

1041 For those who don't know original languages to read Bible (Verses refer to those in NASB unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)

We shared before that the only method described in the Bible to read the Bible correctly is through the leading of the revelation of the Holy Spirit [1]. Revelations are what we cannot do. Among what we can do is not to discount the words that the Bible says. Using the original languages to help us to read the Bible tends will make us understand the meaning of the words more accurately. I don't know the original languages. But after I learned about how to use the Strong's Concordance to help me to read the Bible in the original languages, I often got revelation through it. For example, Holy Spirit may lead me to look at one particular word and the associated verses, so that I could understand verses I couldn't understand before. So, my motivation is very simple. I hope that the others could get such revelations. Using the Strong's Concordance to help in reading the Bible in the original languages is not only for those who are familiar with the Bible, but also for new beginners who want to learn the Bible more accurately by establishing a good habit right from beginning, and even for friends who want to know the Bible accurately.

First, we mention in the preface that we talked about the three things in "1039 Looking at what we should do through Revelation 15," and discussed what people might ask when talking about the consistency of the Bible [1]. Thus, we include more discussions in the preface. Then, we explain why it is important to use the original languages to study the Bible. This is sort of similar to the principle of faith. One has to believe first before he can get the fullness of Christ. In my own experience, we have to use the Concordance first before God uses the original languages to reveal to me. Thirdly, we explain step by step the basic method of using the Concordance to help to read the Bible. If you follow each step, you should be able to learn it without spending too much time at all. Fourthly, we use one example to show you that one has no choice but to use the original languages to read the Bible if he wants to read the Bible correctly. Fifthly, we present an example to show you why the Concordance is indeed a good tool. Sixthly, we describe an example to show you that although words are different on the surface, but they have the same meaning since one is verb and the other noun. Finally, we mention one reason in the conclusion why the Bible tells us not to forsake assembling together, and explain why revelation is not all supernatural to us according to the Bible. We also see that we indeed have free will. It is not easy to have ears which can hear. We believe that the God will desire to bless us if we are actively willing to work with Him.

1. Preface: What we can be actively willing to do in reading the Bible

In the past, we talked about how we need to actively use revelation to lead our Bible study. Thus, we are passive [1]. However, we can do three things actively. In other words, we are actively passive in reading the Bible. In [1], what are those three things? (1) Not to discount things the Bible says that are written in black and white: we illustrate through an example to show that it not easy to do; (2) To use logic correctly: we explain through an example why logic is just a tool, and what we see through faith will result in different hypotheses (axioms); (3) To use the consistency of the Bible, i.e., what God tells us through the Bible is

consistent. This may be different from what people usually define this term as. We illustrate these three in detail by examples in [1], where people may raise questions regarding the discussions on the consistency of the Bible. Thus, we use this opportunity to add some additional information for further discussion. This is based upon the conclusion that the Book of Revelation is written in order according to the events. Thus, this is why what says in [1] the fact that there are some Christians who are not allowed to enter the city of New Jerusalem when the time is for a new heaven and a new earth. We know that this may cause arguments. But we are forced to say so since if we use logic on the words what the Bible says, we can only get such a conclusion.

Why do we say that the Book of Revelation is written in chronological order? As one example, when the Book of Revelation talks about seven seals, seven trumpets (including seven thunders), and seven bowls are written according to the order. For example, the seven seals are broken according to the order. In Revelation 6:1, it says, "Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, ..." Then in Revelation 6:3, it says, "When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come."" And so on until all the seals are broken in order. So, particularly in the beginning, the Bible wants us to make sure that the events are described in order. In Revelation 10:4, "When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."" John didn't write what said by seven thunders. He wrote in order what he saw regarding what would happen in the future. He is obedient and thus credible. This is very different from what said in the four Gospels. It is apparent that what is described there is not according to the order.

From another aspect, the Book of Revelation is clearly written as "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near."(Revelation 1:1-3) It is what will happen in the future, and hope that everyone can read it. Furthermore, it clearly said the obedience and thus the credibility of John. It also described clearly in the beginning that the events are written in the order. Thus, as discussed in [1], we cannot change the order just because we cannot accept something in the aspect of human. If we view things in the aspect of human, we really cannot see there is a possibility that some Christians are not allowed to enter the city. You must see things in the aspect of God to get such a conclusion. In fact, the Book of Revelation says right in the beginning that it hopes that everyone will know what will happen in the future. Why would he write in anything but chronological order? This is not logical. The Bible is inspired by God, if He was on purpose, isn't it better not to write it at all? Or told John like the way of seven thunders. For things not there, there is no chance to understand them at all.

Back to the original topic, someone doubts the verse in Revelation 22:15, "Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying," is not written in order. Because of the moral

standard according to human, one cannot accept such persons are Christians. This is right. Therefore, other than what had discussed in [1], we need to share more what we see. First, we need to know that Christians have only one standard. That is to see what God emphasizes. In other words, we need to see things in the aspect of God, not in the aspect of human.

We have to notice what God emphasizes is very different from what we see in the aspect of human. To explain this by an example, David commits adultery and use the sons of Aman to kill Uriah the Hittite. How come David's life was spared? Also because of his own pride, he counted people, and many people were killed due to this. After this, the Bible doesn't record that he was on trials again. He disguised his sanity and lied to Achish king of Gath too. Isn't it obviously against the law? There is no record about his penalty in the Bible. Isn't it that David is a Christian? Is God partial? Of course not! When we read the Bible, we really want to read out what God emphasizes. See things in the aspect of God. God has the absolute authority. He can make it happen that some Christians are not allowed to enter the city if they are not qualified. I don't ask why He does this. Because I found out that it was us to have problems, not Him!

At this point, let us compare the aforementioned Revelation 22:15 with Revelation 21:8, "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." In Revelation 21:8, those in the second death include the unbelieving among many in common with Revelation 22:15, where the unbelieving isn't in it. Therefore, those cannot enter the city could be a believing one. They could be merely saved by believing once but so feeble to the extent of suffering the attack of Satan till they worship idols, lie, and so on. But the God doesn't lie, we are justified by faith. If a person truly believes by faith even once, it is sufficient. We cannot go back to say that the person has not really believed. A person like this is saved but stays outside the city with weeping and gnashing of teeth. This manifests the justice of God and fulfills the consistency of the Bible regarding 'once saved, forever saved.' Knowing this, it should give people motivations to be persons who can enter the city, and walk on the way to sanctification. In the seven churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation, the overcomers in some churches are not too many!

One may wonder if there is any meaning at all for verses where there are so many in common but only a few in difference? We'll give an example in the Old Testament for you to judge. Starting in Exodus 18:5, it says, "Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped, at the mount of God." "So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge. Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way into his own land."(Exodus 18:24-27)

We can see apparently that such a choice is worldly. The idea was from the father-in-law of Moses. This didn't work due to a wrong source. So, after a long while, there is the second choice of wise and experienced man as said in Deuteronomy 1:3-15, "In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that the Lord had commanded him to give to them, ...So I (Moses) took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them heads over you, leaders of thousands and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and officers for your tribes." In this example, the minor difference is meaningful. The difference is huge since one is worldly, and the other spiritual.

Like what said before, not all the books are written according to the time order. In the Book of Revelation, it is written in order clearly at beginning. How can one think that it is not written according to the order when disagreeing or not understanding what was said? Aha, this is not the main topic regarding what will be discussed today. Just pointing out, there is nothing wrong in logic. If one assumes the Book of Revelation is not written in order, any conclusion can be obtained. Today, we want to go forward one step to read out the Bible more accurately by using the Concordance to help to read the Bible in original languages for people like me, who don't know the original languages but wants to read the Bible more accurately.

2. Why use original languages to read the Bible?

Like what I said before, I don't know original languages. I can only use tools like the Strong's Concordance with the possibility to learn the meaning of words. Regarding why we must read the Bible in original languages because there are cases that we have to use the original languages. More times, we can see that the Concordance is a good tool. Through it, we can understand what the God wants us to see through the Bible, particularly for those who didn't use a Bible in original languages before. For those, they could understand the meaning of words more accurately, which may change the way of their thinking. We want to emphasize a point regarding the fact that the Concordance only helps us on understanding of words, and has nothing to do with the grammar of original languages. After thorough consideration, I decided not to learn original languages because not only the meaning of verses cannot be uniquely determined by verses surrounding it or even in the same book, but they have to be decided by the consistency of the Bible. On the top of that, I know that it is impossible for me to reach the level of experts. I may as well use tools available when necessary.

If the Holy Spirit reveals us to look at original languages and we don't know how to use tools like the Concordance, there is no way to do anything for people like me who don't know original languages. Just like what I shared before, it was only after I learned how to use tools like the Concordance to help me to read the Bible that the Holy Spirit would often reveal some verses to me to make me understand the Bible better. My motivation is simple. I hope that others could get such revelations. As said, this is similar to the basic principle in faith. One has to believe first before he can receive the fullness of Christ. So, we need to use original languages first before we get such revelations. Furthermore, from my personal

experiences, learning the Concordance first as a spare tool is better than not knowing it at all. On the top of that, it doesn't take much time to learn the basics. Once one learns about the basic method, how to apply it is really up to individuals.

3. The basic method of using the Concordance

We choose the 'Blue Letter Bible' in the web since it includes all we need and more. We are not intended to introduce this software but to use a small part of it. Any corresponding software can be used. The basic method should be similar.

Now, we try to explain step by step what we do. First, in the search type in 'Blue Letter Bible,' and choose 'Blue Letter Bible Search and Study Tools.' Since the Concordance uses the KJV (King James Version), we'll use it from this point on. Let us now use part of Ephesians 4:15 as an example, "But speaking the truth in love, ..." On the right search the Bible box, you can type in 'Ephesians 4:15' and choose KJV. You can see a window with Eph 4:15 on the left. Choose near the top on "STRONG'S", then we can see the number corresponding to a word appeared in the right of the word. Choose 'G226', and we can see a lot of things. Moving to the bottom of the left column, we see only two verses with G226. They are 'Gal 4:16' and 'Eph 4:15', and both for this word G226 are translated as truth. What does the truth in here mean? We cannot really get its real meaning without using the consistency of the Bible. We are asked in 1 Thessalonians 5:19, "Quench not the Spirit." Does the Spirit talk to us always regarding Word? No, the true words sometimes. It should be the latter if we want to keep the consistency of the Bible.

When you move to the top, you'll see a lot of information including the Strong's Definition, which shows you the root of the word G226 is from G227. So, it shows you that the Strong's Definition is based on the root system. We need to see how the Bible uses such a word by examining all its appearances. Normally, more than two will show up. Ordinarily, if the same word appears in the same book enough times, you can figure out its meaning without looking at all the appeared. In the worst case, a word can only appear once. We need to check all surrounding verses, and use the consistency of the Bible. On the top of that, a dictionary may be helpful as a reference.

4. An example indicating that the use of original languages is necessary

In John 21:15-17, it says in KJV, "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (G25) thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (G5368) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (G25) thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (G5368) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (G5368) thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest (G5368) thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love (G5368) thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

Here, I include the Strong's number for the word 'love.' we can see that the Greek language has different loves, and there is no way to distinguish them unless the original languages are used. More times, we can see that the Concordance is a good tool. Through it, it is much easier for us to truly understand the meaning of a verse, which can change our thinking completely. We'll present such an example in the next section.

5. An example where we can truly see that the Concordance is a good tool

The twenty-four elders and four beasts first appeared in Revelation 4:4-6, it says, "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, ...were four beasts full of eyes before and behind." In Revelation 5:6-8, it says, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, ...And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having (G2192) every one of them (G1538) harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Some people think like what I did in the past that only the twenty-four elders in Revelation 4:4-6 took the harp and golden vials. But it is not true.

Let us first notice that the four beasts and the twenty-four elders are often mentioned together. Among them are the following verses. "And when those beasts give glory ...The four and twenty elders fall down before him ..." (Revelation 4:9-10) "And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him ..." (Revelation 5:14) "And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped ..." (Revelation 19:4) If the verses in Revelation 5:6-8 only refers to the twenty-four elders, the word G3588 (who, which) should be used just like what happened in Revelation 1:9, "I John, who (G3588) also am your brother, ..." The word G3588 appeared in the Book of Revelation already 66 times, and more than 500 times in the New Testament. Instead, the present participle G2192 is used here. The Bible wants us to make sure that we know that it indicates both the four beasts and the twenty-four elders. So, we can see that they represent and are in the same group.

6. An example which shows the same meaning even with different words

The two different words Agape (G25) and Agapao (G26) have the same meaning since the former is a verb but the latter is its noun. The former can be found in Mark 10:21, "Then Jesus beholding him loved (G25) him, ..." The latter can be found in Matthew 24:12, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love (G26) of many shall wax cold."

7. Conclusion

We can see the Concordance is a good tool. In Hebrews 10:25, it says, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; ..." It is really for our goodness.

Why? We really don't know when God will reveal to us by the sharing of brothers and sisters. It could be anytime particularly sometime through our reading the Bible in original languages. This is why we shared how to use the Concordance today.

Here, we want to emphasize one point. Not all revelations are through supernatural means. After Paul saw the light, God gave a vision to Ananias and told him to tell Paul some things. Additionally, we all know that man has free will. Even if what is said in the Bible and logic are fulfilled, one can still choose unbelief. Basically, it is because the conclusion is different from what he agrees. In other words, what one sees things in this case is in the aspect of human. We really want to have ears which can hear as said in all seven churches in the Book of Revelation. I remember that when I thought a person hinted me that I had no ear, I was not happy even though I didn't say it. Now, I know that it was true. Here, I just say what the Bible says that we need to have ears which can hear. I don't imply that I have them always. So, we have to be very careful when listening to one's words. We cannot arbitrarily add an equality sign just like when reading the Bible. Man has free will, thus it is not easy to always have ears which can hear. When we are actively willing to work with God, I believe that He'll not let us go and desires to bless us.

Related knowledge

[1] In the web "<https://a-christian-voice.com/>," press "On spiritual understanding about life" and "1039 Looking at what we should do through Revelation 15."