**PARTICIPANT 4**

1. **How would you describe your personal and chosen approach to scripture?**

*For me, The Scripture is the word of God written to me in a human language for me to understand. I remember, one of the books I have is: “Dit is God’s word in mense se taal”. This is why I can’t understand how people could preach in Latin and the people in the pews don’t understands a word the man is saying. When Martin Luther translated the Bible in German there was an uproar from the Roman Catholic Church: “How can you do that?” For me this was turning point because normal people for the first time could read the Bible because the Bible is God’s Word, in human language.*

*INTERVIEWER: “So would you see the Bible as God’s letter to us”?*

*Yes, in a sense that I was in a conversation with a lady yesterday and she was referring to the miracles of Jesus. I was preaching out of Matthew Chapter 8, the calming of the storm and I said to her: “You must know that there are those Old Testament and New Testament Books that are not gathered in the Bible (The Apocrypha) and there you will have other stories about Jesus and when the people sat down and decided which are the books that we are going to accept into the Bible, it does not mean that it is a forbidden scripture to read. Here you will read of the story where Jesus took clay and turned them into birds. My logic tells me that the Bible does not describe Jesus as a young person, there are one or two verses. How can we say that this (miracle) did not happen?*

*INTERVIEWER: “There is one verse in John 2, when He turned water into wine that says this was his first miracle. I think that verse throws some doubt on the idea that “miracle”.*

*Yes. I was in a bit of a turmoil last week because we are preaching through Matthew for more than 1 Year and we are now in Chapter 8. For more than a Year we have been preaching through Matthew except when there are “big days” like Christmas and Easter. So we “stick”, we are preaching and this is Matthew. So what happened now is that I, in the senior bible study, I try to keep up with Matthew, in the sense, now we have the miracles and I would like to give them a blink into parliament, to understand. And suddenly, WOW there are miracles in Chapter 9 and what must I do now? And I get into this study and then I wrote: “His first miracle” and I should have rather written, the first miracle that Matthew records. Then suddenly this guy comes up to me and says: “The first miracle was in John Chapter 2” and I said: “Woe” and you know when someone gets into that fighting spirit and says: “you are wrong, how can you say this was his first miracle?” but that is what I am trying to say.*

1. **What has led you to adopt this approach to scripture?**

*What helped me is the way that I grew up and forever I was in the Dutch Reformed Church and this has been the way that the Doominee and the other Doominees of the Dutch Reformed Ministers explained to me and in a sense this is how I started to Bible Studies and to ask: “What is being said here?” “What am I reading here?” “What is God saying to me through this?” “What is my response to what I have here?” That is how I have been reading my Bible.*

1. **What one word best describes your approach to scripture besides the answer in Question 1?**

*I can’t describe it with one word. In a sense it makes sense. It was “Comforting”.’*

1. **What principle(s) would you consider as important to all biblical interpretation?**

*This comes over time, when you discover that not all books are the same. Some are poems, some are, this is exactly what happened, narrative and but in saying that you must be very careful when bringing your own understanding into that. One must look at the text and the context, when it was written, what was the historical situation there, what gave rise to the context and purpose is very important. That is why, when I start talking about Matthew, although Matthew and Luke and Mark is not telling the same story, but they are telling the same story because they have an audience and there was a reason for writing and that is what you must understand. For example, the recipient of Matthew’s Gospel were the Jews as a tax collector and an outcast, the Messiah’s call to him was huge. This was one of the things, and is my understanding, and It was important for Matthew to communicate to the Jews that Jesus came for them. For them to understand that the Messiah was the one from the Old Testament.*

*INTERVIEWER: Was there an offer for the Kingdom by John the Baptist and Jesus?*

*Answer: It is a difficult one to answer. According to Matthew*

1. **For example, how would you understand Zechariah 14 from the Old Testament?**

*By trying to put myself into the shoes of the people who lived in Zechariah’s day and I think it is impossible for them to picture what we have today in the year 2022. This is why when they began to teach that the Earth was round there was a lot of turmoil in the church. Even if we took people from the 15th Century and tried to explain to them the world in 2022, they would consider us as crazy.*

*Therefore, this is how I understand what God was saying to Zechariah: God was speaking to Zechariah of something that was far bigger than he could imagine. I have been to Israel twice in 2018 and 2019 and when I stand on the Mount of Olives, and I ask with a human mind, and one looks and thinks of the millions and millions of graves that will open at that time, I cannot understand how this will take place. However, I understand that when this does happen, there will be a judgment day.*

1. **For example, how would you understand Romans 11 in particular V26-27 from the New Testament?**

*The salvation of Israel was the topic of the Old Testament. No one can be saved without Jesus. I believe that the Jews are the chosen people. If there is a new people of God I am part of the people of God. Speaking of the people of God we must be careful of a nationalism or “states volk” mentality. I have a soft spot for the Jews because they still reject the Lord and His grace. If I am circumcised, then I am a child of God. Israel was supposed to be the light to the world. We also must be the light of the world.*

1. **What do you understand or know about how the Church, at various times, interpreted scripture?**
2. **Have you been exposed to dispensationalism and what are your thoughts of it?**

*I have heard about 7 dispensations. I am a covenant theologian and I hold to this. I don’t see a God for the Old and a God for the New Testaments. I am a part of the Covenant with Abraham through baptism. We must not leave the Old Testament separate from the New. The path that Israel walked we, the church are completing. The promises made to Israel I take for myself. Like the sacrifices in the Old Testament are my sacrifices in Christ*

1. **Are you familiar with one John Nelson Darby and what is your evaluation of him?**

*I only learned about him now.*

1. **What do you know about the history of dispensationalism before JN Darby?**
2. **If you were made aware of the history of dispensationalism, would you be willing to discuss and give your personal perspectives on the following claims of dispensationalism:**

* ***God has always had varied and distinct arrangements (called dispensations) with humanity throughout History.***

*For instance the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was present in the OT but he was poured out at Pentecost, this a distinction. David asked God not to remove his spirit from him in the same way that someone today may be going through a tough time and they feel like God’s Holy Spirit has left them. Even though he knows that the HS cannot leave him, people may feel this way. People of the OT were not really aware of the Holy Spirit. They were not aware of the Trinity. The types of Christ and the traces of Christ are in the Old Testament but the NT makes the OT clear (Joseph a type of Christ) Without the New Testament we will never understand the NT.*

* ***Israel, as a nation and the Church, as a whole, have two distinct origins, missions and destinies.***

*I disagree with this.*

* ***There is a future, physical removal of the church (called the rapture) prior to the coming wrath of God on the Earth (called the tribulation).***

*The rapture and the second coming are describing the same event.*

*Paul encourage these believers about the coming of the Lord so much that many of them had stopped working. This is why he wrote a second letter to them. They were ignorant about the people that died. Paul is saying that they should not worry about who should see the Lord first.*

*I don’t know how the supposed to comings of Christ happen (One quickly and every eye shall see him). If there is a rapture, then that means that God is giving people a second chance.*

*When Jesus came as a man, he came to die, this was the opportunity and responsibility for people to be saved. The guarantee that one is saved is when he/she believes. We are responsible now to believe. There is no second chance because Jesus has already come. There is no rapture for a second chance for the Jews because they reject Jesus today. However, if God wants to give the Jews or anyone a second chance then what can I say.*

* ***There is a coming literal 1000 Year kingdom reign of Jesus Christ on Earth (called the millennium) fulfilling God’s covenant promises to Abraham and his descendants.***

*There is no physical reign of Christ on Earth but this is a heavenly Jerusalem that the Lord will reign from because the Bible says that God will make a New Jerusalem. I cannot see how this is possible because there are millions and millions of people.*

* ***The ultimate purpose of all creation and history, is the eternal Glory of God in His Kingdom.***

1. **Are there any questions or concerns you have with the dispensational approach to scripture?**