

Meeting the Scriptures **06-23-19 AM**

Imagine meeting the Bible for the first time. This is not such a farfetched idea. In 2 Kings 22:1-20 King Josiah meets the Scriptures for the first time in his life. It was not a joyful experience. We are told that he tore his clothes in anguish when he learned what he had NOT been doing for God. He sent emissaries to God, and because of the experience of being anguished he received God's mercy.

If you were meeting the Bible for the first time, what might that experience be like for you? What things would the Scriptures reveal about themselves that might surprise you?

First, you might be surprised to know that the Bible is not one book, but many. In fact, it is two separated libraries (or schools) of books (the Old and New Testaments. This is an important fact to understand, because it speaks to the multi-witness testimony of Scriptures; it is not one book that speaks of itself, but many testimonies of each other. (Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses - 2 Corinthians 13:1). Many accuse the Bible of being guilty of circular reasoning; this would be true if it was only one book. But since it is multiple Teachers in two Libraries, this is simply not the case.

Second, you would probably be surprised that the Bible claims that it is a supernatural set of libraries. In particular it makes three claims over all of its contents. First, it claims that it is not the work of men, but of God; it claims that it is inspired by God – 2 Timothy 3:16. Second, it claims that it is able to be understood by all, regardless of race, time, or culture – Ephesians 3:3. Finally, it claims that the libraries are indestructible – 1 Peter 1:23-25.

A third surprise might be the way that the two libraries testify of each other. The Old Testament reveals that a new one was coming; this was stated in the very beginning all the way to the end (consider Deuteronomy 18:15, Jeremiah 31:31, Ezekiel 37:26 and Malachi 4:5). But the New Testament, while acknowledging that it is the outcome of the Old Testament promises, claims that no revelation or covenant is to follow, as seen in places like Jude 3 or 2 Timothy 3:16-17. It is the final revelation from God, the perfect covenant (Hebrews 1:2).

Perhaps it might surprise you to find that the Bible can be found in a variety of translations that do not impede the supernatural nature of the Bible. In other words, a translation does not lose inspiration. Translations reflect efforts to understand (Eph. 3:3). When the NT claims that Scriptures both old and new are inspired, it is including the text used by NT writers, the Septuagint, a translation of the Old Testament. It can be determined that in regards to translations, some are better than others.

Finally, it is important to know that the Bible has a demand of His students. He demands that we have NO personal interpretation – 2 Peter 1:19. The Bible demands that we receive NO other messages – Galatians 1:8-9. Finally, when we are told what to do, the Bible insists that there is NO delay in action – 2 Timothy 3:7.

So you want to learn the Bible? Before you can know what it says, you need to know WHO He is. Scriptures are the manifestation of Christ as the Word of God and of the Holy Spirit of God by inspiration.

Consider again the nature of Josiah and his meeting the Scriptures for the first time. Josiah was in anguish meeting Scriptures. This was because his heart was "tender" and he was willing to be changed. Scripture

is a seed testing the heart-soil. Scriptures reveal your character by judging the result of your response. Are you hard hearted or are you willing to change?