

understand a text on its own terms. Instead, they insist, we can only read it from within our cultural prisons. The same critical theory has come to see words (including written texts) as weapons of oppression—oppression that must be resisted. This is the world we inhabit. Where does that leave us? A couple of partial solutions offer themselves:

1. I can simply go with what I do see in the Bible, hoping my myopia hasn't led me to get it so wrong. That does not seem satisfactory when we are dealing with the Word of God by which we live.
2. I can spend my life listening to how people from different cultures read the Bible, humbly learning to see the world and the Word through their eyes. This approach might expand my horizon, but it is also likely to cause much confusion if I don't have any way to evaluate and arbitrate these different readings. It will just be one interpretation against another; one world view against another.

I think there is a much better solution. And God has already provided it in the Old Testament. In God's dealings with the nation of Israel (and the people connected to it), God created a distinct culture. Over a period of 2000 years he set about establishing, building and renovating a relationship with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If culture is the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society, then it is clear that Israel developed its own distinct culture during the period of her history covered by the Old Testament. And this culture was primarily shaped by God himself. Israel was never a perfect expression of the culture God desired, but God's design for their individual and corporate lives was abundantly clear.

If this is the case, then it should be clear that the primary culture we need to be concerned with is not our culture or other cultures from around the world but the culture God set up—the culture that forms the context of the Bible and Jesus. To be enculturated in God's Old Testament culture is not an easy, instantaneous task. It takes thoughtful reading and meditation. But it is a task that those who love God's Word must undertake. And as we make progress in the task, our understanding of the Bible, especially of Jesus, will be built up and enriched. We will grow in confidence that we are seeing what God means us to see. And so, we will speak with greater confidence.

Collect

Lord of life, by submitting to death you conquered the grave; by being lifted upon the cross, you draw all peoples to you; by being raised from the dead, you restore to humanity all that was lost through sin: be with us in your risen power, that in word and deed we may proclaim the marvellous mystery of death and resurrection. For all praise is yours, now and throughout eternity. Amen.



St Luke's Anglican Church Emerald

Cnr Ruby & Theresa St.

Phone – 4982 1802

Email – emerald@anglicanchurchcq.org.au

Website – stlukesemerald.org.au

Turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord [Acts 3:19-20]

Easter 3

14th April

Acts 3:11-26

Psalm 4

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:33-49

Easter 4

21st April

Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

1 John 3:16-24

John 10:11-18

Isn't That Just Your Interpretation?

Tim Thorburn TGCA – April 2022

One of the delights of the worldwide church is reading the Bible with sisters and brothers from different cultures. Here, there is no Gentile or Jew, slave or free, bogan or cool, but Christ is all and is in all. But there is also something unnerving about cross-cultural fellowship. For as we read the Bible together, we find ourselves understanding it differently. We read the same words, the same story, the same text. But what we see in the text and how we understand it, depends on the cultural lenses we use to see the world. This can be exhilarating as we 'see' that there is more to the story than we have seen before. But it can also be unsettling: it raises difficult questions; questions like:

- Have my cultural lenses blinkered me from seeing the truth God has revealed?
- Is what I see in the text merely a small, insignificant part of the truth?
- Am I missing the wood for the trees?
- Have I completely failed to understand what the text is about?

For thoughtful readers of the Bible, these questions are unsettling. So how do we work out who is right? Often the different 'readings' will be complementary, and we can 'add' them all together. But sometimes also, they will be in tension. For the last 70 years, academic trends in the West have emphasised the inability of culturally conditioned humans to arrive at any 'objective' meaning. A revolution in philosophy and literary criticism have attacked the idea that we might hope to

A guide for our prayers during the week

Monday

Our diocese and the gospel

- Bishop Peter
- Other parishes
- Dean for Cathedral – Rev. Ross Nicholson

Tuesday

Our church and the gospel

- Children and youth
- Families
- Seniors
- Ivy, Nancy, Chris

Wednesday

Our community and the gospel

- St Luke's Op Shop
- Blackwater
- Emerald Churches

Thursday

Our nation and the gospel

- Prime minister
- State and local government
- Religious Freedom legislation

Friday

God's world and the gospel

- Islamisation
- War and poverty
- Persecuted Church
- CMS and ABM

Saturday

Ministry and the gospel

- Bible Studies
- Food for Body and Soul
- Wardens and Parish Council

Dates to Remember

20 April	Working bee from 8 am
21 April	Service at 4 pm
27-28 April	BCA – Mike Uptin
25 May	Lay Preacher training Springsure 1-5 pm
26-29 May	Clergy Conference

	14 April	21 April
Service Leader	Donna	Russell
Welcome	Alan	Merv
Power Point		
Read		Larry, Nancy
Prayers	Dianne	Natalie
Sunday School		
Morning Tea		
Shop	Donna, Dianne	Nancy
Mowing	Daniel	

The BCA Prayer

Lord our God, help us to remember those who live in isolated and remote parts of our land. We ask you to strengthen and encourage all whose ministries are supported by The Bush Church Aid Society.

Refresh them in times of discouragement and loneliness and call others to stand with them in the task of making Christ known.

Grant that, through the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, through caring service and by support for young people, the message of your redeeming love may be proclaimed and accepted by the people of our land. We ask these things through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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