

Can We Understand the Bible?

By Richard Cravy

WHAT IS the Bible? It is the book of God. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (2 Timothy 3:16). "...Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). To ask if we can understand the Bible is to ask if we can understand what God has said!

UNDERSTAND THE SPOKEN WORD. Men in ages past have been able to understand God's spoken word. When God audibly gave Noah instructions for building the ark, we read that, "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (Genesis 6:22). When Saul of Tarsus heard the voice of the Lord Jesus from heaven, he says, "...I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19). Yes, when God SPOKE, men were able to understand His message!

UNDERSTAND THE WRITTEN WORD. As we have already read, the Bible claims that it is God's WRITTEN word. Can men understand it? Men were able to understand God's SPOKEN word. What difference is there between SPOKEN and WRITTEN communication? The meanings of the words remain the same. The rules of grammar do not change. In fact, the ONLY difference is that one is received by the EAR, the other by the EYE of man! If men could understand God when He SPOKE, then men can understand God when He has WRITTEN His will! If not, why not?

Peter said that while he was with his fellow Christians he reminded them of the things they needed to know. He then WROTE those same things down so that after his decease they would still be reminded of their duties. Notice: his spoken word reminded them; his written word reminded them (2 Peter 1:12-15). The apostle Paul stated that the Christians in Ephesus would be able to understand what he WROTE. "...By revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words; whereby, when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Ephesians 3:3,4).

God has chosen to communicate to us using the same language we use to talk to each other. Isn't it strange, then, for some "religious" people to claim that we cannot understand God's message even though we understand each other! Is the Creator of all less capable than we? How foolish to so charge Him!

Consider one last example: In Acts chapter two Peter is filled with the Spirit of God and spoke under His guidance (Acts 2:4). By this means the people were shown to be murderers in need of God's forgiveness. They cried out, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37.) "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Those people DID"

UNDERSTAND what they must do, for the record says, “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41). Now, that same Spirit has guided the recording of those instructions. Can we understand them? YES! It is only those who do not wish to do what is commanded who arise and say, “It doesn't mean what it says; we cannot understand it!” Do you understand it? Then we encourage you to obey it!

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