

Wonderful WORD

The following are some of my personal thoughts on the Wonderful Word of God.

There are 4 letters in the Word WORD. “W” is the 4th last letter; “D” is the 4th letter, and “R” is the 4th letter from “O”. It is therefore most appropriate that the 4th verse of the 4th chapter of Matthew, Jesus, Who is the personification of the Word of God, says:

But he answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The 4th verse of the 4th chapter of Luke says the same thing:

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

The Word of God is like a building. You can, like most, ignore it, walk around it, or try to peep in through the windows, but you won't see much. You must enter it and look around. You should enter it through its main gates, **Prayer** and Thanksgiving. Then you should go through its main doors with **Praise**.

The ground floor is the **Prose** level. Here each book is a separate room. You can stay in any room as long as you wish, but there is much more to explore.

The next floor is the **Poetry** level. Here we find the Wisdom books, the Psalms, and many sections of the prophets. Much of scripture is poetic. E.g. the book of Lamentations is composed of 5 separate songs or poems, one per chapter, of which the first 4 are acrostic, using all 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet in successive order as the first letters of lines or stanzas. (Other examples of acrostic composition are Psalms 9, 10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, and 145, as well as Proverbs 31:10-31, and Nahum 1:2-8.) Poetry is the most concentrated form of literature, in that in poetry one can say the maximum in the minimum number of lines, using imagery. The economy of scripture phrasing is one of its characteristics; its imagery and the loftiness of its thoughts and language is unsurpassed. Again, one can stay here, e.g. in the Psalms, all the time, like Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration wanting to stay, and saying "Lord, it is good for us to be here!" (Matt 17:4)

There is yet much more, however. On the next floor we find the level of **Prophecy**. About a third of scripture is prophecy concerning events future to the time the passage was penned. What is particularly fascinating is the fact that the prophecy is often so well concealed one does not even realise it was prophecy until after the event. Consider just one example: Hosea 11:1 " *When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*" This is not just a statement (prose) of recorded history (the Israelites being brought out of Egypt with Moses). It is not just poetic (the referral to a nation as God's son, loved and looked after in his youth is powerful imagery). It is also prophetic, for it referred to the time when God's Greater Son, Jesus, would be called back out of Egypt

where he sojourned as a child.(cf. Matthew 2:13-15). Yes, one can pitch one's tent here for a long time, encamped around the fascination of prophecies fulfilled centuries after they were written.

But there is yet more. On the next level, the next floor up, there is the level of **Parables**. I refer not just to the marvellous parables of Jesus, which are fictitious stories with spiritual lessons. I mean the true stories within the Word of God itself which are themselves portraying spiritual truths or events yet future to the time they occurred. One can call them "plays" or "parables" or "allegories". Here again, when you start to view the Word of God at this level, you don't feel like moving on. An example of this pertains to Melchisedek (Genesis 14) being related to the words of Psalm 110, and the priesthood of Christ, as explained in Hebrews 6-8.

Another example of such a parable is given by the apostle Paul in Galatians 4:21-31, re Abraham and his 2 sons, the one by a bondwoman (Hagar), the other by a free woman (Sarah). The former son (Esau) persecuted the latter (Jacob), and Paul points out that this was but an allegory. The former son represents the bondage of the law given at mount Sinai, the latter the freedom of the heavenly Jerusalem. He then skips over to Isaiah 54:1, and shows that the blessing yet pertains to the children of promise (Isaac being the promised child to Abraham), and that we are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

I believe there are yet countless more examples hidden away in scripture. Here are some of my own. Jacob worked 7 years to win Laban's younger daughter, Rachel. But he was not given Rachel to wed at first. Instead, he was given Leah, the elder daughter (Gen. 29). Both women were beautiful (Gen. 29:17). Jacob, however, though he had worked so long for Rachel, had to be wed to Leah first for a week before he was wed to Rachel. Could this not be an allegory, or a parable, where Jacob represents Christ, Leah the Gentiles, and Rachel the Jews, younger in age than the Gentiles? Here's another. Do you recall the incident where Solomon had to decide who of two mothers "owned" a baby? Could this not be an allegory of what may take place in the future where two women, again the Gentiles and the Jews, argue over who "owns" Christ? Perhaps the Jews will claim the Gentiles stole Him in the night while they slept.

Here's another one, this time from the New Testament. In the book of John, we see Jesus calling fishermen to Himself to be His disciples, first Peter and Andrew, and then the next day evangelist Philip. Then Philip calls Nathaniel, who is seen under a fig tree. Then the third day Jesus and His disciples are called to a wedding in Cana, where Jesus changes water into wine (John 2). Then there is an account of Him cleansing the Temple in Jerusalem. The order of events there as John as penned it starts to take on extra significance if you realise that a "fig tree" is generally symbolic of Israel, and Cana means "high Place". Could there be a hidden parable here describing the age of evangelism presently taking place, the calling of the Jews (Nathaniel under the fig tree) at the end thereof, the marriage supper of the Lamb in the High Place of heaven, and lastly the cleansing of the Antichrist and his works in a yet-to-be-built Temple at Jerusalem at the Second coming of Our Lord?

As you can see, one can really get "stuck" at this level, not wanting to leave it either. But there is more. The next level is the **Personal** level. One of the amazing things about the Word of God is that it can speak directly to an individual at any point in time in that person's life. It can read as though it was written especially for you. There are personal applications to be found in almost every passage, that you can apply to your own life. Then there are times you wonder if a certain verse was placed there just for you. I recall a missionary sharing how she had a tooth that needed filling while on the mission field. She had opened her Bible in prayer and seen the words "*[Psalms:81:10: I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.](#)*" So said, so done. She opened her mouth, literally, and the Lord gave her tooth a brand new filling.

Yes, we can get totally stuck at this level too, and not want to move. However, I submit that there is at least one more upper level in this fantastic building of the Word of God. This is the level of **Pearls**. I think any fellowship group or body of believers, indeed the entire church, should study the Word of God at this level, to see what He is saying to the body corporate. By pearls, I mean eternal truths of importance to the body of Christ, which you have to dive and search for, but which when you find, are truly precious, so much so that you feel like selling all you have for them. I can think of several truths in the Word of God that have always been there but where the Church of Christ corporate has only recognised their value in recent centuries. Divine healing through laying on of hands, the priesthood of believers, the importance of praise and worship, the gifts of the Spirit...these are but a few examples. The discovery, or re-discovery, of justification by faith by Martin Luther around 5 centuries ago was another example of a pearl.

But hey, we are still not done. Let's travel to the basement of the building! There we find what is being referred to as "The Bible Code". I submit this is the level of **Patterns**. Patterns at the level of letters of the alphabet in the original languages of the text, patterns in the numbers those letters stand for, patterns in the words used - colours, names, directions, creatures, etc. Much of this basement (eg. Equidistant Letter Sequences proximity coding) is only now being discovered!

Del Washburn is perhaps the leading researcher in our day into the field of "Biblical numerics", or "Theomatics", having studied it for 20 years. He writes ("The original Code in the Bible, using Science and Mathematics to reveal God's fingerprints" Madison Books, 1998, p88): "Here is the key. Every number that appears openly in the text of the Bible is a key number for the theomatic structure. It is oil coming to the surface and seeping out of the rocks." He goes on to give several examples of this; e.g. as one would expect, the structure of 7 and multiples of 700, 490, etc. stand out in the text all through the book of Revelation. The woman in Rev 12:1 wears a crown of 12 stars, and the number 120 runs through scripture in references to the stars of heaven. What is interesting is that patterns here hold true both in the Greek and the Hebrew. In John 21:11, the Word tells of the great catch of 153 fishes when Jesus, after his resurrection, told His disciples to let down their net on the other side of their boat. Del notes that 153 is the sum of all integers up to and including 17, and spends a chapter of his book (chapter

7) showing how nearly every reference to fishes and fishing in the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is based on the numbers 153, 170, and 289 (17 squared). Del comments "we are babes in diapers when it comes to the eternal things of God". (P229).

One reason why people stay out of the fabulous building of the Word of God is pointed out by Del (p239): "you cannot understand the eternal things of God until a right relationship is established with the Creator. Repentance and faith must precede knowledge." You have to be correctly dressed (i.e. in robes of righteousness) to be allowed by the owner of the building (the Lord) to fully explore it. Finally, apart from the 7 floors to the blessed building of the Word of God already mentioned (**Prose, Poetry, Prophecy, Parables, Personal, Pearls, Patterns**), one thing should be remembered - the central column running through all the building is the **Person** of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!