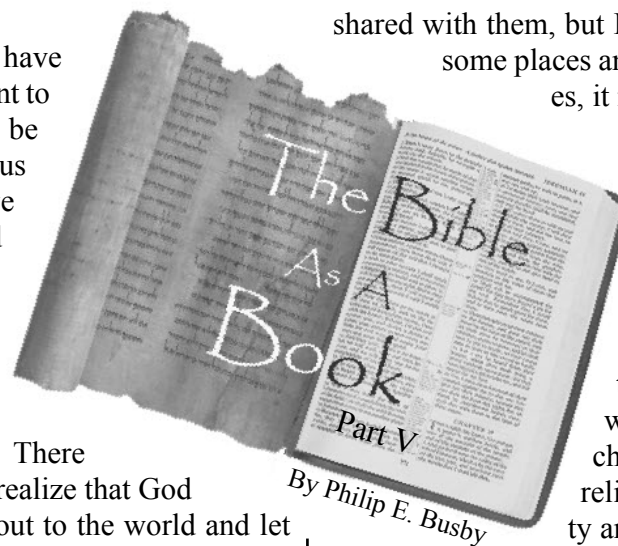


So far in this series, we have talked about why it's important to know how the Bible came to be as a book, and why God gave us a written Word at all. Now, we want to talk about why God gave His written Word to a specific people. To begin that discussion, we have to back up through the question of why, and talk about the simple fact that God did! There are many people who do not realize that God didn't simply put His Word out to the world and let chance carry it around. Many people who lived in the time we often refer to as the middle ages, are revered for their courage because they literally gave their lives to free the Word of God from religious overlords who did not want to allow the general population the opportunity to read and know the Bible for themselves. Great men of God took great risks to get their hands on various portions of God's Word, and much time was spent translating the Word into languages which people of their region could understand. There was further work done so that the Word could be distributed to the common man at a price which even the poorest could afford. In Europe, the Bible was one of the biggest reasons the printing press was invented, and so widely used. Now, I will agree that this is all part of a mostly Gentile Christian history which we can love and use as examples to our children and Christians at large to show what our dedication should be to God and His ways. However, one of the saddest facts is that not all that risk had to be taken.

There were many Jews all over the world who held in the care of their synagogues and/or families, written copies of, at the very least, what Christians call the Old Testament. Something which has been lost on Christians is that you can't understand the New Testament without reading the Old. Thus, this information would have been of great value to Christians of the middle ages, as well as the development of the Christian religion. However, in defense of these men who did not simply go knocking on the doors of synagogues desiring the Word, we have to remember that without the Word, specifically the Old Testament, they may not have realized they could do this! Some might argue that the Jews would not have



shared with them, but I don't believe this is true. In some places and under certain circumstances, it may have taken time to build a rapport with the Jewish community which would have allowed access to the actual writing, but many Jews would have been freely willing to teach Christians many things. This kind of dialogue would probably have even changed the entire face of the religions we know as Christianity and Judaism, especially on the level of both religions understanding their common bond of serving The One True God. It is later Christians, after the Bible became widely printed and distributed, which have to answer the question of why they don't understand the direct connection the Word has with the Jews, and those of us living today with Bibles readily available are certainly not the least of these. The Bible clearly shows us that God's Word, not just the "Old Testament" but the "New" as well, was entrusted to the Jews!

You see, God is very organized in His plan. We have already talked often about the Garden of Eden in this study, and it serves to look at it again here. The garden was a place where things were not just wild and natural. It was a place God specifically planted on a specific spot. God did not just throw man out into the world; He placed Adam in the garden. (Gen. 2:8) As we have also covered, it was up to man, right from the start, as to whether he would follow God or go his own way. However, that does not preclude the fact God had and has a plan! Planting the garden and placing man in it was only the beginning of that plan in action. The fact man chose to take of the one thing God told him not to take of and that it resulted in man being driven from the garden, has not changed God! (Ps. 102:24-27, James 1:16-20) It's not God's will for any of us to perish but that each of us come to repentance. (II Pet. 3:9) However, God's plan is not thwarted by the fact all men will not choose this path. (Rom. 3:1-8) This is because God's plan is based on free will from the very beginning of things! It gives those who desire not to follow, the opportunity to walk away; but at the same time, ensures that those who do not want to follow cannot stop those who

want to. This is a foundational fact as to why God came in the flesh to show us He holds the power over death, hell, and the grave. We are not to fear those who can take this life from us. (Matt. 10:28) Man can do all he wants to try and make us not follow God's plan, but even the threat of death will not work on the one who loves God more than what this life has to offer. The devil can do all he wants to change our mind and even threaten us with death, but just as Jesus proved, killing those who trust in The One who is the giver of all life, is actually a mistake. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21 Bottom line, we are not to fear the devil or man. The only thing there is to fear is being rejected by God on Judgment Day! (Matt. 7:21-23)

God is the only One who can destroy both the body and those parts of us which are not of the body. When we are told to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, it is this aspect we are being told to look at. (Phili. 2:12) Man and Satan can rage all they want, but only the fearing a rejection by God has productive ability in our lives. Now, we are not told to fear God because He is mean or unloving! We are told to fear Him because He is obligated to judge sin. (Isa. 45:20-23) We are all sinners, and there is not a one of us which is righteous. (Ps. 14, Rom. 3:9-10) However, death allows us to shed the sin we carry and are guilty of in this life. This is great, but then we will need a place to continue our existence where sin no longer is. Jesus left this world to prepare a place for that purpose, but it's only those who desire God's plan which will enter into that place. (John 14:1-6) Those who do not desire, no matter how much they may have performed religious ceremonies meant to get them there, will not enter in. (II Cor. 6:14-18, Eph. 5:1-10) Man can see the outward appearance, and what we look and act like is important. However, God can also see the heart's desire, and He will choose who meets the criteria for entrance or rejection. (Rev. 21:22-27) Thus, it is He we should fear.

This also is very good news, because God's Word shows us He has a plan and that it is organized in spite of man's disorganization and sin. God wants those who believe in His plan to be a part of enacting it. This is why one day God called a man who desired to follow God's plan, to build an ark of safety. God had decided man had become so disobedient to, and/or devoid of, the knowledge of His plan, there

was no point in his further existence. However, God still partnered with the one last man who still believed, and created a way to escape the coming flood. (Gen. 6:1-8) So too, when time itself began to chip away the knowledge of God's plan among men, God decided there was need for His instructions to be written down! In order to do this, God once again looked to those who desired His ways, to partner with. God decided the right man for the job was a man named Abram. (Gen. 12:1-3) God would change his name and his wife's name; thus, we know them as Abraham and Sarah. (Gen. 17) From specific descendants of this man and wife, God would build a nation. They would not become a nation because, like other family groups, they grew, stayed together and formed a governing entity on a specific spot. These people would be grown and bound together by God. God would keep them together by circumstances in spite of geographical challenges, and eventually, they would be given a specific governing system by the hand of God!

The governing system would be based on one simple thing - the plan of God. Again, God gives us a free will, and He works with that. Even after God confounded the languages at the Tower of Babel, (Gen. 11:1-9) man went on to form into groups on a smaller level. Some people try to blame God for war because instead of being one big happy group, He made us several smaller groups which have trouble getting along. However, this is just silly! God confounded our languages to protect the individual and breakup the group mentality which would take from each individual their individuality. Instead of getting that message, man still went out and formed into groups which often stifled the individual, and this led to competition between groups. Competition over resources, ideas, and the simple concept of power - not to put to fine a point on it - is what has led to war and much suffering. The fact man insists on living this way is what causes war, not God's intervention. People can be very different and still get along, but they choose not to. Even within groups there often forms smaller competing groups which stifle the individual. Children are often forced to join groups at very young ages or be harmed by them. This happens in every form from the social clicks of the school yard which dictate whether you get certain opportunities on the basis of how cool you are, all the way to gangs which end up clashing with other gangs in

what can be described as nothing short of military action.

This is how man lives his life, not the plan of God. However, in the midst of all this, God did an amazing thing which the more you look at, the more you study, and the more you understand it, the more amazing it becomes. God setup a group in the same base form man had chosen to live his life. God established a nation. However, this nation would not be about the group, it would be about the individual! This nation was to be an example to men as to how you could live in the structure which man chose to live in and use it to protect God's purpose for the individual, instead of squelching it. This is amazing stuff in light of the fact man has lived this way for so long now, many people today just can't imagine how you could live without a government dictating law. What would a world look like without borders, where people could simply travel and do the things they imagined to do? We do see places in the world where there is not a government or at least a stable ruling entity, and the people who live there need to be part of some "protective" group or they seem to just get mowed down.

On the flip side of this, we often recognize when we look at bad governments just how much this system can also take from our lives! However, we just can't seem to see a better answer. Thus, there are many people who believe they are working in the best interest of man, who want to continually expand government. In the end, all this does is intrude on the choices of individuals more and more. A world without borders may be a dream man gives lip service to, but the only thing he can imagine will accomplish this feat is to make one big government which rules everything. This just takes us full circle back to something God judged as such a bad idea that He confounded our languages to put a stop to it, and even since the time of the Tower of Babel, the idea has been tried more than once! Some of the ancient empires had such great success at putting large parts of the world under their control, that current ideas such as the United Nations can only dream of such accomplishment. However, it didn't work out then, and it's not going to work out now. The only way it will ever work is for there to be a perfect leader who has absolute power. Now, the Bible tells us it will come to this one day, but the leader will not be of the

sinful lineage of Adam. The leader's name is Yashua, and He is the only begotten of The Father! (John 1:14) In English, we know the name as Jesus!

The Bible tells us Jesus will return a second time and utilize another idea of man, which is that the strong shall rule, and there will be no one who can stop Jesus. (Matt. 26:59-64, Rev. 19:11-21) Again, God is not mean; He is perfectly just! Right now, the just shall live by faith, but one day, justice will be the government enforced law of the world! This will not come about because one day God looks down and decides if that's how they want to play ball, He'll show'em how it's done! It will come about because God has been offering the right solutions all through the process, and in the end, it's the only option left. Jesus came to this earth the first time to peacefully offer Himself as that one perfect leader man's ideas necessitate. This did not result in Him being killed because the world just accidentally trampled over this peace loving man during a food riot. He was not crucified because the world simply did not understand their system dictated the need for one perfect leader. The Roman empire was at a zenith, and one perfect leader was all that was needed. It also did not happen because Jesus tried to walk into the set of world power and asked the current ruler to simply step down and trust that He was the answer. God had a plan which had been unfolding for centuries.

The plaque above Jesus' head, while He hung on the cross, read His crime, and what it declared was that He was The King of the Jews. (John 19:19-22) This was precisely what the wise men who came from afar to worship Jesus during His childhood said they had come to find. (Matt. 2:1-2) Why would anyone have even the slightest idea that this was important? Why would anyone from outside Judah care about the fact the Jews had a new born King? Judah was under the rule of the Roman empire, and Herod was a Roman puppet king. Uprisings of the Jews had failed before, so why would a new born of the House of David mean anything? The answer to all this is that fact we have been talking about: God's plan was and is organized. There was no need for a wise man to care about any other country's new born king, but The King of the Jews meant something special in the world. Why? Because this was one of those specific points for which the Jewish nation was organized.

There is a prominent theory in the Christian world of “prophetic interpretation” which teaches that before Jesus returns the second time, there will arise a specific person who will fool the world into believing he is the messiah. I do not have the space in this writing to go into the ins and outs of why this is wrong, but I bring it up because throughout my life I have heard different philosophies as to who the “anti-christ” is. Through my years in ministry, I have been asked if I believed this person or that person was possibly the “anti-christ,” and what has always amazed me is that I can’t think of a single time when the person someone taught, thought, or asked about, was Jewish! If the philosophy was right and there was going to be a person who would rise to power under the cloak of being the messiah, whom the Jewish nation would all go after and be fooled by, the very first thing that person would need on their résumé is that they were, at the very least, of Jewish descent, not to mention, actually of the line and lineage of King David.

The world has produced a significant number of tyrants, dictators, and brutal men who, even through sly means, have gained power. The truth is, many of these men are not obviously brutal and heartless. They often appear to be some of the coolest, smoothest, and well meaning people you have ever met. However, in the end, they are interested in nothing more than power and control. Even those who seem well meaning and seem to be working on things for the good of society, are still very uncaring about the individual, because they believe what is good for the whole outweighs the desires and even the needs of the individual. They believe caring about what man can accomplish together is more important than the path an individual desires for the life God granted to them. It’s often and largely about what keeps the wheel moving far more than it’s about the individuals who get crushed by the wheel. This way, is not God’s way, and the Tower of Babel story is the proof that God is never going to allow one man of the line and lineage of Adam, to rise up and rule the entire world, even if that is just before the return of Yashua!

God’s plan was not entrusted to Abraham because God wanted to make an elite group of people who would have heavenly privileges above the rest of the world. God did not tell Abraham that it would be through that specific son he fathered with Sarah

that this nation would come, so that those who followed would be granted a pass to heaven no matter what they did. Esau clearly shows us this. (Rom. 9:13) There was no intent to freeze out the rest of the human race from knowing or serving God when He told Jacob his name would no longer be Jacob, but Israel! No, the intent was just the opposite of those things. The intent was to lay a responsibility on the shoulders of one nation who would see it as their ancestral heritage to have The One True God as their God. The beauty of it all is that for all the false gods man would create in all the various societies and religions of the world, there would never fail to be a group of people who said, “Our fathers worshiped The True God.” This is why our Creator is often referred to as, “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!” (Gen. 50:24, Ex. 3:6, 6:1-7)

The cultural aspect of this would go even deeper than just three forefathers who served God. We talked about why God waited so long to give us a written Word, and a large part of the answer is that point of man being close enough to the beginning of his existence that he had not lost touch with the truth like future generations would be in danger of. So too, God would wait until man had showed the way he insisted to build and organize his world before God would intervene in a parallel way, to carry forth His plan without thwarting man’s free will. Patterns which are large in nature are often repeated when you look at something very small. Paul says in Romans 1:20 that God is clearly seen in the things He created. That is very true, and it’s also true we can identify God’s patterns in the lives of men, by looking for the same ideology we see in nature. Just as God waited to give man a written Word, He would go through a similar process with how He would give it. One man was told that to descendants he did not even know he would have, God would commit His oracles. (Gen. 17:1-7, Rom. 3:1-2) Abraham, and even that son through whom the nation would come, would see very little of the promise come to pass, but one of his grandsons would still believe with all his heart. (Heb. 11:8-13) Through him, the foundation of the new nation would be laid. However, by the time of his death, his family would no longer even be living on the promised land the nation was to receive by the hand of God. (Acts 7:15-18) The next generations would believe in the covenant, not because it was laid out in front of them, but because they were not far

enough removed from the patriarchs to forget the oral traditions. They also were not ready to be the nation God was making them into.

As the generations passed, God led them into a situation from which there was no human escape, so He could prove to them it was He who was on their side and nothing which followed was an accident. (Ex. 14:10-31) This brought a fresh and new perspective to that generation of the children of Israel about The God their fathers had served and made a covenant with. They may or may not choose to follow, and that would still be their individual choice, but it was foolish beyond measure to question the existence of God. They had lived in a land which served more gods than one can hardly count, yet The God of their fathers crushed that land time and time again without encountering the slightest resistance. Both Pharaoh and his many gods were destroyed without Israel having to lift a finger!

Man went his own way, and Noah came through a worldwide flood with just his family. God worked His plan, and Moses led thousands out from a devastated Egypt. After the flood, man attempted to reach the heavens with a tower he was building. After God touched their tongues so they would leave off their wicked building project, they left in various groups to different regions of the world and began again. After Egypt, God brought the children of Israel to a mountain which He had created. There, The True God Of Heaven, touched the earth, and bound the children of Israel together as a nation tapped for His purpose, by giving them Words. These Words would not confound them, but show them how to continue to see a far more positive outcome in their lives than the ways of man had been bringing the world at large! (Ex. 19 & 20) As a nation, they were to follow the path and be an example of what the world would look like if man would put his trust in the ways of God instead of the way which seems right unto himself. (Prov. 14:12) A living breathing example of God's existence and plan would be established on the earth by giving these specific people His Words, not just as a suggestion, but as a national identity!

Paul asks if there is any advantage to being a Jew over being a non-Jew, and the answer is profoundly, yes! However, it's not that God loves them more. The Jewish advantage is that to them was committed

the oracles of God! (Rom. 3:1-2) Good examples? For those who still lived in Judah there was no long trek to be taken such as the wise men had to take to see God incarnate for themselves. The wise men gave the time period of two years for when they had first seen the star which led them, but the shepherds who were simply abiding in the fields of Judah keeping watch over their flocks that night, were able to go and see the great joy which was to all people! (Matt. 2:7-16, Luke 2:8-20) The aged prophet and prophetess who abode in the temple each day did not have to go anywhere to see it for themselves. Mary and Joseph brought The Consolation of Israel right to where they were. (Luke 2:21-39) Jewish children who live in religious families learn the Bible inside and out on a level many non-Jewish ministers never obtain. They live the rituals of past and foreshadowing prophesy every year; where as, many non-Jewish believers barely understand what they are reading in their Bibles and what many of these prophesies in action even look like!

However, just like the wise men, if we desire to know what they look like, we do not have to look for some secret society or go on harrowing adventures to see what God has done. We do not have to wonder where we can get God's instructions, because there is a specific people who attempt to live it, and it was made their culture. We do not have to wonder, through what people, the rightful King of the world will come, because there is a people established by God for the purpose. We do not even have to painstakingly search among those people for which family He is supposed to be from, for God made the promise, The Messiah would come through the House of David. (John 7:42) We don't even need to wonder where He will come to, because there's a geographical location established for the purpose which, just as God's Word tells us it would, is more and more becoming the focus of the world, today. (Micah. 4:1-4) God didn't want there to be any question marks or wondering about His plan, so He laid it out, not just in writing, but in flesh and blood!

Let's stay in God's Word!