

Chapter 4

“SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES”

*Who are the searchers of the Scriptures in the eyes of men?
Who are the searchers in the eyes of God?*

*“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have
eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”
John 5:39*

"Searchers" of the Scriptures are typified by the Scribes and the Apostles during the time of Christ. The Scribes, with due diligence and much human effort, tried to gain mastery of the word of God. That is why they were called Doctors of the Law. The Apostles on the other hand, most of them unlearned, like "little children," knew nothing and could do nothing.

Who would think that the real searchers are the Apostles of Christ? The spiritual language of God is amply demonstrated here. To Him "searching the Scriptures" is simply total trust and confidence that He would endow knowledge and wisdom:

James 1:5-8 "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. ⁷For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. ⁸A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Christ proved this with His Disciples who were endowed with divine knowledge and wisdom, not otherwise given to the diligent searchers with human efforts. "Searching" according to Christ simply means humbling oneself before Him:

Mathew 11:25 "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

1 John 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie...:"

GOD IS A SPIRIT

God is a Spirit (John 4:24). What relationship can man have with a Spirit? God made a plan that He has to relate to His chosen people. This is through His *spoken words*. Can the *Speaker* be separated from His *spoken words*? "Are" the Speaker and the Word counted two? Now the following presents a much deeper dimension:

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

God relayed His spoken words to His prophets and apostles.

2 Peter 1:21 "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

From a closer point of view, we see the Word as referring to Jesus Christ.

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us..."

Revelation 19:13 "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."

Just as God relates to His chosen through His words; so is the Word in the flesh:

1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

Since the creation of man, God had been relating to the people through His spoken words. In the beginning, this was conveyed from mouth to mouth from generation to generation. Moses began putting these words in writing in

the book of Genesis, the first book, followed by Leviticus, Numbers, Exodus, and Deuteronomy. The last person to write the words of God was John the apostle, who wrote the book of Revelation as he was exiled in the island of Patmos. The prophets and apostles, therefore, were the *Writers* while God is the *Author*. The writers might have different styles in writing, but the message cannot be altered.

In the beginning, the words were written on bark of trees and skin of animals. Later, these were transferred to the crude form of paper called *papyrus*, and compiled into *rolls*. It was only after the invention of the printing press in the mid 20th century, that we have the words of God printed in books, which we now call the Holy Bible. This is the proof that the words of God represent Him:

2 Timothy 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE

God commissioned about forty men, called prophets and apostles, to write His spoken words. It took them about 1,600 years from 1500 B.C. to AD 97 to do it. They were simply the writers.¹ The Holy Bible was written, not in words of human wisdom, but in words inspired by the Holy Spirit:

In the beginning, the Holy Bible was written without division into chapters and verses. It was only in the mid 20th century that this was done. Stephen Langton divided the Bible into chapters in about AD 1228. R. Nathan divided the Old Testament into verses in 1448. Robert Stephanus divided the New Testament into verses in 1551. The entire Bible, divided into chapters and verses, first appeared in the Geneva Bible in 1560. The Holy Bible, or part of it, was translated into more than 1,600 different languages and dialects in the early 1960's. Man's role, therefore, in the *Word of God* is limited to writing, dividing it into chapters and verses, printing, binding, and presenting it in the form of books. As to its interpretation, this is the subject of this chapter and encompasses this present and, perhaps, succeeding volumes of the book. This is what is written about the word of God. God is a Spirit, so are His words spiritual.

¹ 2 Peter 1:21 “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

John 6:63 (Jesus Christ speaking) “It is the spirit that quickeneth...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

Romans 7:14 “For we know that the law is spiritual...”

It should be noted that God is the *Author*, while the prophets and apostles were only the *Writers*. God is the *Speaker (over the microphone)*, while the writers compose the *Speaker System*. The speaker system cannot produce sound of its own. If ever, it is purely hiss and hum, a cacophony and noise. Who can, therefore, decipher or interpret the word of God in the Holy Bible?

PEOPLES' PERCEPTION OF THE HOLY BIBLE

1. Some people say the Bible is a work like any book written by men. These people therefore do not give much importance to the Bible.
2. Other people say the Bible is not within the “province” of man. You will just go crazy understanding it. To these people, reading the Bible is a waste of “precious” time.
3. To the religious people, they believe God dictated or revealed His words to the prophets and apostles and their writing is compiled in a book we call the Holy Bible. It contains the words of God that instruct the people about His ways and plan. To these people, therefore, the Bible can be easily understood if only one would “search the scriptures.” God gave us the intellect to understand His great message, they say. Is not God love? He, therefore, gave His words that many people would be saved. The Bible is a source of strength in character leading to righteousness.
4. To a very few people, the Bible is written by men but authored by God. It contains the words of God that represent Him. Since God is a Spirit and He is represented by His words, He alone can decipher the Holy Bible through His “spiritual language.” These people, therefore, never attempt to interpret the great message of the word, although they understand the literal meaning.

People in the four categories during the time of Jesus Christ may be the following:

To the *First* belonged the Romans who, at that time, ruled Israel. Included also were other nationalities that had other concepts of God and supernatural things.

To the *Second* were the Jews in general who had interest other than the Laws of God handed to Moses.

To the *Third* were the Teachers of the Law and their followers. Largely, they may be called the religious people. The Teachers of the Law took upon themselves the authority to interpret and to preach the Laws handed down to Moses. When they met our Lord, however, in His tender age of twelve years, they found themselves as ignorant as they found anyone else.

Luke 2:42 “And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast...⁴³...the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.⁴⁶...And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.⁴⁷And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.”

To the *Fourth* were the fishermen, tax collectors, prostitute, and sinners in general. They were Peter, Andrew, John, James, Magdalene, Matthew, Levi, Zacchaeus and others. Did these people ever take upon themselves the intelligence and capability to comprehend the word of God? When our Lord spoke, “*Destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it up again,*” did they understand what He was saying? They were as ignorant as the rest! They only came to know the meaning when our Lord explained it to them by “demonstration.” That is, at His resurrection after 3 days that the temple refers to the body of our Lord.²

The Jews who, relying on their own understanding ridiculed Jesus, saying, “Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?” They even used this notion in indicting our Lord leading to His death on the cross.

One thing that separated the “simple people” from the rest is, in the eyes of our Lord, they were “little children” who knew and could do nothing. They

² John 2:20 “Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?”

John 2:21 “But he spake of the temple of his body.²² When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.”

were unworthy sinners, destitute and ignorant. Unknown to them, however, they had the key to the kingdom of heaven:

Matthew 18:3 "And said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

John 13:33 "Little children, yet a little while I am with you..."

These unworthy simple people, "little children in the eyes of our Lord," were the ones endowed with divine knowledge and wisdom not only in the New but in the Old Testament as well. In the eyes of God, they must be the real "searchers of the Scriptures."

Matthew 11:25 "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Isaiah 28:9 [KJV] "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts."

If we are to see the four kinds of people in our time, can we possibly identify ourselves?

1. To the *First* are the people who do not believe in the Holy Bible as the word of God. These are people of different religions having their own "inspired religious writings."
2. To the *Second* group belong the people who, although they know that the Holy Bible is the word of God, do not put much thought about it. They are preoccupied with more "important matters" in life.
3. To the *Third* are the religious people in our time. Trusting in man's intelligence and capability, they spend many years in Bible schools and Seminaries "burning the midnight oil," so to speak. With the diploma/s in hand, they profess authority from God as prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Just like their counterparts during the time of Christ, they draw many people with their eloquent preaching of the word of God. Everything is seen in

them as Christ saw in His time: the title and honor³, authority and heavy burden imposed on the people⁴, distinction in attire⁵, peculiarity in speech, manner and conduct⁶, beautiful prayers⁷, and piety as our Lord saw “cleanliness” in them⁸.

As at the time of our Lord where the sect of the Pharisees and Sadducees bitterly engaged in debate regarding the truth, so are Christian denominations today. All profess to love and worship God, but just as our Lord told the religious leaders, today we hear preachers of denominations openly declaring, “The infinite God is incapable of clear identification with the finite mind of man.”

John 8:54 “Jesus answered...it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: ⁵⁵Yet ye have not known him...”

God’s word is true all the time:

1 Corinthians 1:19 “...I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. ²⁰Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? where is

³ Matthew 23:8 “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and *all ye are brethren.*”

Matthew 23:9 “And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”

Matthew 23:10 “Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.”

⁴ Matthew 23:4 “For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.”

⁵ Matthew 23:5-7 “But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, ⁶ And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, ⁷ And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.”

⁶ Luke 20:47 “...and for a shew make long prayers...”

⁷ Matthew 6:7 “But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be Heard for their much speaking.”

⁸ Matthew 23:25 “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup And of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. ²⁶ Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.”

the disputer of this world...²¹...the world by wisdom knew not God...”

Today, where can we find the fourth category of people? Where did we find the Disciples of Christ? In high society? In politics? They are obscure as the Disciples of Christ. They are, however, as knowledgeable and assertive of the great message of the Word of God as their counterpart 2000 years ago!

As Jesus taught His Disciples and promised to be with them until the end of the world,⁹ these “few obscure people” show their complete grasp of the great message of the word, and their declaration that God never is a mystery. They have the promise from the New Covenant.¹⁰ What a great similitude, reminiscent of the child Jesus in front of the Doctors of the Law:

Luke 2:46 “And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.”

2 Timothy 3:15 “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation...”

With their true spiritual humility, they recognize the *Authority* of God!

Isaiah 55:8 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, smith the LORD. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

⁹ Matthew 28:20 “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

¹⁰ Jeremiah 31:31-34 “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a *new covenant...*³³ after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD...”

Hebrews 8:11 “And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.”

How easy for many people to quote that verse. However, the test for real trust is to accept the following:

Proverbs 3:5 "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."

Proverbs 28:26 "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool..."

DECIPHERING GOD'S WORDS

In reading the Holy Bible, we often hear preachers suggesting that, in order to get the message of God, we have to read the whole chapter or several verses to get the context of the story. With this practice, in some cases perception of different people may be the same. However, many times interpretations differ resulting in the divergence of assessment of the truth. God gives us the proper way of reading the Holy Bible:

Isaiah 28:10 "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:"

Related to God's instruction, in the beginning, the Holy Bible was not even divided into chapters, and chapters are not divided into verses. Oftentimes, the verses we now read are not interrelated and well organized. Thus, having in mind a particular topic or question and depend on God's guidance finding the "line or lines" in the "different books or chapters or verses" would give us the intended message.

God is the *Speaker*. His true Disciples are the *Speaker System*. No words will come out the speaker system without the speaker talking over the microphone. Any sound coming from the speaker system, without the speaker, is cacophony or noise. That is how the true followers of Christ, the real Christians, see God and themselves.

They are "little children" who know nothing and can do nothing. They therefore fully and truly depend on God alone – not to anyone else or to themselves. They realize that the God-given intelligence and physical strength is not for their *Spiritual Life*, but these are intended for their *Physical Life*.

For their *Physical Life*, therefore, they have to use the intellect, feeling, and physical strength to the fullest extent. That is what they see in the life of our

Lord Jesus Christ as model.¹¹ He worked as a carpenter, and never did we see or hear Him asked the Father for His physical and material needs. Paul followed the path shown by the model. So he wrote:

1 Corinthians 11:1 “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

For their *Spiritual Life*, real Christians see themselves “nothing” in the eyes of the Lord. What can they do? They therefore fully depend on God on matters pertaining to Him and His words. This is what they see in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, the man,¹² as model showing the example.¹³

John 5:19 “...Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself...”

This is what “little children” mean to them, and what our Lord meant in:

Matthew 5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

As Solomon asked the Lord, so also do they ask divine knowledge and wisdom and not corporeal or earthly things. God was pleased with Solomon. With God’s plan, there is no need for His Chosen to depend on other people. They look at the servants (Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, and Teachers) of God as simple *Sound System*, sans human wisdom, who simply emit what the *Speaker* is saying over the microphone.

What can real Christians do regarding matters pertaining to the word but simply wait for God’s revelation:

1 Corinthians 2:12 “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. ¹³Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

¹¹ Mark 6:3 “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.”

¹² 1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

¹³ 1 Peter 2:21 “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ... leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”

How many people believe and accept this?

1 John 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you..."

GREAT LESSON

Real Christians want to share this one thing with people. For being "little children" and realizing their "nothingness" in the eyes of God, they cannot do anything but depend on Him. God, therefore, is given a "free hand" to work in their *Spiritual Life*.

Their *Physical Life* though is their own responsibility as Jesus Christ and Paul demonstrated. They never asked the Father for their physical-material necessities. This jibes perfectly with what our Lord told His disciples:

Matthew 6:8 "...your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

God gave us the intellect and physical strength, and we did not ask for them. The fowls of the air do not have these "tools" for their physical survival, yet they live.

Matthew 6:25 "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?²⁶ Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"

Physical Life, however, has to walk hand-in-hand with *Spiritual Life*. By virtue of being a "little child," God now guides the real believer's *Spiritual Life* to His path and said, "Ye are the light of the world." He told them, "Ye are the salt of the earth," pertaining to their *Physical Life*. Real Christians realize the true meaning of the following pertaining to these two kinds of life:

Amos 3:3 "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

The fact that *Christianity Today* is divided is the proof that no one, but God alone can reveal the truth. Many people think otherwise, saying:

- "How can God explain His words when He is invisible."
- "We will go crazy trying to understand the Bible."
- "We will just rely on 'Bible authorities.' After all, it is their role to explain and exhort as God's representatives."

God revealed that man is incapable of unraveling the great mysteries of His words. Many people are deceived into believing that just because a doctrine is supported by Bible verses, it already constitutes the truth. This is what the 1001 Christian denominations are preaching today. Each of them claims the "truth" on the basis of this misconception. "Many" people follow them!

God's chosen few see otherwise. They ask the *Speaker* on the microphone and not the *Speaker System*. They ask God and not the "servants" on their own personal authority. They know the "voice" of the Shepherd. They can distinguish whether the sound came from the *Speaker* or just originated from the *Speaker System*. If it is a clear crispy sound, it came from the *Speaker*. If it is not clear, distorted and hazy sound, it is simply a noise coming from the *Speaker System*, so is the word of God.

John 10:3-5 "...the sheep hear his voice... and leadeth them out. ⁴...and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. ⁵And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

The "voice" of *God* is clear, authoritative, and powerful. It never finds contradiction with basic truth for God will never contradict Himself. The "voice of the servants" is not clear, and full of contradictions with what "is written." Questions remain unanswered and doubts are "hanging" for they are not authoritative. People however, are taken by the emotional refreshment from the eloquence of the "speakers." This is what is learned from the efforts of men in taking up *Theology* and its ramifications: Apologetics, Dogmatic theology, Moral theology, Pastoral theology, Homiletics, Canon Law, Biblical exegesis, textual, linguistic, literary, historical disciplines, liturgical, ethical, philosophical theologies, etc.

“SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES”

God has been telling His people both in the Old and New Testament to “search the Scriptures:”

Isaiah 34:16 “Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.”

John 5:39 “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life...”

For emphasis, there are two views on the “search.”

1. One is to depend on human capability and “pray to the Holy Spirit” at the same time.

1 Corinthians 2:11 “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?...”

2. The other is to convince oneself that only God can expound on His words. This takes a lot spiritual humility that our Lord calls “babes and suckling.”

Who would believe the following taking the “letter” of the word?

2 Timothy 3:15 “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

God's revelation is also taken from His words, and with His guidance the great spiritual message is expressed. Illustration:

In the Old Testament God was speaking of deliverance from slavery of His chosen people:

Exodus 3:8 “And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites...”

We hear preachers say, “The Israelites, the chosen people of God, were in Egypt as slaves. God brought them to Canaan, the Promised Land, that they would be free. In that land, they would have their own king. It is a fertile land that they would live prosperously which God called, “flowing with milk and honey.”

The “spiritual little children” ask God, “Lord, following your way, how do you explain deliverance from slavery in Egypt, and taking your people to the land flowing with milk and honey?”

As if God is saying, “*To you slavery is political bondage. You must remember that I am speaking ‘spiritual things.’ Do you still remember when I talked about freedom? Did I refer to political freedom in the following?*”

John 8:32 “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

It is very clear that God is speaking spiritual things. Man is limited only to literal-physical things. God is after the “spirit in the word” for the soul, while man is limited to the “letter in the word” for the benefit of the body.

2 Corinthians 3:6 “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

To simply take the “letter of the word,” the incident happened in the past – no more. But to take the “spirit” and not the “letter of the word,” the message is “alive” as God is alive in our time, all the time. *Literally*, the Israelites were the chosen people of God in the Old Testament. That is history or story.

Spiritually, during the time of our Lord, the “Israelites” were Simon Peter, Nicodemus, James, Saul of Tarsus, John, Mary Magdalene, Simon the Zealot (His disciples) who were “slaves of human precepts and religious traditions.” Today, they are the people who have the will to humble themselves like “little children” in the eye of God. Thus,

*Galatians 3:28 “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free... for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.
²⁹And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*

During the time of Christ, the equivalent of Pharaoh and his sidekicks were the people opposed to the truth. Today, this truth has not passed away and

we know who the enemies of the truth are. How can “many” people be “of Christ” when they cannot even agree on the identity of Jesus?¹⁴

- Some people say, “Jesus is only a man and not God”
- Others say, “Jesus is only a mighty God for there is a supreme or Almighty God”
- Still others say, “The name of the Father and the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ”
- Many people say, “Jesus is both God and man, and He is the 2nd person of the Trinity.

“THE PROMISED LAND”

Man’s understanding of land is the soil or ground from where plants and trees are growing. The Promised Land was flowing with milk and honey. To take the word of God literally, He would have lied for no such things did the Israelites find on the land. However God is speaking of spiritual land in the following:

Genesis 3:19 “...till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Genesis 18:27 “And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.”

If land symbolizes man, there is actually no good land for there is not any good man:

*Romans 3:10 “...There is none righteous, no, not one:
¹¹There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. ¹²They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”*

However, there is a “portion of the land” that is holy.

¹⁴ How many people noticed this warning?

2 Corinthians 11:4 “For if he that cometh preacheth *another Jesus*, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or *another gospel*, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.”

Ezekiel 45:1 "Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the LORD, an holy portion of the land..."

There is only one "good man" who knows no sin. This is Jesus Christ, the man:

1 Peter 1:19 "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

Clearly Jesus Christ symbolizes the Promised Land. "Land flowing with milk and honey" is now revealed! "Milk" refers to the words of our Lord that are expressed in parables.¹⁵

1 Peter 2:2 "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

"Honey" relates to the great spiritual message that our Lord Jesus is expounding on His words as hereto demonstrated:

Psalms 119:103 "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"

Look, if the word is taken literally, the Israelites then, and now known as the Jews, many of them do not even believe in Jesus Christ. How could they be the chosen of God spiritually? The Jews, while they occupied physical Canaan as physical descendants of Abraham did not however "occupy the spiritual Promised Land." They rejected *Jesus Christ* because they did not recognize Him!¹⁶

Romans 9:6 "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:"

Now, how about professing followers of Christ today? Do they really know Jesus Christ?

¹⁵ Mark 4:34 "But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

¹⁶ John 8:54 "Jesus answered... it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: ⁵⁵ *Yet ye have not known him...*"

John 8:19 "Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."

Why do we hear *many* people professing to know Jesus Christ, saying, "The infinite God is incapable of clear identification with the finite mind of man?" Does this make a difference from the rebuke labeled against the Jews in His time?

Does not *to know* come before *love*? Thus, a humble Scribe found the importance of this, and asked Jesus about the first commandment of all.

Mark 12:28 "And one of the scribes cam, ...and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?"

Mark 12:29 "And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord."

As demonstrated, Israel does not only refer to the physical descendants of Abraham. Who is the "Lord our God is one Lord?" He must be the One True God. After knowing Him, Jesus enumerated the two great commandments that we often hear from preachers, but omitting the prerequisite to love.

Mark 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength...³¹...Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

From the foregoing explanation of God of His words, through His very words, the story of Moses, slavery in Egypt, deliverance from slavery, crossing the Red Sea, wandering in the wilderness with Manna as food and water spouting from the Rock, crossing the Jordan River and, finally, the occupation of the Promised Land, now give a very deep dimension to the real Christians. Only God, not any man, can truly explain His words!

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT – "FAITH AS BIG AS A MUSTARD SEED"

How could the intellect of man explain the word of God in the following?

Matthew 17:20 "And Jesus said unto them...If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Matthew 21:21 "Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not...say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done."

Were there not two kinds of people who heard our Lord said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up? The Jews thought they could understand it. The Disciples waited for our Lord's explanation, actually by demonstration.

"FAITH"

Perhaps many people think that faith comes from man, because our Lord kept on saying, "Have faith...",¹⁷ if you have faith..." However, faith is a gift of God:

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"

Faith is a fruit of the Holy Spirit:

Galatians 5:22 " But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,"

Since faith comes from God, how could a real believer have it? Real spiritual humility!

Matthew 18:3 "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Since faith comes from God, this is hardly discernible by unbelievers. Thus, its spiritual size of a mustard seed. To the Natural Man, faith is sincere belief and zealotry. This comes from man's capability. This is not true faith. Our Lord saw this kind of faith in the religious people during His time. He called them "hypocrites." (Read the whole of Matthew 23.)

¹⁷ Mark 11:22 "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God."

“MOUNTAIN”

Look how far man understands from God’s explanation of His word. Mountain to God refers to people. God tells us to take only the “line,”¹⁸ and not “verse by verse.”

Judges 9:36 “... Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men.”

Ezekiel 36:1 “...Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.”

Psalms 114:6 “Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?”

Mountain, therefore, refers to the real believer who has faith as big as a mustard seed. This spiritual mountain must “move to the sea.”

“SEA AND MANY WATERS”

Look how far is God’s explanation of His word from man’s understanding. To God, this is the “sea” and “great waters” where the spiritual mountain would go:

Psalms 77:19 “Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.”

The Apostles of our Lord, except Judas Iscariot, had “faith as big as a mustard seed” as a “gift” from God and a “fruit of the Spirit.” This, they got because of real spiritual humility as “little children.” “Mountain” symbolizes them. True enough, they were “moved to the sea.” That is, they were thrown into the “way of our Lord.” They followed the path of our Lord who showed the Way, as model.¹⁹ Their life is depicted by a mountain that is thrown to the sea because they had faith as big as a mustard seed.

¹⁸ Isaiah 28:10 “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.”

¹⁹ Roman 8:29 “For whom he did foreknow... *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

The “life” in the word is the spiritual message. Just as God is alive, so are His words! The words of God are like prophecies that will all come to pass. This is what our Lord wants to convey when He said:

Matthew 5:17 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. ¹⁸For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

This was revealed to Peter when he wrote:

2 Peter 1:20 “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.”

Who can decipher the language of God and explain His words that are like “prophecies” that will all come to pass? The aforementioned parables are samples of how God deciphers His language. We have seen how the message of God in the Old Testament and New Testament do not differ after He has interpreted His language. Now the following present a much deeper dimension:

John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Malachi 3:6 “For I am the LORD, I change not...”

Hebrews 13:8 “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

Man formulated *theology* to reconcile ambiguous words of God, and conceived *exegetis* to adapt to present day circumstances.

1 Corinthians 3:18 “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. ¹⁹For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.”

1 Corinthians 1:19-21 “...I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe?...the world by wisdom knew not God...”

CONCLUSION

Who are the real searchers of the Scriptures in our time in the eyes of God?

