

## PRINCIPLE FOUR: Considering Context

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### What do we mean by “Considering Context”?

“Considering Context” means that, to better understand a passage or book of the Bible today, we must first turn back time to understand what it meant when it was originally written.



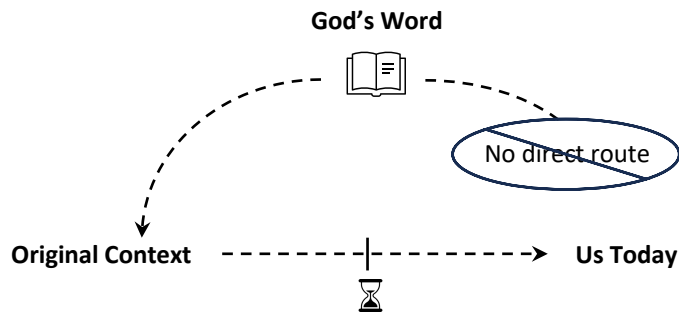
Before applying it to our own lives, we must first consider what it meant in its original context.

### Why is “Considering Context” important?

If we take the shortcut of applying God’s Word directly to our lives today, we risk misunderstanding its meaning, misapplying its message, and misleading others around us to do the same.

Turning back to understand what a text meant in its original context helps us understand how to better apply it to our lives today.

### How does “Considering Context” work?



1. Not taking the direct route from God’s Word to us today
2. Understanding the meaning of God’s Word in its original context
3. Applying the meaning of God’s Word to us today

### What is the “original context” with which we should be concerned?

- **The Historical Context.** The time and culture in which a text was written and the particular situation to which it was addressed.
- **The Literary Context.** The place of a text within a particular book, collection of books, and ultimately the Bible itself.

### Questions to Consider:

Read the following passages to better understand Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, both before and after the time of Jonah:

- Genesis 10:6-20
- 2 Kings 17:6 and 19:35-37

Read the following passages to better understand the prophet, Jonah.

- 2 Kings 14:23-15:7
- Exodus 34:1-10

How do these passages help us understand the historical context of the book of Jonah? Of the time when the book of Jonah was written?

How do these passages help us understand the events that take place in the book of Jonah?

How do these passages help us understand the response that the author desires from the original readers of the book of Jonah?

How does traveling back to understand the meaning of the book of Jonah in its original context help us rightly understand apply its meaning to us today?