

TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE



You want to understand the Bible?

Lay aside your commentaries and start listening to Jesus.

The Bible can be interpreted in a thousand ways.

Hence all the denominations.

All the sects.

All the cults.

Each claims to have the true interpretation.

“It’s all about the gift of grace.”

“It focuses on the coming judgment.”

“It’s driven by the light of prophecy.”

“It reveals the essential Sabbath.”

“It’s about Security”

“It culminates in the Spiritual Gifts”

Somehow the clear voice of Jesus is lost in a flood of doctrine, theology, prophecy and spiritual mysteries.

The Father’s Final Word.

God the Father pronounced the final word on the Mount of Transfiguration.

And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

Peter was awed to see Jesus raised to the level of Moses and Elijah, who stood for the Law and the Prophets of scripture.

Then Peter did what we keep doing to this day.

Peter perceived Jesus as “part” of scripture instead of Lord of Scripture.

He added Jesus to the law and the prophets as an equal.

Big mistake.

He was still speaking, when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said,

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

Matthew 17

Jesus only.



“My Son stands far above the law and the prophets!

Listen to him!”

The living God was telling Peter---and all of us---that...

Jesus is Lord of scripture.

Jesus is the fulfillment of scripture.

Jesus is the interpreter of scripture.

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

We have fallen into the trap that blinded the “scripture experts” of Jesus’ day.

We try to use scripture to interpret Jesus, instead of letting Jesus interpret scripture.

“You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.”

John 5

The purpose of all scripture is to bear witness to Jesus, the Incarnate Word.

Jesus is on the Throne.

Scripture is at his feet.

Only when we *listen to the Son* do the scriptures truly come alive.

"Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?"

Luke 24

Jesus is Lord of Scripture

Jesus knew scripture better than anyone who ever walked this earth.

The words of scripture were constantly on his lips.

They flowed from him like a river.

But Jesus did not hesitate to enlarge, sharpen, or even discard scriptures that were popular in his day.

He took the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" and raised it to a level never seen before.

"You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.'

But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be liable to the hell of fire."

Matthew 5

Jesus took the food laws and set them aside with the authority of heaven.

And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a man from outside cannot defile him, since it enters, not his heart but his stomach, and so passes on?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.)

And he said, "What comes out of a man is what defiles a man."

Mark 7

The Son of God was with the Father eons before Moses and the Prophets appeared.

The Spirit of the Son was present through all the turmoil and suffering and victories and joy from which the scriptures emerged.

Jesus alone causes scriptures to speak to the human heart, when the heart humbles itself before him.

Jesus is the Fulfillment of Scripture.

***For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.
He was despised and rejected by men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.***

***Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.***

***But he was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that made us whole,
and with his stripes we are healed.***

***All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned every one to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.***

Isaiah 53



Centuries before the Lamb of God appeared at the banks of the Jordan, flashes of vision were given to the prophets.

The Psalms are loaded with hints of the coming Messiah.

Daniel and Zechariah could see the light of the coming kingdom, and shared what they saw as best they could.

Always the focus of Hebrew scripture was the "Coming One".

When Jesus arrived, he confirmed these prophecies again and again.

Without apology he declared himself to be the fulfillment of scripture.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the Sabbath day. And he stood up to read; and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

***“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”***

And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Luke 4

Without Jesus, scripture is like a headless body, a rudderless ship.

Scripture was incomplete until Jesus arrived and fulfilled it.

Scripture is meaningless without Jesus explaining what it’s all about.

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Listen to him!”

Jesus is the Interpreter of Scripture.

At the well....

The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.



God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

John 4

Seeing her tender heart, Jesus explained scripture to this woman with alarming power.

Jerusalem has no monopoly on worship.

God can be worshiped anywhere...

....if you worship him in Spirit and in truth.

At the Feast of Tabernacles...

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"

John 7

At the Feast of Tabernacles people lived in booths to commemorate past deliverance.

It was all about the past.

As Jesus interpreted this feast, it was now about the future.

This feast was pointing to an outpouring of the Spirit which Jesus had come to bring.

"As the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"

Jesus had now made the Feast of Tabernacles something totally new.

Answering the Sadducees ...

The Sadducees, who insisted that there is no resurrection, figured they could embarrass Jesus with a simple problem.

"After seven brothers died in succession, all having had the same woman as wife, (fulfilling Jewish law), who's wife will she be in the resurrection?"

But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven."

And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living."

Matthew 22

"You know neither the scriptures nor the power of God."

Jesus interpreted scripture and let these Sadducees decide what to do with the light he gave them.

When we're baffled...

When we come to a passage of scripture that stumps us, we go directly to the Lord Jesus.

Lord, do you want women to keep silence in church, as the Apostle Paul requires in I Corinthians 14?

Jesus is quite able to make his will known to us.

We need to turn to him for clarity, and wait.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.

I will guide thee with mine eye.

Psalm 32

We pass not judgment on those who claim to have a different answer from the one we received.

The Master will sort it out, when he's ready.

Our job is to keep walking in the light we have been given.

"This is my beloved Son....listen to him!"

For too long we have put the Bible on the throne, with Jesus at its feet.

We will never understand the Bible until we see Jesus on the Throne and the Bible at his feet.

Jesus is the Lord of scripture.

Jesus is the fulfillment of scripture.

Jesus is the interpreter of scripture.

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased;

listen to him."



Prayer- Father we thank you so much that Jesus is Lord of Scripture.... that when we hear him speak, our hearts burn within us. Keep our hearts humbled and soft so we may continue to hear you speaking to us. May we be troubled when we hear a word, teachings or interpretations that do not sound like you. Help us to turn to you and seek your direction when we are confused. Lead us to the Living Water that will fill us and flow out of us and help us to truly worship you in spirit and truth.