


**ORIGEN ON SPIRITUAL READING OF SCRIPTURE AND PRAYER  
AS DIVINE PEDAGOGY FOR THE PERFECTION OF LIFE**


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## ABSTRACT

There are many disputations among scholars regarding Origen's scriptural hermeneutics. Some reject Origen's way of reading Scripture, but others support and accept this method of Scripture reading. Origen's spiritual reading is unfairly treated if it is not viewed from his own perspective and context, since his thought and religious life were influenced by his circumstances. The Hellenistic philosophical context in Alexandria where he spent more than half of his life and the pastoral context in Caesarea where he lived for the rest of his life mostly shaped his work on Scripture. Further, many studies of Origen's biblical hermeneutics address Origen's approach in isolation from his devotional practice, thus, this does not reflect the fullness of Origen's mystical understanding of the Scriptures. For Origen, reading Scripture is not only intended for gaining the meaning of the text. Rather, the most important element of Scripture reading is to form one's life spiritually, so that the faithful person might experience the perfection of life right up into the apex of divinization in Christ in the eschaton. This study shows that for Origen, the spiritual reading is inseparably connected to prayer to make the reading work in the life of the faithful. To be consistent with his ultimate goal, Origen places Scripture reading and prayer on the progressive rungs of *paideia* to signify the spiritual growth of a person in becoming an imitator of God. Thus, Origen's spiritual reading of Scripture must be understood in its coherence with prayer and education for the spiritual journey of returning back to God.