

Searching the Scriptures / 3 / The Bible Is Living / Part 3

In Heb 4:12 we read, *“For the word of God is quick [living], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”*. We want to look at the Old English word “quick”, which means “living”. How is it possible that the Word of God is “living”? Isn’t it just a book made up of paper, ink, glue, and binding? Yes, but the paper, ink, glue, and binding are not alive – only the written words that God has breathed out of His mouth are alive because they reflect the infinite mind of Eternal God. As Peter commented to Jesus in John 6:68, *“...Thou hast the words of eternal life.”* It is no wonder that the words of the Bible are living, because its author, God, is living.

The Bible declares in Mat 22:32, *“God is not God of the dead, but of the living.”* Of course, the words of the Bible are only “alive” when we read them or hear them. We read in Isaiah 55:11, *“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”*

Let’s now take a closer look at the meaning of “living” as it applies to the Word of God. The Greek word for “quick”, or “living” in Heb 4:12 is “zao” (Strong’s #2198), which we also find in John 5:25, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live <2198>.”* Although this verse is referring to the Judgment of the Last Day at the end of the world, it is also referring to the nature of salvation. Man is born spiritually dead, but when some of these spiritually dead people are qualified by God to hear the voice of the Son of God, they shall live, or be made alive. How is one made alive? In Rom 10:17 we find the answer: *“Faith [which is a synonym for salvation] cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”*

How then does one hear? Merely hearing with physical ears is not sufficient to produce eternal life. God must give people “spiritual ears” to hear the voice of the Son of God because they are spiritually “deaf”, and they are on their way to Hell. Isa 53:6 informs the human race that, *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* But the Lord Jesus came to *“seek and to save that which was lost”*, as we find in Luke 19:10.

Frequently in the Bible Jesus said words similar to these in Mark 4:23, *“If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.”* So, how do we get those “spiritual ears” to hear? In Deu 29:4 we read, *“Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.”* Here we see that spiritual ears (as well as a heart and eyes) must be given to us as a gift from God.

What then is the “voice” of God? It is the Bible. How do we know this? In John 10:7 the Lord Jesus declares, *“I am the door of the sheep.”* In John 10:2-5 we read, *“But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.”*

Here Jesus is referring to Himself as the Shepherd of His sheep, and in John 10:27 He says, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."* Speaking about all those who would eventually become Christians throughout history, John 10:16 states: *"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."*

This same idea of hearing the Bible and being made alive by its words is repeated in Acts 7:37-39: *"This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel [messenger] which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively [living] <2198> oracles to give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt."* The "lively (or living) oracles" are the Scriptures; and the "prophet" and "angel" (or messenger) mentioned here both refer to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another helpful passage to look at is 1 Pet 1:23, *"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."* Here we see that the Word of God, the Bible, is living and everlasting. This Word is pictured as an *"incorruptible seed"* because it produces a plant that can never die. God gives true believers eternal life in their souls through His Word, even though they were once spiritually dead. Thus, we can see how the Bible is living and makes alive dead souls as we read in Rom 10:17 that, *"faith [salvation] cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."*

May it be that many hearing this devotional message will cry out to God for ears that can hear Him, and eyes that can see to understand His Word, the Bible. In Pro 20:12 we read: *"The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them."* Jesus said in Rev 3:20 says, *"Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."* Notice how being able to hear God's voice is a prerequisite for salvation. God has to give us spiritual ears to hear. May God, by His wonderful Grace, be pleased to give His people hearing ears to hear His Living Word, and then the desire and ability to obey it.