. He also provides a list of questions at the end of each chapter that encourages the reader to think more deeply about the how each genre influences interpretation.Critical AnalysisIn chapter one, Stein provides a clear explanation of the roles that the author, the text, and the reader have in the process of interpreting the bible. Stein interacts with differing views, answers objections to his own view, and offers logical and convincing arguments with biblical and extra biblical evidence. Chapter two includes helpful figures and charts to clarify hermeneutical terms and their relationship to one another. In chapter three, Stein explains the role of the Spirit in biblical interpretation with scriptural evidence and addresses common misconceptions. Chapter four explains how the literary form influences a textÃƒÂ¢Ã¢â€šÂ¬Ã¢â€šÂ¢s meaning through numerous biblical examples. In chapter five, Stein uses the example of Mark 1:2-8 to show how genre influence interpretation and focus (88). In chapter six, Stein gives two principles for understanding OT covenants: their gracious nature and

already-existing covenantal relationship (103). In chapter seven, Stein shows the importance of parallelism in poetry by explaining Col. 1:15-20 (114-116). In chapter eight, Stein explains how Psalms of praise can be recognized by introductory expressions like Hallelujah, and they often include a description of what God has done (127). Chapter nine explains why proverbs should be understood as “generalizations learned from careful observation and a wise analysis of life” (133). In chapter ten, Stein gives clarity to the literary form of prophecy by pointing out the different language it employs and the different possibilities of fulfillment. In chapter eleven, Stein shows how we can understand biblical idioms by looking at their context and other biblical references. In chapter twelve, Stein refutes the allegorical method for interpreting parables, and provides one main rule for interpretation: seek the author’s intended, one basic point for telling the parable. In order to recognize exaggeration, Stein gives five main principles: the statement is impossible, it is contradictory to what other statements in the bible teach, other passages interpret it non-literally, prophecy was not literally fulfilled, and it uses universal language. In chapter fourteen, Stein describes how the meanings of words contained in correspondence are influenced by their literary context and cultural context.

Stein walks through the rule needed when interpreting a text from a different language and culture, i.e. the Bible. These rules should be obvious, like what did the original author intend to say in the text? Or, the text means what it says, not what we want it to say, but there are timeless principles that do apply to us today. The first section of the book presents the General Rules of Interpretation (Hermeneutics). This section itself is worth the price of the book. The second section talks about interpreting various genres, which Stein call "Rules for the Individual Games." That section is helpful to anyone who wants to read any genre intelligently. Finally, there are helpful picture and tables throughout the book that illustrate key points that Stein is making. I found them to be very helpful. This is a must read for any Pastor, Sunday School teacher, Seminary Student or Professor.

This is not an easy read but there is good helpful insight that will help clarify some confusing scripture

This is a great book for understanding Biblical interpretation. I used it for a Master’s level Hermeneutics class and found it to be a great asset to what the Professor was teaching. It has also helped me in my daily personal studies in gaining greater insight into what God is telling us through

His written word.

Really helpful. Wish I had understood this years ago. Read the hard copy but downloaded the electronic version for a handy reference. Highly encourage all students of the Scriptures to read this book.

great assigned martial.

Stein's book is a relatively simple, but concise and cogent work on Hermeneutics. The first several chapters deal with general hermeneutics and the second half of the book deals with specific hermeneutics. The book will provide you with hermeneutical terminology that is extremely helpful, based on E.D. Hirsch's ideas. For example, in a given biblical text, you will learn the differences between what the subject matter is, the meaning of the text (authorial intent), the implications, the norms of language and utterance, the significance of the text (which is application), etc. In addition, you will learn specific hermeneutical principles for different biblical genres. I highly recommend this book for your library!

This book was assigned in a class. I initially checked it out from the library but after viewing it I bought a copy. It is easy to follow the author's points and the author builds his points from chapter to chapter. A good read.

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