

## Introduction - Food from Heaven

Ps 119:103 How **sweet** are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (NKJ)

There is nothing in this world more valuable than the Bible. All the **gold** in the world couldn't buy what this little book has to offer, the knowledge of God. When the words of this book enter a person's heart, he is changed forever. He will never be the same again, as the scripture says:

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

The Word of God brings God's life into us. One man explained it this way using the example of a seed, "A seed is that little thing that carries within it the very life of a plant or tree, and when planted in the ground, it imparts that life somewhere else." The Word of God reveals to us God's life, His thoughts, His attitude, His affections, and His power. Jesus said:

John 6:51 "I am **the living bread** which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever."

As the bread of life we feed upon it, just as food. It



nourishes us and when digested, it becomes part of us. In feeding upon the Bible, we take in who God is and the power of the Word of God enters us, and becomes our very own. When we think of eternal life we usually think of living forever, but according to the Bible, **eternal life** is much more than that. It is a quality of life. A taking in of the knowledge of God. As Jesus said when praying to the Father:

John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may **know** You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

You may find it interesting that the word used here for "know" is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew word meaning "intercourse." Therefore only the sexual union of a man and his wife becoming one could possibly picture what kind of union exists when a man takes in the Word of God and is supernaturally transformed.

2 Cor 3:18 "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being **transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The Word of God changes us like a tree that produces fruit. The fruit of God is His character and life working within us transforming us into the image of Jesus Christ Himself. The Bible makes this clear:

Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is **love**, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Jn 15:5-8 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, **bears much fruit**; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Yes, the Bible is much more than a book, and it should be valued more than anything else. The Bible contains **riches and treasures** beyond our greatest wishes. I believe God created us with something inside that is attracted to enjoyment and satisfaction. We find ourselves working hard so that we can earn the money to do things or to have things that will bring us pleasure. God's Word is the most pleasurable. It can bring out the deepest emotions of pleasure and satisfaction because it brings us close to God. Men of God said:

Ps 119:24 "Your words also are my **delight** and my counselors."

Lk 24:32 And they said to one another, "Did not our heart **burn** within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

Job 23:12 I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have **treasured** the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.

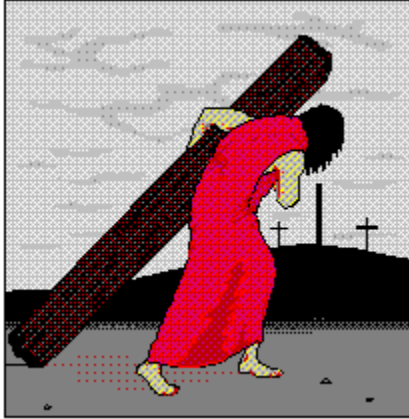
Ps 119:103 How **sweet** are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

When we are close to God, we feel secure. We learn to trust Him in any circumstance. We find the best things in life. **His Word opens us up as with a surgeon's scalpel.** We learn about ourselves. The Bible can be so enjoyable. There's a multiplicity of things that happen to each one of us uniquely when we open the Scriptures. Through the Word we learn our purpose in life, God's will is established, and in turn we are fulfilled.

We can learn a lot by examining the life of Christ. What did the Lord Jesus think about the Scriptures. The Word guided His every step, it was His food, and His strength. It was the weapon by which He could overcome every enemy. From beginning to end His life was the fulfillment of what had been written of Him in the **"volume of the Book."** Jesus constantly appealed to the Word. When He was tempted in the wilderness, He conquered Satan by saying, **"It is written."** When He was confronted by the Pharisees He would say, **"What sayeth the Scripture?" "Have ye not read?" "Is it not written?"** When His disciples questioned Him about His sufferings, He replied, **"How otherwise can the Scriptures be fulfilled?"** Even in His death, He quoted Scripture.

Jesus was the living Word, He had the Spirit without measure. Surely, He didn't need the written Word, yet It was everything to Him. I am convinced that Jesus could not have done what He did, had He not yielded Himself step by step to be led and sustained by the Word of God. The Scriptures were more than a book to Him, it was the Word of His Father, and His very life. When He quoted the Scriptures, He spoke from His deepest personal experience. When He said **"Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,"** He really meant it and from the deepest part of Him. His life was a life of depending on the Word of the Father. He had His mind and heart so filled with the Word, the Holy Spirit could at any moment find within Him the perfect word for the need of the moment.

**Jn 4:33-34 33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.**



When the Lord Jesus became man, He set an example for us to follow. He shows us what are the most important things in life, like being alone with God, enjoying God's presence, doing God's will, love, patience, generosity, humility, kindness, and so on. May we follow Christ's example and allow the Spirit of God to fill us with a desire for the Father's Words. May we learn from Christ Himself how to make the Word our bread, and as it is digested, our very being. May we learn from God alone what our unique purpose is in this world and may His Word be, as David said, "[a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.](#)"

Amen.



## **The Incredible Bible Chapter 1 - The Only One of its Kind**

**Abraham Lincoln** said: "I believe the Bible' is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this Book."

**George Washington** said: "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."

**Charles Dickens** said: "The New Testament' is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known in the world."



**Daniel Webster** said: "If there is anything in my thoughts or style to commend, the credit is due to my parents for instilling in me an early love of the Scriptures. If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity."

The Bible is definitely a very unique book. There has never been anything like it in the world. No book in history has affected the world like this book has. It is the most quoted, the most published, the most translated, and the most studied and criticized book in the history of mankind. It is one of the oldest books, yet it is still the **world's best seller**.

No one can deny the uniqueness of the Bible. The word "unique" means, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "being the only one of its kind." Everything about the Bible is unique because it is God's very Word to man. We will be looking at just **four areas of uniqueness**: Its unity, its content, its indestructibility, and its unique superiority to the sacred texts of other religions. As we study this please understand, we are not trying to prove that the Bible is God's Word, for the Bible never does this, we are simply establishing the credibility and believability of this wonder book. I heard it said once, "**you don't have to defend a lion, just let it out of its cage**".

### **a. Unique in its Unity**



The Bible contains 66 books, written by about 40 different men, and covering a period of approximately 1600 years. It contains hundreds of themes, written in different countries, by men of various occupations. Yet, among all this diversity there is an amazing unity of all its teachings and subjects. It has one basic cause of all man's problems (sin), and one cure (Christ). It deals with controversial subjects such as: Heaven, Hell, Death, Sickness, God, Satan, Marriage,... etc. with such harmony, and this Book spans the culturally changing centuries. What is also amazing is that most of the authors never met each other. Yet they had the same unique experiences.

Jer 30:1-2 1 The word that came to Jeremiah' from the LORD, saying, 2 "Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying: `Write in a **book** for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you.

Lets examine briefly the lifestyles of some of the key writers of the old and new testaments: Moses , David , Solomon , Jeremiah , Matthew , Peter , & Paul .

Moses was raised in the Courts of Egypt as a princely Epyptian until the age of 40. Then, he spent another 40 years in the wilderness of Midian as a family man, shepherding his father-in-laws flocks, until finally he was called by God to lead His people Israel out of Egyptian slavery. (1400 BC)

David was a shepherd boy from a little city called Bethlehem. After years of running from king Saul he eventually became king. David did much of his writing while on the run. He grew into a valiant man of war and wrote also in times of war. He was from his youth a musician and songwriter. (1000 BC)

Solomon, the son of David, was also king. He reigned at a time when the kingdom of Israel was at its climax. It was so rich and beautiful that people came from all over the world to see it. Solomon was probably the wealthiest man in the world at the time that he did most of his writings. (950 BC)

Jeremiah, who was called "the man that hath seen afflictions" was a tenderhearted, affectionate son of a priest. He wept continually as he witnessed Judah's fanatical addiction to idolatry and apostasy. Jeremiah was often writing in a dungeon and courageously prophesying about the tragedies soon to come, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the people being deported to Babylon.  
(600 BC)

Matthew, as we move to the New Testament, was a tax collector. Though he was Jewish, he was hated for serving Rome. Matthew was more than just a tax collector, he was the kind that would sit in a little Roman booth at seaports and trade routes. The Jews called them "beasts in human shape."  
(1st Cent. AD)

Peter was a simple fisherman with no formal education. He did most of his fishing at the Sea of Galilee where the society was greatly influenced by Greek culture. (1st Cent. AD)

Paul was a pharisee of pharisees, a student of Gamaliel who was a noted teacher in Israel. Paul was apparently wealthy as he had a Roman citizenship. Before he became a Christian he terribly persecuted the Christians from house to house, throwing both men and women into prison. He was the pride of the Jewish aristocracy until he became a believer in Christ. He also did much of his writing in prison. (1st Cent.).

These are just a few examples, but imagine these men, all from different walks of life, living centuries apart, with **different personalities**, different moods, and in different places, never having met each other, and writing books that they said were the word of God. And these books, though dealing with hundreds of controversial subjects, reveal such a **startling continuity**, that whoever reads these books must conclude that it is one book, with one purpose, one moral standard, one plan of salvation, one explanation for everything, one consummation for all the ages. I am happy to say that it is the embodiment of divine revelation. The Bible is definitely unique in its unity. It is also unique in its content.


## **b. Unique in its Content**


The Bible contains so many awesome things including answers to all man's questions, an accurate history of mankind, miracles that reveal God, and prophecies about future events that we can look back on and conclude that it all happened just the way the Bible said it would. It even gives man hope for the future. Lets look briefly at each of these.

**The Bible contains answers .**

First of all, it teaches us about **God**, His personality, the fact that He's one God having a triune nature. It magnifies His holiness and love, as well as His sovereign rule in the universe. It reveals to us that we were created by Him in His image and our fall was a free revolt against His revealed will. It teaches in great detail sin as rebellion and under the judgment of eternal punishment as well as God's abundant mercies in providing salvation and the conditions on which it is experienced. The Bible sets up the highest ethical standards and teaches that these qualities can only be maintained by a changing of the inward nature through the Word of God. It answers questions about life, death, good, and evil.

### **The Bible also contains an accurate history of mankind.**

It gives us reliable information about people, places, and events that other ancient books do not mention. It even tells about kingdoms that have disappeared from the face of the earth. The Bible begins with God's creation of {bmr CORBIS3.BMP}the world, and leads us through many centuries of ancient history, and points us toward the end of time. History is very important and does have a purpose. The ancient Sumerians  Babylonians, and Egyptians knew this and often wondered **the meaning of history** and where it was heading.

 They carefully preserved the ways of their ancestors and treasured whatever they had of the past. But this sense of history was lost with the fall of Rome and the coming of the dark ages. Western society lost contact with its heritage. In fact, medieval art and literature had to illustrate Scripture with people who wore medieval clothing and lived in castles. Even today modern technology has blinded us from the depths of the past.



Today, we are only concerned with the "**now**". It's very hard for us to put ourselves in the shoes of those who lived in the distant past. Who cares about their manners and customs, trade, money, law, warfare, etc.? Well, I'm happy to say that God does. God's Word reveals that ancient human beings were no less creative or intelligent than we are, and through these people, places, and events God has been working out an eternal purpose, as one writer put it:

"Behind 10,000 events stands God, **the builder of history**, the maker of the ages. Eternity bounds the one side, eternity bounds the other side, and time is in between---Genesis-origins, 'Revelation-endings, and all the way between God is working things out. You can go down into the minutest detail everywhere and see that there is one great purpose moving through the ages, the eternal design of the almighty God to redeem a wrecked and ruined world. **The Bible is one book, one history, one story, His story.**"



## **The Bible contains Miracles that reveal God.**

People say, "Well, if there just weren't any miracles in the Bible, more people would read it." But the very fact that the Bible does contain miracles, marks it out as a supernatural book. If there's a God, then **He can do anything He wants** to do, including things that our finite minds cannot understand. Surely, if He created the natural laws, then He could, at any time, set them aside to do whatever He purposed. When I read about the miracles in the Bible, it shows me that God is always present, and there's no limit to His power.

Is 40:25-26 25 "To whom then will you liken Me, or to whom shall I be equal?" says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; he calls them all by name, by **the greatness of His might** and the strength of His power; not one is missing.

Miracles reveal that God is a God of infinite variety and He has millions of ways to respond to our needs. There's so much we can say about this, but let's just list a few of the Bible's miracles:

- The creation of the world** (Gen 1)... "In the beginning God created..."
- The creation of life** (Gen 2)... "The LORD's breath of life..."
- The great flood** (Gen 6-7)... "I Myself am bringing the flood of waters.."
- The gathering of animals into the ark** (Gen 7)... "They went in to Noah.."
- The tower of Babel** (Gen 11)... "The LORD confused their languages..."
- The destruction of Sodom** (Gen 18-19)... "The LORD rained fire..."
- The 10 plagues on Egypt** (Ex 7-12)... "I will execute judgement..."
- The parting of the Red Sea** (Ex 14)... "The LORD made the sea dry land..."

-Events under the ministry of Moses, Joshua, the Judges, the Kings, and all the prophets.

-Even the New Testament is filled with signs and wonders and healings performed by God through Jesus and the apostles.

Miracles are occasions on which God comes forth from His hiding place and shows to man that He is **a living God**, that He is still on the throne of the universe, and that He is sufficient for all of man's problems. The Bible is a Book about God. It has to have miracles. The only other option is that there is no God. Therefore there is no Bible, or salvation, or resurrection, or any kind of hope for mankind. But with this little Book, there is hope. We have God's Word that **"everything is possible to him who believes."**

## **The Bible contains prophecies about Future Events.**

Prophecy here means the foretelling of events through direct communication from God. There is no other book in the world that foretells the future like the Bible does. All the way back to the beginning of time the Bible records predictions about people, situations, cities, nations, and empires with perfect accuracy to the very minutest detail.

Prophecies about ancient cities and empires such as Babylon, Egypt, Israel, Greece, Rome, Tyre, Ninevah, etc., as well as predictions about people such as Alexander the Great, Cyrus, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, and especially about Jesus Christ- His birthplace, lineage, first and second coming, type of death, His resurrection, and on and on. And these were all written so long before the actual fulfillments that no one could ever come close to claiming that they were forged after the events happened. **Only God can give us the details of history before they happen.**

Is 46:9-10 9 Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 **Declaring the end from the beginning**, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.'

The amazing accuracy leaves us with but one conclusion--the Bible is authored by God. It is obvious that **the Bible is a product of someone who knows everything**, and that someone is God. No man has ever been able to foretell the future with perfect accuracy.

### c. Unique in its Indestructibility



The Bible was written over a period of about 17 Centuries and yet here it is still with us today. Even though the Bible was written on material that perished more quickly than what we have now, it has survived, and is proven to have been preserved beautifully in all its writings. How could this be? **Even Shakespeare's writings are in total question**, and they were written only a couple of centuries ago. There is definitely something supernatural about the indestructibility of the Bible. Throughout every

century the Bible has been attacked. There have been many geniuses, philosophers, psychologists, scientists, historians, critics, and political leaders, who have criticized the Bible over and over again and here it stands. Many have even tried to do away with it completely or keep people from reading it, and yet even today almost every home in America has a Bible. There is certainly great truth in this scripture:

Is 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God **stands** forever."

#### **4. Unique in its superiority to Other Sacred Texts.**

The Bible is infinitely superior and unique to that of any sacred, religious book in the world. The major religious literature of the world are as follows: The "Veda" of Hinduism, the "Tripitaka" of Buddhism, the "Zend-Avesta" of Zoroastrianism, the sacred texts of Confucianism, the "Koran" of Islam, and the "Bible" of Christianity. **Lets compare** with the Bible the three most influential sacred books: the Tripitaka, the Veda, and the Koran. I think this is important because there are, according to the World Almanac- over 950,000,000 Muslims (Koran), 700,000,000 Hindus (the Veda's), and over 300,000,000 Buddhists (Tripitaka) in the world today.

#### **The "Tripitaka" of Buddhism**

Buddhism began in India about 525 BC. The founder was Gautama Siddhartha (563-480 BC) who achieved enlightenment through intense meditation. The Tripitaka is a collection of Buddha's teachings, rules of monastic life, and commentaries. It is about 10 times larger than the Bible. The basic belief is that life is misery and decay, and there is no ultimate reality in it or behind it. The cycle of endless birth and rebirth continues because of desire and attachment to the unreal "self." Right meditation and deeds will end the cycle and achieve Nirvana, the Void, nothingness. The Bible makes it clear that a personal God does exist and He is to be the only object of worship. According to the Bible, man, though he has sinned against his maker, is not worthless but of infinite worth, therefore God in His love has provided salvation through Jesus Christ.

#### **The Vedas of Hinduism**

Hinduism also began in India, but much earlier than Buddhism, about 1500 BC. The Vedas are a collection of rituals and mythological and philosophical commentaries with a vast number of epic stories about gods, heroes, and saints. They were written over a period of about 2000 years, (approx. 1400 BC-500AD). To summarize the Hindu belief would be impossible because there are so many different ways to look at it. That is why there is so many different sects. But they all believe in Brahman (the three-in-one god),

Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the destroyer). Man is subject to fate since he is part of Brahman.

Karma, Reincarnation, and Nirvana are also believed as in Buddhism. Yogas cause one to control the body and emotions through intense discipline, and Dharma is the law of moral order which one must follow to reach Nirvana. It is the aim of every Hindu to avoid reincarnation and reach Nirvana through pure acts, thought, and devotion. It is interesting to note that it is the Hindu Vedas that worship the cow.

The Bible teaches God as a definable, infinite, and personal Supreme Being, who created man in His own image, whom he loves dearly. Sin is rebellion against a holy God, but the judgment for that sin fell on Christ. Salvation is freely given by God and cannot be earned. The Bible sees the universe as totally separate from God and not part of Him.

### **The Qur'an or Koran of Islam**

Islam was founded in 622 AD by Mohammed (570-632 AD), the prophet, in Medina, Arabian peninsula. Today, the Muslim faith is the fastest growing religion in the world, spreading to over 40 countries on three continents. Its founder, Mohammed, was born in Mecca, Arabia (570 AD). He received his first revelation by the angel Gabriel at the age of 40. Though he could not read or write, his revelations were apparently written down by his secretaries for about 22 years until he died in 632 AD. He denied Polytheism and only worshipped Allah, the only God who sent his last and greatest prophet, Mohammed, to give the word of God, the Koran, to mankind.

The Qur'an or Koran are the holy scriptures in Islam. Almost as large as the New Testament, it contains 114 chapters. The Koran is superior to all other revelations because they have been corrupted beyond recognition. Only the Koran is infallible. There is no room for discussion of the historicity of the Bible because Mohammed said it was corrupt. The Koran was written in the Arabic language shortly after Mohammed's death. It teaches that the one true God's name is Allah. He is so far above man in His knowledge and power that no man could ever know him. In fact, it would be blasphemous to call Allah, "your father." There is no personal relationship with him. He is to be obeyed without question, therefore the name Moslem, or Muslim means "to submit." Allah has spoken through numerous prophets, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc.

But Mohammed was the last and most perfect prophet. The Koran teaches that man's good and bad deeds are being recorded by each man's two recording angels, and on the last day, Allah will weigh them in the balances. Some will go to paradise, where they will recline on soft couches with cups of wine, given to them by virgins, of whom each man may marry as many as he

pleases. Others will go to Hell where there will be unmerciful torment. If a man dies in war, defending Islam, he is guaranteed eternal life in paradise.

The Bible teaches that **God is not divorced from His creatures** and loves man dearly. He is a God of love, grace, and mercy, and does call us children. Jesus was called the Son of God, repulsive to Islam. The Bible reveals that salvation can be certain, and sin has been provided for through the death of Christ, also repulsive to Islam for Allah would never permit the suffering of an innocent on behalf of others let alone one of his prophets who he could easily rescue. God motivates man through grace, not fear, through relationship, not legalism. According to the Bible, Christianity was founded by a risen Christ who said:

**Jn 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends**

In conclusion, the Bible is different than any other book ever written. These are just a few reasons among many. It is without question God's revelation of Himself and His purposes. **The Bible is truly a wonder book.** May we, as followers of Christ, believe it whole-heartedly, and seek to Know Him better, and may we increase in a desire to share the riches of God's love each day as He leads us.

Amen.



Before we actually study Canonicity, which determines how each book became included, let's first look at the **Names** and **Divisions** of the Bible.

### (1) The Names of the Bible



The word "Bible" comes from the Greek word "biblos" which means "a little book." It comes from the word given to the inner pulp of the papyrus reed that ancient books were written on. Here are two scriptures in the New Testament that use this word "biblos":

Matt 1:1 The **book** of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David', the Son of Abraham:

Lk 4:17 And He was handed the **book** of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

Other names besides Bible are used in the New Testament. For example:

Mark 15:28 So **the Scripture** was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."

Lk 24:27 And beginning at Moses' and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all **the Scriptures** the things concerning Himself.

Rom 1:2 which He promised before through His prophets in the **Holy Scriptures**,

Rom 3:2...Chiefly because to them were committed the **oracles of God**.

Rom 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by **the word of God**.

### (2) The Divisions of the Bible

The Bible has an Old Testament and a New Testament. The word "testament" means a covenant that God made with His people. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

#### A. The Old Testament

The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into 3 sections:

**-The Law (Torah)**, 5 books:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

**-The Prophets (Nebhim)**, 8 books:

Former Prophets - Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings

Latter Prophets - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve

**-The Writings (Kethubim)**, 11 books:

Poetical Books - Psalms, Proverbs, Job

Megilloth - Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Esther, Ecclesiastes

Historical Books - Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles.


**B. The New Testament -Biography of Jesus** (4 books):

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

**-Historical** (1 book): Acts

**-Epistles** (21 books): Romans - Jude

**-Prophetic** (1 book): Revelation'

It is very important to realize that the Bible wasn't originally divided into chapters and verses as we know it today. In fact, they were first introduced by Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, around 1201 AD. The first Bible to be published which was divided into chapters and verses was **the Geneva Bible** of 1560.  Nevertheless, we have to remember that chapters and verses weren't inspired, though they are helpful. They can mislead us if they come right in the middle of a subject being dealt with.

### **(3) The Canon of the Bible**

The word "canon" comes from the Greek "kanon" which means "a measuring rod or reed," and signifies a rule, a standard. Therefore, canon means those books which have been measured, found satisfactory, and approved through the decision of Rabbis or a church council to be inspired of God and, therefore, a standard for men. Notice that these Ecclesiastical councils did not give these books their divine authority, but merely recognized that these books already possessed canonicity.

#### **1. The Canonicity of the Old Testament.**

The Bible reveals when the Old Testament canon began, but is never clear about when it was complete. The law was written down by Moses and periodically read to the people. For example:

Deut 31:9-11 9 So **Moses wrote** this law and delivered it to the priests, the

sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. 10 And Moses commanded them, saying: "At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, 11 "when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

This marks the very earliest beginning of the Old Testament Canon. Also:

Deut 31:24-26 24 So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law **in a book**, when they were finished, 25 that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying: 26 "Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you;

Samuel also wrote certain events of his day in a book, as it says:

1Sam 10:25 Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty, and **wrote it in a book** and laid it up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

Later on in Old Testament history the prophets wrote books, as it says:

Is 30:8 Now go, write it before them on a **tablet**, and note it on a scroll, that it may be for time to come, forever and ever:

Jer 36:2 "Take a **scroll** of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day.

Hab 2:2 Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on **tablets**, that he may run who reads it.

Zech 7:12 "Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts **had sent by His Spirit** through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.

Even Daniel searches "**in the books**" to discover God's will about Jerusalem and the people of God in Babylon:

Dan 9:2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by **the books** the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

There is no doubt that the Old Testament Scriptures were recognized during



those times as the very Word of God. Many scholars, including Norman Geisler, and Gleason Archer, who are foremost among the scholars of our day in these subjects, believe that **the Old Testament Canon was completed and recognized as authoritative during the time of Ezra (444 BC)**. This was confirmed by the famous Jewish historian Josephus in many of his ancient writings, especially "Against Apion" and also by the historian Philo.

What is most important is that the Old Testament Canon was, no doubt, **complete at the time of Christ**. Jesus had some very interesting things to say about the absolute authority of the Old Testament Canon as we know it today:

## 2. Jesus and the Old Testament Canon.

Jesus referred to it as the "Scriptures" when He said:

**Jn 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."**

**Lk 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.**

In the **Hebrew Bible**, Genesis is the first book and 2 Chronicles is the last book. Jesus made a remarkable statement that would not only put His seal of approval on the entire Old Testament, but gave us exact knowledge that the entire Old Testament books were **in existence**, and were approved at the time He was here on earth. This is spoken of in Luke 11,

**Lk 11:51 "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation."**

Jesus was referring to the martyrs of the Old Testament. Abel was the first, recorded in Gen 4, and Zechariah was the last, recorded in 2 Chr. 24. Wow, what an amazing verse to substantiate the authority of the Old Testament Canon and spoken by Jesus Christ Himself.

Jesus many times authenticated **people** and **events** in the Old Testament to show His belief in the literal interpretation and authorship, such as:

**Adam & Eve - Matt 19:4 And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning `made them male and female,'"**

**Noah & the Flood** - Matt 24:37 "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

**Jonah in the Whale** - Matt 12:40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Many other examples could be given such as the lives of David, Daniel, Abraham, Lot's wife, Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Elijah, etc. Events like Sodom & Gomorrah, the lions den, the burning bush, manna, etc. all were mentioned by Jesus. **He either quoted from or alluded to every book of the Old Testament.**

### **3. The Apocrypha .**

The word "Apocrypha", refers to the 14 "Apocryphal Books" which have been added to the Old Testament by the Roman Catholic Church, who believe them to be part of the Old Testament Canon. The books are as follows:

1 & 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, The Rest of Esther, The Wisdom of 'Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, with the epistle of Jeremiah, The Song of the Three Holy Children, The 'History' of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, 1 & 2 Maccabees.

These books were written during the first two centuries BC. and fill the gap between the Old Testament (which ended about 400 BC.) and the New Testament. The question is...Should we accept these books as Scripture along with the Old Testament? Most Christians and Jews would definitely say, **"No,"** though they do have historical value. Roman Catholics since the Council of Trent (1546) have held these books to be canonical, as quoted at Trent,

**"If anyone receives not as sacred and canonical the said books (including Apocrypha) entire with all their parts...let him be anathema".**

There are **several reasons for rejecting** these books. Here are a few:

#### **External Reasons:**

- a. They were never considered canonical by Christians or Jews until the Council in 1546, which was an obvious lash at Martin Luther.
- b. They were never accepted as canon by Jesus, or the N.T. writers.
- c. Virtually all of the early Church leaders rejected their canonicity.

d. Jerome, the great Hebrew scholar and translator of the Roman Catholic Latin Vulgate, strongly rejected the Apocrypha.

### **Internal Reasons:**

- a. The Apocrypha doesn't claim to be the Word of God.
- b. It doesn't speak with God's authority as the O.T. books.
- c. It contains historical errors (see Tobit 1:3-5 and 14:11).
- d. It contains theological heresies such as praying for the dead (2 Mac), and intercession to the saints.
- e. It doesn't contain any prophecy and adds nothing to the messianic hope.

## **4. The Canonicity of the New Testament**

There is much more evidence for the canonicity of the New Testament than that of the Old. The 27 books of the New Testament were written during the last half of the first century AD. The Christian Church was being formed and they had the Old Testament Scriptures as the basis for their faith, as well as the teachings of Jesus, passed on through the word of the apostles, and also the authoritative teachings of the apostles. It was not long until the Gospels and the words of the apostles were placed alongside the Old Testament. The authority of the apostles of Christ is revealed:

1 Jn 1:3 that which we have **seen and heard** we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

2 Pet 1:16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were **eyewitnesses** of His majesty.

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the **apostles' doctrine** and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The same was immediately true of the apostle **Paul's writings**:

1 Thes 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be **read to all** the holy brethren.

Col 4:16 Now when this epistle is **read among you**, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from

Laodicea.

Even in Peter's epistle, he recognizes Paul's writings as equal to the Old Testament Scriptures when he writes:

2 Pet 3:15-16 15 and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation-- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also **the rest of the Scriptures**.

The process of collecting authentic apostolic literature began in the first century. Though many books were written, there were tests to prove a book's canonicity. The following principles were used to determine this:

**a. Apostolicity.** Was the book written by an apostle, or one who was closely associated with the apostles?

**b. Spiritual Content.** Was the book read in the churches and did its contents spiritually edify the body?

**c. Doctrinal Soundness.** Were the contents of the book doctrinally sound? Any book containing heresy, or any teaching contrary to the already accepted canonical books was rejected.

**d. Usage.** Was the book universally recognized in the churches, and was it widely quoted by the church leaders?

**e. Divine Inspiration .** Did it claim or give true evidence of divine inspiration? This was the ultimate test!

By the second century all but 7 of the 27 books were included in the canon. These books were: Hebrews, 2 & 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude, James, and Revelation. The process was rushed when Emperor Diocletian (302 AD) ordered that all the Scriptures be burned with fire. Within 25 years, Constantine, the new Emperor, had embraced Christianity and ordered Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea and church historian, to prepare and distribute 50 copies of the New Testament. Athanasius (born about 298 AD), in one of his pastoral epistles, lists all 27 books used by Eusebius as Scripture, the same 27 that are in our New Testament today.

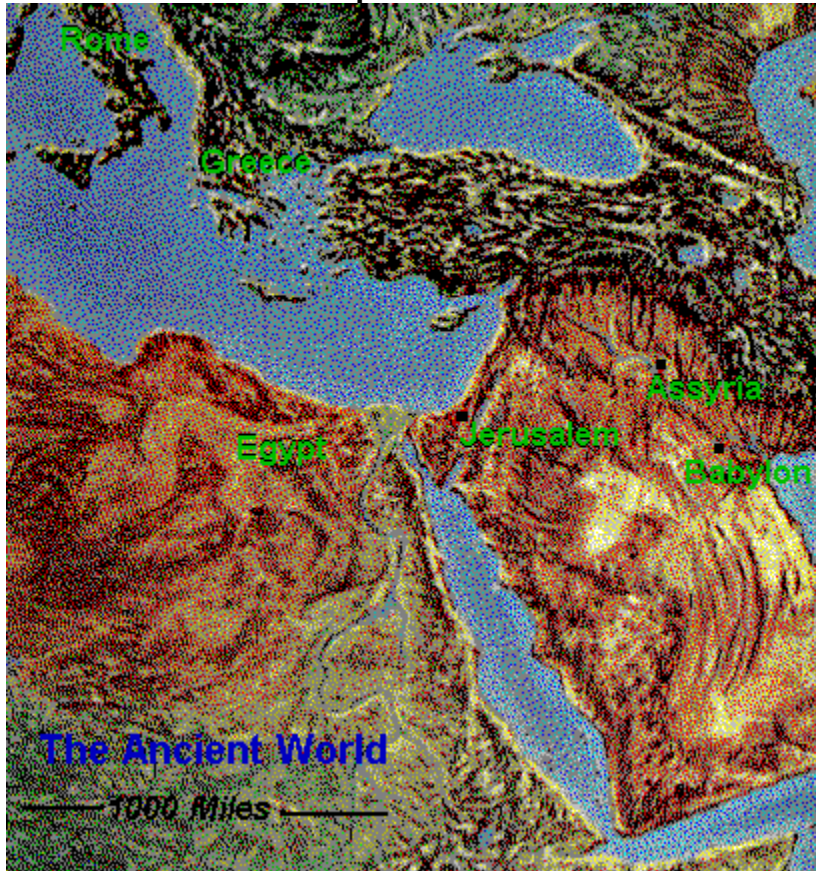
There were literally **hundreds** of books to be considered during the first four centuries. One group worth mentioning is called the pseudepigrapha. These writings are clearly heretical. Many heretical doctrines, such as those held by the Gnostics, who denied the incarnation of Christ; the Docetics, who




denied the reality of Christ's humanity; and the Monophysites, who rejected the dual nature of Christ, are found in these books. Fortunately, there were great influential leaders and councils that maintained the purity of the New Testament Canon and it has maintained that same purity up to the present day, despite what the higher critics of the Bible might say.

Amen.



## The Incredible Bible Chapter 3 - Ancient Materials and Manuscripts




Skeptics for so long have said, "Moses could not have written the first parts of the Bible because writing was unknown at that time"(1500 BC). But recent discoveries in archaeology have shut the mouths of those skeptics by uncovering writings thousands of years before the time of Moses. **Sumerian** writings  dating as far back as 3500 BC(about 2000 years before Moses) ancient Hieroglyphs of **Egypt**,  and the incredible writings of the **Babylonians**  dating almost as far back, have been uncovered. Writing was a hallmark of civilization and progress even leading to the development of the alphabet.In this study we will be looking at Ancient Writing Materials, Writing Instruments, and Manuscripts.

### (1) Ancient Writing Materials


**a. Stone** . Many famous inscriptions have been found in Egypt and Babylon inscribed on stone. The 10 commandments were written on two tables of stone (Ex 31:18). Two other examples are the Moabite Stone (850 BC), and the Siloam Inscription found in Hezekiah's tunnel by the Pool of Siloam (700 BC).



**b. Clay** . The predominant writing material used in Assyria and Babylonia was clay, formed into small tablets and impressed with wedge-shaped symbols called cuniefom



writing and then baked in an oven or dried in the sun. Thousands of clay writing-boards have been uncovered by archaeologists. (Ez 4:1; Is 8:1).



**c. Wood** . Wooden tablets were used extensively by the ancient writers. For many centuries, this was the common writing material in Greece and Rome. They were made of wood or ivory with a recess to hold a wax surface (Is 30:8; Hab). Even Ancient Egypt made use of wood.



**d. Leather** . The Jewish Talmud specifically required that the Scriptures should be copied on the skins of animals, on leather. It is most certain, that the Old Testament was written on leather. Rolls or Scrolls were made by sewing skins together that were from 3 to 100 feet or more in length. The text was written in columns perpendicular to the roll. The rolls were 18-27 inches high and rolled on one or two sticks.

**e. Papyrus** . It is almost certain that the New Testament was written on papyrus because it was the most important writing material at that time. Papyrus is made



by shaving thin sections of the papyrus reed into strips, soaking them in several baths of water, and then overlapping them to form sheets. One layer of the strips was laid cross ways to the first. Then these were put in a press that they might adhere to each other. The sheets were made 6-15 inches high and 3-9 inches wide, pasted together, forming rolls that were usually 30 feet long, though one was found to be 144 feet in

length. Our English word "paper" comes from the Greek word for papyrus.



**f. Vellum or Parchment** . Vellum was developed in Pergammum (180 BC) when the king was refused any more Papyrus from Egypt to build his library. So he developed a new type of writing material through a new process for the treatment of skins. This was called vellum or parchment. From the skin of sheep or goats a fine quality of leather was

specially and carefully prepared for writing on both sides. Most of the known manuscripts are on vellum. Later they were glued into book form, this was called a Codex. The codex made it possible to have much more Scripture in one place.

## (2) Writing Instruments



Black ink was made from soot or lampblack and gum, diluted with water. The Essenes, who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls, used burned lamb bones and oil. It is remarkable how well the writing has been preserved to this day. The ancient writing instruments were a chisel, for use on stone; a stylus made of metal or hard wood, for use on the clay tablets; and a pen, for use on papyrus or vellum. These pens were made from the hollow stalks of coarse grass or reeds. The dry reed was cut diagonally with a knife and shaved thin at the point, which was then split. In order to keep these in good condition, scribes carried a knife with them, a "penknife".

We need to realize that, as far as we know, none of the original manuscripts are in existence. Some may very well be discovered, but who knows? [No material Biblical object has yet been found.](#)

## (3) Manuscripts

The word "manuscript", as it is used today, is limited only to those copies of the Bible which were made in the same language as it originally written. At the time the Bible was first printed (1455 AD), there were over 2,000 manuscripts (copies of the original) discovered. Only some are complete, and some contain only small portions of the text, but put together a full text can be seen. At the present time, there are over 4,900 manuscripts of the New Testament. What is really amazing is that professors of Religion and History' at Universities throughout the world discredit the Bible as history while they [accept](#) works with comparatively less copies. For example:

**Homer's "Iliad"** (900 BC) - 643 copies; first copy found (400BC).

**Titus Livy's "History of Rome"** (40 BC) has only 20 copies.

**Caesar's "Gallic Wars"** (65 BC) - 10 copies; first copy found (900 AD).

**Thucydides "Peloponnesian War"** (410 BC) - 8 copies; first found (900 AD).

**Plato's "Tetralogies"** (400 BC) - 7 copies; first copy found (900 AD).

**Aristotle's "Works"** (350BC) - 49 copies; first copy found (1100 AD).

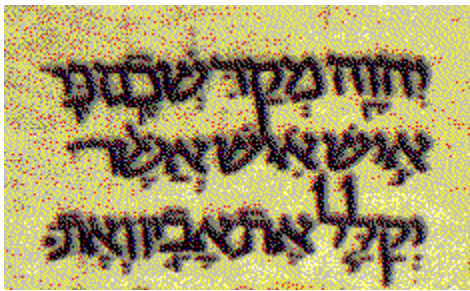
**New Testament** (40-100 AD) - 4,969 copies; first copy found (125 AD).





## a. Old Testament Manuscripts

**The Masoretes** . Before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 the earliest Old Testament Manuscript was dated at 895 AD. But the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal that the 895 AD. manuscript was virtually perfect. This means that the scribes copied perfectly, year after year, the Old Testament Scriptures. Let me briefly mention an interesting word about scribal customs:



After the Jews returned from Babylon, they formed communities of scribes to preserve and circulate the precious Scriptures. These scribes, later called "Masoretes" were so careful that they wouldn't write a word or even a letter **from memory**. They would be seated in **full Jewish dress** after having **washed their bodies**, and if a king should come in and address him he was **not to look up**. After the scribe finished copying a particular book, he would then **count all the words and letters** it contained. Then he checked this number with the count for the manuscript he was copying. If they didn't match, the copy was immediately burned. **In fact, the Masoretes destroyed all other manuscripts except their own and that is why we have so few Old Testament manuscripts.** This is also why the Dead Sea Scrolls were so important. The main manuscripts that have been discovered are:

- The **Leningrad Codex** or St. Petersburg Codex, written in 916 AD.
- The **Cairo Codex** or Codex Cairensis, written in 895 AD.
- The **Aleppo Codex**, written in 930 AD.
- The **British Museum Codex**, written in 950 AD.

## The Dead Sea Scrolls

In 1947, young Bedouin shepherds, searching for a stray goat in the Judean Desert, entered a long-untouched cave and found jars filled with ancient scrolls. That initial

discovery by the Bedouins yielded seven scrolls and began a search that lasted nearly a decade and eventually produced thousands of scroll fragments from eleven caves. During those same years, archaeologists searching for a habitation close to the caves that might help identify the people who deposited the scrolls, excavated the Qumran ruin, a complex of structures located on a barren terrace between the cliffs where the caves are found and the Dead Sea.



Within a fairly short time after their discovery, historical, paleographic, and linguistic evidence, as well as carbon-14 dating, established that the scrolls and the Qumran ruin dated from the third century B.C.E. to 68 C.E. They were indeed ancient! Coming from the late Second Temple Period, a time when Jesus of Nazareth lived, they are older than any other surviving biblical manuscripts by almost one thousand years.

There have been about [350 rolls uncovered](#) and this discovery has been considered one of the greatest archaeological finds of the twentieth century. Since their discovery nearly half a century ago, the scrolls and the identity of the nearby settlement have been the object of great scholarly and public interest, as well as heated debate and controversy. Why were the scrolls hidden in the caves? Who placed them there? Who lived in Qumran? Were its inhabitants responsible for the scrolls and their presence in the caves?

[Portions of every book of the Old Testament](#), with the exception of Esther, have been found. What's really interesting are the scrolls of [Isaiah](#), because one of the two that have been found gives the entire book of this great prophet, and it dates to before Jesus was born. That's incredible! Here is a Hebrew manuscript of Isaiah 1,000 years older than our oldest manuscript (Masoretic) and confirming the accuracy of the Masoretic text of the Old Testament.

## **b. The New Testament Manuscripts.**

There is much more abundant and accurate manuscript evidence for the New Testament than for any other book from the ancient world. Let's examine a few of these manuscripts:

- **The John Rylands Fragment** (125 AD). This is a very small piece of papyrus only two and a half by three and a half inches in size. It contains 5 verses' from the gospel of John and is the oldest manuscript of any part of the New Testament. It was obtained in 1920.

- **Papyrus Bodmer II** (200 AD). These contain most of John and Luke, along with the books of Jude, and 1 & 2 Peter'. These manuscripts contain the earliest complete copies of New Testament books and are in substantial condition.

- **Codex Sinaiticus** (340 AD). It is considered one of the two most important manuscripts in existence. In 1844 Dr. C. Tischendorf, a German Bible professor and

scholar, at the monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai, found monks lighting their fires with this manuscript. When he rescued it, it contained the whole New Testament and half of the Old Testament in Greek. In 1933, the (USSR) sold it to the British Museum for 100,000 pounds (\$500,000) where it is today.

- **Codex Vaticanus** (350 AD). This manuscript as well as Sinaiticus were written on vellum. It contains most of the New and Old Testaments in Greek and the Apocrypha. It was discovered in 1475 and was brought to the Vatican Library where it is today. It is considered to be highly accurate and one of the two most important manuscripts in existence.

- **Codex Alexandrinus** (450 AD). It contains much of the Old and New Testaments. Although it is one of the three greatest uncial (large capital letters) manuscripts, it does not measure up to the high standard of the other two, the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts. It is now in the British Museum in London.



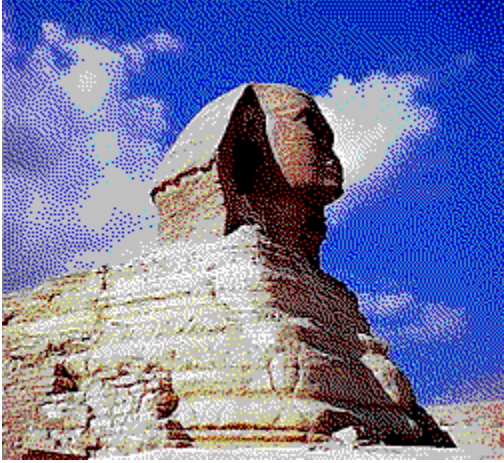
- The total count of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament is now close to 5,000. The New Testament scholar Bruce Metzger counts: 76 Papyri, 250 uncials, 2,646 miniscule, and 1,997 lectionary (special reading) manuscripts. This would total 4,969. No other book in antiquity even compares, and that's not even counting the different ancient versions such as the Septuagint, Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac, and Latin versions, as well as the Jewish Targums, Talmud and Midrash. The evidence is overwhelming.

- In fact, just the quotations of many of the church leaders who wrote during the first and second centuries AD. could compile an entire New Testament. Church leaders gave their testimony to authoritative books in the New Testament Canon:

Clement of Rome (95),  
Ignatius (110),  
Polycarp (120),  
Irenaeus (150),  
Tertullian (190),  
Origen (200),

Not every book is quoted by every leader, but every book is quoted as canonical by some leader. Norman Geisler said, "Five fathers alone possess almost 36,000 quotations from the N.T."

## **In Conclusion**



The Bible is trustworthy. If anyone says, "How can we know if what we are reading today was really in the original?" you can know for sure that there is overwhelming evidence for the historicity of both the Old and New Testaments. Besides, God is fully able to preserve for us a pure and accurate account of the Word of God, and He has.

**Matt 5:18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.**

Amen. 



Napoleon said: "The Bible is no mere book, but a living creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it." The subjects we have been studying so far about the historicity of the Bible are very encouraging, but we can't stop there. If we did, we would have just an honest ancient work on religious matters. Is there anything more we can affirm from the Scriptures? Is the Bible really the truth? **Is it really God's spoken Word, totally and in every part?** Are we to consider the Scriptures as the absolute authority on this planet? I would say, definitely yes, and there is absolutely no doubt in my mind about it. But my testimony doesn't amount to much. So let's look at a few reasons why I have come to that conclusion, and find out what the Bible says about itself.

### (1) Related Terms

In order to define Inspiration we'll need to distinguish it from other related terms. We will be briefly defining: **Revelation , Infallibility , Inerrancy , and Illumination .**

**a. Revelation.** God has revealed Himself. This is undeniably true, especially when we look around us. Things like mountains, clouds, animals, color, taste, stars, snowflakes, roses, etc; all reveal the touch of a master's hand.

Ps 19:1 The heavens **declare** the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.

Even within our own minds, we can detect an all-knowing person who listens and watches, but this is not the type of revelation we are talking about here. The Biblical definition for "Revelation" is the Greek word "apokalupsis" which means an uncovering or unveiling. Revelation is the Spirit of God revealing to man that which is otherwise unknowable. He gives to us the knowledge of God:

1 Cor 2:10 But God has **revealed** them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

God can only be known if He chooses to reveal Himself. We could never know Him, or who He is just by looking at what He has made. We could only know about Him, or what He can do. When we read the Bible with total trust, it is God talking to us and allowing us to partake of His very Life, who He is.

**b. Infallibility.** The Bible is the Word of God and, therefore, carries with it **divine authority**. It is binding upon every man, whether he admits it or not, and it is the ultimate standard for our mind, conscience, will, and heart. The reason for this is because it is truth, and it is God's Word, and it is right. That is exactly what the Greek word for infallible means, "right", or "perfect". God is God, and He Knows everything, and He has spoken, and it is right, and we must submit. That is the essence of the word infallible.

**Ps 19:7-11** 7 **The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them Your servant is **warned**, and in keeping them there is great reward.**

**c. Inerrancy.** The word "inerrant" is very closely related to the word "infallible". The Bible is infallible in total, and inerrant in every part. Inerrancy means that not just all the truth in the Bible is God's word, but every scripture down to the dotting of the "i" and the crossing of the "t" is the embodied Revelation of Almighty God, and is entirely true and never false in all it affirms, whether it be in doctrine, or ethics, or science, or history, or the future, or whatever the case may be. Jesus said,

**Matt 5:18** "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law **till all is fulfilled.**

**Jn 10:35** "...the Scripture **cannot** be broken.

**d. Illumination.** The Bible can be read by anyone, and its contents can be grasped intellectually, but only when the Holy Spirit brings God's light into a man's darkened mind and darkened heart can he receive of God's Revelation. This can only happen through faith and trust in Jesus Christ and being born again. As I said before, Revelation is the very knowledge of God Himself. God is not physical, not of the 5 senses, He is Spirit, as Jesus said:

**Jn 4:24** "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship **in spirit and truth.**"

According to the Bible, man was created in God's image. That image wasn't

anything physical but spiritual. When Adam sinned all died. This meant that Adam died spiritually, and every child born after him would have a dead spirit, and all of mankind was plunged into spiritual darkness. So God in His wisdom established the sacrificial system, and called **a sense ruled people**, the Jews, to preserve it until the Lamb of God would come and rebuild a broken relationship between God and man through the shedding of His own blood. After Adam no one was born again until Jesus came. That is why Jesus said:

Jn 12:46 "I have come as **a light into the world**, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

Jn 6:63 "It is **the Spirit who gives life**; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

So illumination is when the Holy Spirit teaches us everything we need to know about God and makes the Word "come alive" as we read it. A person who has not accepted Jesus cannot comprehend spiritual things for the Bible says:

1 Cor 2:14 But **the natural man** does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

But we have the promise of God that His Holy Spirit lives in us and will illumine us and teach us all we need to know for Jesus said:

Jn 14:16-17 16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- 17 "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for **He dwells with you and will be in you**.

Jn 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things**, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

## Inspiration

### a. Definition

What does the word "inspiration" mean? According to Webster's dictionary it means to "inhale". The Biblical definition is found in 2 Tim 3,

**2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for**

doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

The word "inspiration" here is the Greek word "theopneustos" which literally means "**God-breathed.**" The Scriptures teach that when God created all things that He "breathed" the universe into existence (Ps 33:6), and when He created man He "breathed" into Adam the breath of life (Gen 2:7). So now we see that the Bible also was created by the very breath of God. How much of the Bible did God breathe out? "All Scripture". The Greek word "all" is "pasa" which means "all" or "every" and the Greek word "scripture" is "graphe" which means "holy writing" or "scripture." Therefore "pasa graphe theopneustos" means "every scripture is God-breathed."

## b. The Writers

God breathed out His Words through **divinely chosen men** so that the writings of these men were actually the Word of God. Lets look at a verse:

2 Pet 1:20-21 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were **moved** by the Holy Spirit.

It is not of "private interpretation" (not the writer's own thoughts), also it did not come into being by "the will of man" (man did not intend to write it, or get together to arrange it), but "holy men" (divinely selected) "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (the Spirit spoke through them and moved them as wind pushes a sail).

Now the question is, how did God do it? Did these writers have some superior insight? Or were they inspired the way we are when we write a special song or talk about the Lord to someone? Did God suggest thoughts to them and they put it into their own words? Or did He just dictate to them everything He said verbatim, word for word, as His secretaries, leaving out their own personalities? Is there an answer for this?

It is obvious in the Scripture that we can see a a twofold nature. On one hand, it has God's character. On the other hand, it has a human character. When we read the books of the Bible, we find human personality. God used men. It's true. He could have dictated everything, but He chose not to. He chose to let men express **their own personalities, emotions, style, vocabularies**, etc; and under God's guidance, the words they chose were not only their words but God's words. God was there forming their personalities, controlling their heredity, environment, and lives, to make them into the men He wanted them to be. Their lives had been so fashioned by God that the words they used out of their own personalities and



vocabularies were in reality God's Words.

The only real explanation is that it was a miracle. Who could ever explain the miraculous nature of inspiration? Its never been seen. But we have its results. We have the Word of God.

It is important to remember that "the writers" **weren't** inspired, and everything they spoke and wrote wasn't inspired, but only the selected "words" at various times that God spoke through them and they recorded. The next question is, what does the Bible say about its own inspiration, and what did Jesus think about it?

### c. Biblical Claims

The Bible claims to be the Word of God and if a man or book speaks truthfully on all other matters, we should allow them also to speak for themselves. The Bible makes claims for itself.

#### 1) Old Testament

Over **3800** times the Old Testament uses terms as "thus sayeth the Lord", "the Word of the Lord came to me", or "the Lord said". Lets examine a few verses' and let the Old Testament speak for itself:

Ex 24:4 And Moses **wrote** all the words of the LORD.

Lev 26:46 These are the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai **by the hand of Moses**.

2 Sam 23:1-2 1 Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; thus says the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel: 2 **"The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue.**

Is 34:16 "Search from **the book of the LORD**, and read: not one of these shall fail; not one shall lack her mate. For My mouth has commanded it, and His Spirit has gathered them.

Jer 30:2 "Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying: **`Write in a book** for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you.

Jer 36:1-2 1 Now it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: 2 **"Take a scroll of a book** and write on it all the words that I have

spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day.

Ezek 11:25 So I spoke to those in captivity of all the things the LORD had shown me.

Zech 7:12 "Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit **through** the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.

## 2) The New Testament

The New Testament makes reference to the inspiration of the Old Testament as well as all of its sections, and almost every one of its books in particular. Also, it affirms the literal historicity of great **persons** and **events**, such as Adam, Noah, the Flood, Moses, Elijah, Jonah, etc. It even affirms the inspiration of the words of other New Testament writers, as well as the possibility of a New Testament from God. Here are some good verses:

Rom 3:1-2 1 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the **oracles of God**.

1 Cor 14:37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which **I write** to you are the commandments of the Lord.

1 Thes 2:13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard **from us**, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

Heb 1:1 God, who at various times and in various ways **spoke** in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 3:7-8 7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice,

1 Pet 1:10-12 10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, **the Spirit of Christ who was in them** was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things which angels desire to look into.

2 Pet 3:2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of **the commandment of us**, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,

2 Pet 3:15-16 15 and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation-- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also **the rest of the Scriptures**.

### **Jesus and the Scriptures**

Jesus Himself confirmed the literal historicity and inspiration of the entire Bible. When He said "**it is written**," He meant that it stands written for all eternity. To Him the Bible was the Word of God. He said:

Jn 10:35 "...the Scripture **cannot** be broken"

Matt 5:18 "For **assuredly**, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Lk 11:28 But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear **the word of God** and keep it!"

Lk 24:44 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things must be fulfilled** which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

In fact Jesus put His **stamp of approval** on the entire Old Testament in one statement when He said:

Lk 11:51 "from the blood of **Abel** to the blood of **Zechariah** who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.

Abel was the first Old Testament martyr in Genesis (the first book), and Zechariah was the last in 2 Chronicles (the last book).

Jesus made reference to or **alluded to** every book in the Old Testament. Here

are just a few examples of **persons**, **events**, and **miracles** quoted by Him:

Matt 19:4 And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at **the beginning** `made them male and female,'

Lk 17:26 "And as it was in the days of **Noah**, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:

Lk 17:29 "but on the day that Lot went out of **Sodom** it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

Matt 11:21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in **Tyre and Sidon**, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Jn 7:22 "**Moses** therefore gave you **circumcision** (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath.

Jn 7:19 "Did not Moses give you **the law**, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"

Matt 19:8 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from **the beginning** it was not so.

Mk 12:26 "But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in **the burning bush** passage, how God spoke to him, saying, `I am the God of **Abraham**, the God of **Isaac**, and the God of **Jacob**'?

Matt 12:40 "For as **Jonah** was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matt 12:42 "The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of **Solomon**; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

Matt 12:3 But He said to them, "Have you not read what **David** did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him:

Matt 12:5 "Or have you not read in the law that on **the Sabbath** the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?

Lk 4:25 "But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of **Elijah**, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land;

Lk 4:27 "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of **Elisha the prophet**, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

Jn 3:14 "And as Moses lifted up **the serpent** in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Matt 24:15 "Therefore when you see the `abomination of desolation,' spoken of by **Daniel the prophet**, standing in the holy place"

In conclusion:

The Bible is the Word of God breathed out by Him for us. We can trust it; Jesus did. May we search hard for the infinite treasures that are in this book. May we come to God as children and just believe. And may we be daily assured that ... **"all the promises in Him are yes, and amen!"**



Amen.

## Cunieform

Cunieform is the earliest - known system of writing. It was invented in Sumeria around 3000 - 4000 B.C. A nation of traders, the Sumerians introduced their word system throughout the Near East, where cunieform became widely used because of its adaptability to a diversity of languages



This is a hexagonal (six sided) clay prism written in cuneiform recording the annals of the early campaigns of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Height 38 cm. Ninevah, Assyria 701 B.C. (see below)

Part of the Inscription reads:

*"As for Hezekiah the Judahite, who did not submit to my yoke, forty-six of his strong walled cities, as well as innumerable small cities in their neighborhood, I beseiged with scaling*

*ladders, breaches, mines and tunnelling and I conquered them. Himself I shut up like a caged bird in his royal city of Jerusalem. I threw up earthworks against him, and whoever came out of the city gates was made to pay for his crimes. Those of his cities which I had plundered I cut off from his land. I increased his former tribute and exacted a yearly tax in acknowledgement of my sovereignty. But as for Hezekiah, he was intimidated by the splendour of my power, and the Urbi and his best mercenary troops which he had brought in to strengthen his royal city of Jerusalem deserted him in terror. . ."*



Babylonian chronicle for 605-594BC. The cuneiform text on this clay tablet tells, among other things, of the Battle of Carchemish (famous battle for world supremacy where Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh Necho, 605 BC.), the accession to the throne of Nebuchadnezzar II, the Chaldean, and the capture of Jerusalem on the 16th of March, 598 BC. Of this capture it reads:

*"In the seventh month (of Nebuchadnezzar-599 BC.) in the month Chislew (Nov/Dec) the king of Babylon assembled his army, and after he had invaded the land of Hatti (Syria/Palestine) he laid siege to the city of Judah. On the second day of the month of Adara (16th March) he conquered the city and took the king (Jehoiachin) prisoner. He installed in his place a king (Zedekiah) of his own choice, and after he had received rich tribute, he sent (them) forth to Babylon."* Paralleling the Scriptural record:

*II Ki 24:7-17 And the king of Egypt did not come out of his land anymore, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the River Euphrates. Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. At that time **the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.** And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, as his servants were besieging it. Then **Jehoiachin king of Judah**, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers went out to the king of Babylon; and the king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign, took him prisoner. And he carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD and **the treasures of the king's house**, and he cut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land. And he carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all who were strong and fit for war,*

*these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to **Zedekiah**.*

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## The Incredible Bible



### The Incredible Bible

Introduction    *Food from Heaven'*

Chapter 1      *The Only One of its Kind'*

Chapter 2      *Its Names Divisions and Canonicity'*

Chapter 3      *Ancient Materials and Manuscripts'*

Chapter 4      *Inspiration'*

Chapter 5      *English Translations'*

Bibliography & Credits



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## **Other Bible Knowledge Accelerator Books**

The purpose of these books are to bring Biblical and historical information to the reader in a quick and easy to learn style using the Windows Help Format. Each book is filled with valuable information, pop-up definitions, charts, maps, and graphics, and can easily be stored and read off one 3¼ in. HD disk. Unfortunately the graphics can only be viewed in 16-color at the present but they are colorful and useful illustrations. This first book is free, hope you enjoy it. Each additional book is \$5.00. The present list (7/95) of books available are as follows:

### **The Life of Jesus Christ**

This book takes us through the life of Christ in harmony with all four of the gospel accounts. The emphasis is on, "Y'Shua ha Mishiach" - Jesus, the Messiah. Understanding His teachings from a Hebraic backdrop, and examining His life and character in a way that gives insight into the incomprehensible love of a Man among men, One who befriended the most wretched, and felt with the deepest of emotions the beauties and agonies of the human experience.

### **The Historical Jesus**

What does history say about Jesus Christ? How does history authenticate the gospel accounts of His life and ministry? This book emphasizes extra-Biblical history and gains insight from ancient chroniclers such as Josephus, Pliny, Tacitus and others.

### **The Bible (Free)**

As with anything in God's creation the deeper you search, the more beauty and perfection you find. Such is the Bible. This book focuses on a closer understanding of the wonder Book, its uniqueness in comparison to other sacred religious texts, canonicity, various names and divisions, ancient writing instruments, materials, and manuscripts, inspiration, and a brief history of pre-reformation translators, English translations, and some notes on modern Bible translations.

### **The Greeks**

A history of the Greek world from a Christian perspective. Grecian history, language, influence, culture, great men, literature, religion, etc. A look at a culture that changed the whole world.

### **The Romans**

A history of the Roman world from a Christian perspective. Roman history, architecture, language, power & military, culture, great men, literature, religion, etc. An empire that changed the whole world. Also Rome's influence on Christianity throughout the church age through Roman Catholicism.

### **Jerusalem at the Time of Christ**

A look at Jerusalem, the city of the great king, in the first century A.D., with all its incredible architecture. Herod's Temple, his Palace, the Fortress of Antonia, the Hasmonean Palace, the Hippodrome, various roads, valleys, pools, hills, and mountains. Including the Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, and Calvary (Golgotha).

### **Religion at the Time of Christ**

Focusing on the background and peculiar lifestyles and beliefs of the various religious sects in the land of Israel whom Jesus encountered and understood when He was here. Pharisee's, Sadducee's, Scribes, Essenes, Zealot's, Priest's, Levites, the Sanhedrin, the High Priest, etc.

### **Sociology at the Time of Christ**

Community living in Israel 1st century A.D. Clothing, work, social life, economics, travel, sabbath, synagogue, children, marriage, homes, calendar and time, temple, festivals, etc.

### **The Crucifixion**

The origins and details of crucifixion and Roman justice, as well as what really happened when the Lord was on the cross. Interesting studies on the history of crucifixion.

### **The Destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D**

What really happened in 70 A.D? Who was Titus? How many came against Jerusalem? What took place at Masada? The slaughters of the Jews and destruction of the great Temple.

### **The Tabernacle**

An in-depth look at the ancient Tabernacle of Israel, its furnishings, details, and spiritual significance. The Ark of the Covenant, golden 7-branched Menorah, bronze Altar, the Veil, and Holy of Holies, etc. This is a rich and edifying study for the serious Bible student.

### **The 7 Jewish Feasts and their Significance**

The ancient yearly feasts and festivals of the Jews and their modern observances. Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles. Details of each including Yom Kippur and the scapegoat. Each of the feasts have a unique fulfillment in God's calendar of events.

### **The Five Levitical Offerings**

An object lesson which God ordained that would make your skin crawl. Why an innocent offering? What is sin? A detailed look at the five offerings that the common people of Israel brought to the priests. How were they uniquely fulfilled in Jesus, the final sacrifice? The Burnt Offering, the Meal Offering, the Sin Offering, the Trespass Offering, and the Peace Offering. How did they differ?

### **The Special Garments of the High Priest**

A unique perspective on the priestly garments. This clothing was designed by God and they were only permitted to be worn by the priests who served. What was the purpose of the jewels on the breastplate of the high priest? the mitre? or the curious girdle? These subjects are pregnant with messianic significance. If you haven't researched this subject, it will amaze you.

### **Solomon's Temple**

The construction, history, and significance of the Temple of Solomon, how it differed from the Tabernacle, and who officiated in its compounds. It also features Solomon's Empire, his remarkable prosperity, king Solomon's mines, his horses and stables, his army, the gold of Ophir, domestic economy, foreign policy, the queen of Sheba, and his 700 wives.

## **Prophets and Prophecy**

This exhaustive book examines the peculiar lives, ministries, and messages of the prophets (mouthpieces) of God. Men who spoke out in the midst of apostasy in Israel, and also in foreign nations like Babylon and Assyria. They spoke of the judgments to come, as well as the glories of the coming of the Messiah, and His glorious kingdom. Men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, also Elijah and Elisha who were identified with some of the greatest of the Bible's miracles.

## **Messianic Prophecy**

The focus is on the Christology of the entire Old Testament. It traces verbal prophecies and non-verbal types and figures book by book with their preliminary and secondary fulfillments. This rich study is extremely insightful and faith-building to any person desiring to learn more about Jesus Christ and the great treasures found in the Holy Scriptures.

## **Old Testament History**

This book follows the entire Old Testament in chronological order with emphasis on history. There is much discussion on archaeology and ancient cultures. It clearly gives the student of the Bible a fresh insight into the Biblical story.

## **New Testament History**

This book follows the entire New Testament in chronological order with emphasis on history. There is also much discussion on archaeology and ancient mediterranean cultures. The seven wonders of the ancient world, Greece, Rome, Jerusalem, Paul's journeys, and much more.

## **Between the Testaments**

There were approximately 400 years from the close of the Old Testament to the Beginning of the New Testament. Though the Bible was silent history reveals so very much that happened. This book examines that time period with Persia, Greece, Rome, the Ptolemies & Seleucids and their violently bitter hatred toward the Jews which led to the Maccabean revolt, one of the most heroic feats in history, the origin of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. It covers men like Alexander the Great, Antiochus Epiphanes, the Maccabeans, and the rise of the Roman Empire with Caius Julius Caesar, Marc Antony, Cleopatra and others.

## **Bible Survey**

This book gives a general overview of every book in the Bible. It outlines each book and focuses on its themes, high points, theology, supposed contradictions, and messianic significance.

## **Basics of Christianity**

This is a new believers handbook of the basics of Christianity. It gives a theological and yet practical understanding of subjects such as : Salvation, Repentance, Faith, Prayer, Praise and Worship, Baptism, Communion, Church, Spiritual Growth, Temptation and Sin. What is Born Again? Etc. The emphasis throughout is on the love of God and our love for one another.

## **The Attributes of God**

Who is God? What is God? This book discusses subjects such as God's eternal nature, His

Immensity, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Omniscience, Immutability, Love, Grace, Mercy, Justice, Wrath, Holiness, Sovereignty, etc.. Filled throughout with powerful, thought provoking Scriptures.

### **The Trinity**

What is the Trinity? Isn't He one God? This book searches the historical doctrine of the Trinity. Was Tertullian (2nd Cent. A. D.) the first to teach the Trinity? What about Augustine? And the Council of Nicaea? What kind of heresies crept into the church throughout the ages? Is there a proper definition of the Trinity?

### **The Hebrew Names of God**

The Old Testament Names of God revealed much more than just a name. They were revelations of who He is. This fascinating study examines 21 of these wonderful names and titles and the history behind them. El Elyon, El Shaddai, El Olam, Adonai, etc. What about Jehovah? Or is it Yahweh? And what's the Tetragrammaton? Why are there extensions to the name Jehovah like Nissi, Tsidk'nu, Jireh, M'kaddesh, and Shammah, etc? Is Elohim a name of God?

### **The Names of Jesus**

Wonderful overview of the glorious names and titles of Jesus revealed throughout the Bible. The Bright and Morning Star, The Lamb of God, The Rose of Sharon, The Good Shepherd, The Door, The Branch, Immanuel, Son of God, Son of Man, The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, The Rock of offence, etc. Over 40 names are studied.

### **Great Men of the Bible**

A general sketch of 15 men of faith who, despite weaknesses and failures, were courageous in their pursuit of God and His will. They are the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11. This book is devotional and meant to encourage the man of God. Lots of illustrations and practical material.

### **The Rapture**

An in-depth look at the various views concerning the "catching away" of the church. When was it first taught? Is it vital that I have the right point of view? Can Jesus come at any moment?

### **The Great Tribulation**

A look at the various judgments to come upon the earth spoken about by Jesus and the prophets. The Day of the Lord, The Battle of Armageddon, The Seal, Trumpet, and Bowl judgments are interpreted in light of the rest of the Bible. Also the two witnesses and the 144,000, and the 70th week of Daniel.

### **The Antichrist and 666**

What is the Abomination of Desolation? Who is the Antichrist? What is the mark of the beast? These questions and others are discussed in this book. Lengthy descriptions are given concerning the Antichrist who is to come spoken about in the Old and New Testaments. With all the events surrounding us in these "last days," we need to gain a clear perspective on what the Bible says specifically on each of these subjects.

## **The Second Coming of Jesus Christ**

This book examines the events concerning the Return of Jesus Christ to the earth and the setting up of the kingdom (Millennium). The kingdom of the Messiah is promised throughout the Scriptures. It will be a time of peace, love, and prosperity, and Jesus Christ will literally be here ruling in Jerusalem. Explicit Scriptural details concerning the Millennium.

## **Heaven**

What does the Bible say about heaven? Is it going to be here on earth? This book discusses the reality of heaven according to the Scriptures, and gives a detailed exposition of the New Jerusalem.

## **Hell**

The Bible mentions a lot about hell. This book focuses on subjects like: The Great White Throne Judgement, Hell, Hades, Sheol, Gehenna, Satan, etc.

## **The Hebrew Language**

A brief history of the Hebrew language and a simple learning tool that quickly teaches you how to read and write Biblical Hebrew.

## **The Greek Language**

A brief history of the Greek language and a simple learning tool that quickly teaches you how to read and write Biblical Greek

## **How to Make Your Own Windows Help Book**

If you have a desire to write your own book like this one, it's very simple if you know what you need. This book will help you learn exactly what you need to know quickly and easily. Where to find the best shareware, what you should and shouldn't do, where to get info about creating with VB4 and Chicago. You'll be amazed at just how easy it is.

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The American Heritage Dictionary defines a translation as "the act or process of translating, especially from one language to another."



Because most people who want to read the Bible have not learned how to read the original Hebrew and Greek, there is an obvious need for translations of the Scriptures into every language in the world. Our desire is to study the English translations or versions and their progressive revisions and improvements as new resources develop.

The English language continues to change. Since the first English translation of the Bible, the language has changed so much that it barely seems intelligible today. The language is still changing, with new words and expressions coming in and old ones going out.

Because the Bible, being the message of God to man, is so important to be understood properly, it should be made available with the best versions possible, which will reproduce in the modern language, the thought of the original. This will, therefore, clear the way for a person to find out for himself what the Bible has to say.

**The Time Period** (Just before the First English Version)



The Time period from 600 - 1500 A.D. was an extremely dark time in both the church and the world. The visible church had become corrupt, traditionalized and structured. It was characterized by "Papal" power, internal schisms and barbaric crusades. The church had moved into a "religious system" that primarily catered to the clergy and the elite. It's hard to comprehend the incredible devilish things that went on. God's glory was blurred and the truth of the Word of God was altered. The system had become incurably flawed, and now it was to be condemned. When things were about the darkest, then slowly some light began to dawn on the scene of history. There was a gradual spiritual awakening in people. A glimmer of hope that God was still alive and longing for a deeper personal relationship with His people. There came a growing concern in individuals and in certain movements to somehow get the Word of God out to the people. For now we will look briefly at a few of the pre - Reformation people and movements.

### **The Albigenses**

They were known as the "Cathari" or "Puritans" of that time period, having been organized in Southern France about 1170. They strongly opposed the Roman Catholic Church, called for reforms, and circulated the New Testament as widely as possible. Pope Innocent III called for a crusade against them in 1208, even after many of their numbers had been burned at



the stake. There were many more crusades against them until they were finally exterminated.

## **The Waldensians**

This group was found around 1170, about the same time as the Albigenses, by a man named "Peter Waldo." He was a rich merchant in Lyons, Southern France and circulated the Bible through his business. He wrote many tracts against the Catholic church. He deposed of his property, took a vow of poverty and gathered a group of likeminded men to go around preaching. They were known as "the poor men of Lyons," and later as Waldenses. The movement spread rapidly until Pope Lucius III excommunicated them in 1184 and officially condemned them as heretics along with the Albigenses.

In 1229 the Council of Toulouse decreed to forcefully suppress the heresy. The inquisition came down upon the Waldenses with great force. They were eventually driven from France where they escaped to caves in the valleys of Northern Italy. Waldo died about 1217 but his movement has survived until the present day.

Other pre - Reformation people and movements that are worthy of study at a future time are the Lollards, the Hussites, Jerom Savonarola, Jaques Lefevre. We now move on to the study of the first English translations.

## **The First English Translations**

The earliest evidence of an English translation of the New Testament is around 1000 A.D. by a priest who wrote the English between the lines of a Latin text he was copying.

Moving on to the 14th Century we come to a man named John Wycliffe (1320-1384) "The Morning star of the Reformation" born of Saxon blood in Hipswell, England. He entered Balliol College as a student and later became master. He was soon esteemed the ablest member of the faculty. Having become a doctor of theology he was given appointment by the king to the rectory of Lutterworth.

Soon he began to speak as a religious reformer, preaching in Oxford and London against the Pope's secular sovereignty and publicizing his ideas by tracts and leaflets. In 1377, the Pope condemned Wycliffe's writings. But Wycliffe had strong support from the people, the scholars, and the nobles of England. He provided England with a new and "pure" Gospel, establishing the Bible as the only source of truth and stating that the clergy were not to rule, but to serve the people. He also denounced the doctrines of transubstantiation and purgatory and many others. He raised up preachers from the students at Oxford known as "the Lollards" and spent most of his

time writing and translating.



He died in 1384 having "lit a fire which shall never be put out." The Catholic Church ordered his books burned and his body exhumed and burned. Nevertheless, about 150 copies of Wycliffe's version have survived, but only one is complete.

Another Englishman, William Tyndale (1494-1536) was a capstone figure in providing an English translation of the Bible. Tyndale attended Oxford and Cambridge becoming a very proficient Greek scholar. The Greek New Testament of Erasmus and the works of Luther awakened in him the desire to give the Bible to the common people in their own language. He then went to Hamburg and studied Hebrew with some prominent Jews, and then to Germany to confer with Luther. It was in Worms, Germany that Tyndale printed his first New Testament (1525) and it was smuggled into England.




He produced several other works while he was in hiding (no one knows where) that greatly affected England. By 1534, believing that the Reformation in England had reached a point that it would be safe for him to come out from hiding, he settled in Belgium and continued his writing. He was soon arrested, imprisoned in the castle of Vilvorde, (near Brussels) Belgium, tried for heresy and treason, and convicted. He was first strangled and then burned at the stake in the prison yard on October 6, 1536.

Also in 1535, an Englishman named Miles Coverdale published the first English translation of the entire Bible in the city of Zurich. This edition had the support of King Henry VIII because Coverdale was an ordained priest and translated the Bible in a way that supported Anglican Catholic doctrine and therefore favored over the Latin Vulgate. In 1539, he incorporated the best of Tyndale and other translators and prepared a huge (9 in. x 15 in.) book which earned the name "the Great Bible." The British government ordered that the book be displayed prominently in every church throughout England.



In 1553, Queen Mary (Tudor) banned the use of all English Bibles by the people. Coverdale and most of the Bible translators fled to Geneva, Switzerland, where John Calvin structured a Protestant stronghold. William Whittingham of Geneva encouraged many of these scholars to begin work on a new English Bible, which was published in 1560. This was the first Bible that was divided into verses by a printer named Robert Estienne. It was

called the Geneva Bible. This translation was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I,

who had taken the throne of England in 1558.  This translation became the most popular at the time.


## 1. The King James Bible (KJV)

In 1604 James VI, King of Scotland from his youth, became King James I of England, the first ruler of Britain and Ireland. Because of the growing



animosity

of James toward the Puritans, a leading Puritan spokesman, Dr. John Reynolds, proposed that a new English Bible be issued in honor of the new King. King James appointed 54 learned scholars in the making of this new translation from the original Greek and Hebrew into English. For the Old Testament they used the ben Asher text, and for the New Testament they used the Greek text of Erasmus and a Greek and Latin text of the 6th Century found by Theodore Beza. They used Chapters (developed by Archbishop Stephen Langton in 1551) and Verses (the verse divisions of Robert Estienne). It was completed and published in 1611 and became known as the "Authorized Version" because the making of it was authorized by King James. It became the "Official Bible of England" and the only Bible of

the English church. There  have been many revisions of the King James Bible ie. 1615, 1629, 1638, and 1762. Some of them include marginal notes containing the chronology of Biblical events laid out by Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656), which dates Adam and Eve at 4004 B.C. The 1762 revision is what we now presently know as the King James Version.

## 2. Revisions of the King James Bible

We will be looking at 3 revisions, the English Revised Version (ERV or RV), the

American Standard Version (ASV), and the New King James Version (NKJ).

#### **a. The English Revised Version (RV)**

In 1881 two respected Anglican leaders, Bishop Harold Browne and Bishop C.J. Ellicot along with an American committee produced a Revised Version of the New Testament. The RV was received well in Britain and the U.S. By 1885 the committee introduced the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments. The RV later lost its reputation in the United States because of its semi British slant.

#### **b. The American Standard Version (ASV)**

This version was published in 1901. Some members of the American committee produced their own scholarly version of the King James headed by J. Henry Thayer. Their aim was for a word for word rendering of the Greek and Hebrew wherever possible. This made it a little harder to read and it lost its King James, Old English flavor.

#### **c. The New King James Version (NKJ)**

In 1979, Thomas Nelson Publishers issued a new edition of the of the KJV New Testament. The Publisher assembled 119 scholars to work on this new version. By 1982, the entire NKJV was published and immediately widely accepted. The New King James version was based on the 1894 version of the Textus Receptus. It is known for its integrity in preserving the true meaning of the text and also for easy readable style (or at least much easier than the KJV). It preserves some of the old archaic expressions.

### **3. New Translations**

Scholars have produced several totally new translations of the Bible. We will be looking at the Revised Standard Version (RSV) and the New English Bible (NEB).

#### **a. The Revised Standard Version (RSV)**

In 1929, the ICRE (International Council of Religious Education) which is part of the WCC (World Council of Churches) began work on a revision of the ASV. They decided on an entirely new translation, based on the latest scholarly Greek texts. It was much different than Westcott and Hort although it was scholarly and very readable. The New Testament was published in 1946, and the Old Testament in 1952. The RSV had its praises and its criticisms (theologically liberal at some points).

#### **b. The New English Bible (NEB).**

This was not a revision like the RSV but a completely new translation from the Hebrew and the Greek. Many scholars from Great Britain headed up by C. H. Dodd worked on this project. The New Testament was released in 1961, exactly 350 years after the first publishing of the KJV and the complete version in 1970. The NEB was immediately loved in Britain having been written in a very modern yet dignified way. It was criticized for being a little too sophisticated and therefore less popular in the United States. Some scholars say that there are many theological problems with the Greek renderings of the NEB and can be misleading to the person who doesn't know any Greek.

#### **4. The Most Recent Works**

Obviously, this is an exhaustive topic, but we will try to examine some of the highlights of the newest revisions and paraphrases.

##### **a. The New American Standard Bible (NASB)**

This is the American Standard version of 1901 with the English a little more modernized and some criticisms corrected. The emphasis of the writers were stated as three goals: accuracy of translation, clarity of English, and adequacy of notes. They mainly used Nestle Greek text by Nestle (23rd ed.) based on Westcott and Hort, and the Hebrew text taken from Kittel. They made it a point to transliterate (write in English letters) the Hebrew and Greek names, and they capitalized the personal pronouns referring to God. It also included lots of marginal notes that are very helpful to the reader. The NASB was complete and released in 1971 and well received. Some scholars say that the NASB is the best literal work done by a committee and an exceptionally valuable word for word study Bible.

##### **b. The New International Version (NIV)**

In 1965, several (100) scholars representing several denominations with ample financial support devoted their time and efforts wholeheartedly to the establishing of a critical text made from the originals that would be known by its accuracy, clarity, and literary quality, and secondly, to translating a number of Old and New Testament passages with a "dynamic equivalent" principle in mind. This principle would allow for the choosing of words or phrases that the original had on its first readers, which made it easier to grasp in our changing culture. It was complete, both Old and New Testament, by 1978 and is similar in some sorts to the RSV. The NIV is a prime example of contemporary evangelical scholarship.

##### **c. The Good News Bible (TEV)**

This version known as TEV "Today's English Version," was sponsored by the American Bible Society. This translation was complete and available by 1976. The main writer, Robert Bratcher used a critical text of the Bible and made a paraphrase that is considered an excellent tool for learning the simple panorama of the Biblical events, but departs radically from the exact meaning of the original in many places.

#### **d. The Living Bible (TLB)**

Another paraphrase known as the Living Bible was published by Kenneth Taylor, an editor at a Chicago publishing house, in an effort to make the Bible more understandable to his children. His version gained exceptional popularity and he founded his own publishing company (Tyndale House). The Living Bible was complete and available by 1972. This paraphrase is of great benefit for clarity and simplicity, but readers should be cautioned that paraphrases can be misleading.

Amen.

[Bibliography](#)

[Credits](#)



*The End*

## Tyndale



Tyndale's 1530 Pentateuch



Painting of Tyndale translating

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## Wycliffe



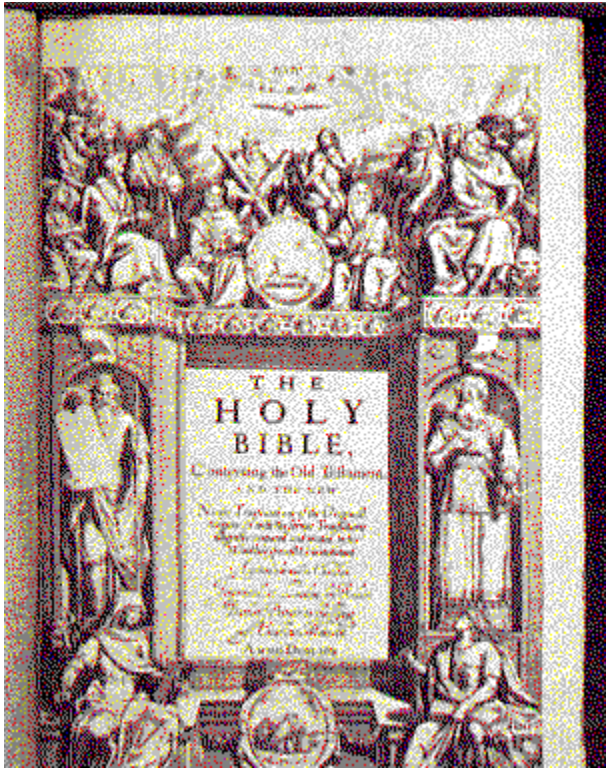
Wycliffe Manuscript Bible - 1440 A.D.

In the century between John Wycliffe's death and William Tyndale's birth, the art of printing spread across Europe

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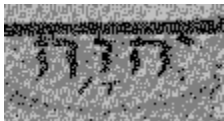
## King James



Frontcover of the King James Bible (Authorized)  
Notice the ornamental artwork. Before the 15th century invention of printing, the copying and illuminating (adding ornamental design) was a painstaking labor of love, often performed by monks in Europe's cloistered monasteries.



Close up (Published in 1611)



Notice the Hebrew name for God at the top middle



Portrait of King James I

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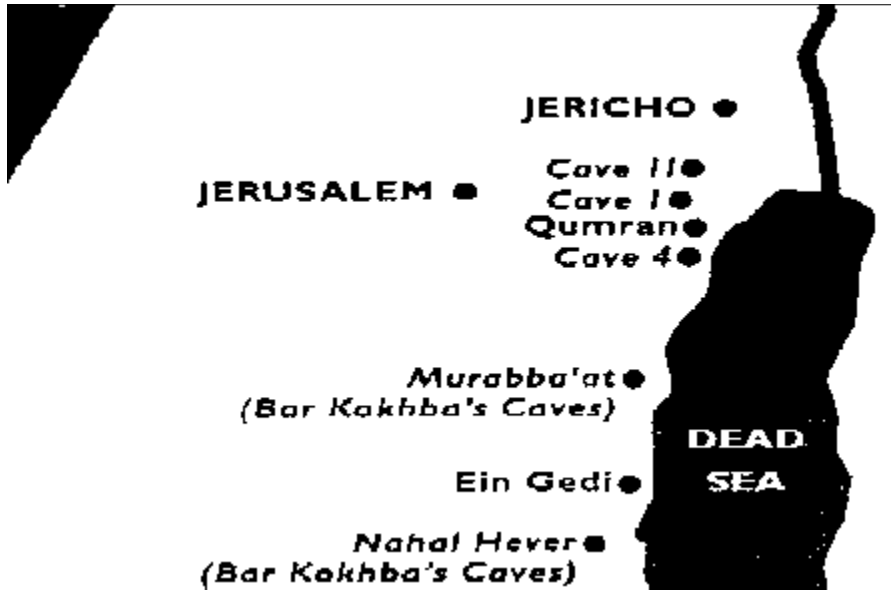
**Wood**



Sarcophagus. Example of painted wood.  
Egyptian Art, Late Period, from Thebes  
Dynasties XXII - XXV (9th - 8th Century B.C.)  
Painted wood (completely inside and out), Height 77 inches  
Mixture of chalk, glue, and vegetable fibres

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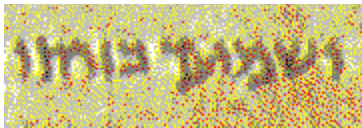
## Dead Sea Scrolls



Map of the Dead Sea Findings



Part of the Scroll of Isaiah  
The oldest manuscript of a complete book of the Old Testament was the scroll of Isaiah found in cave 1 at Qumran by the Dead Sea. Also in the picture are some of the jars that held the scrolls.



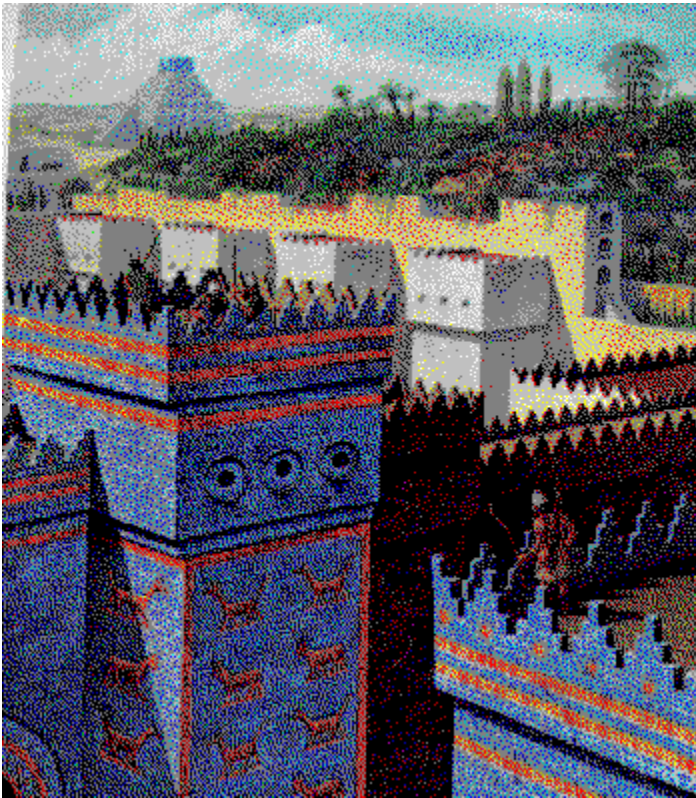
Close up of Isaiah

## Babylon

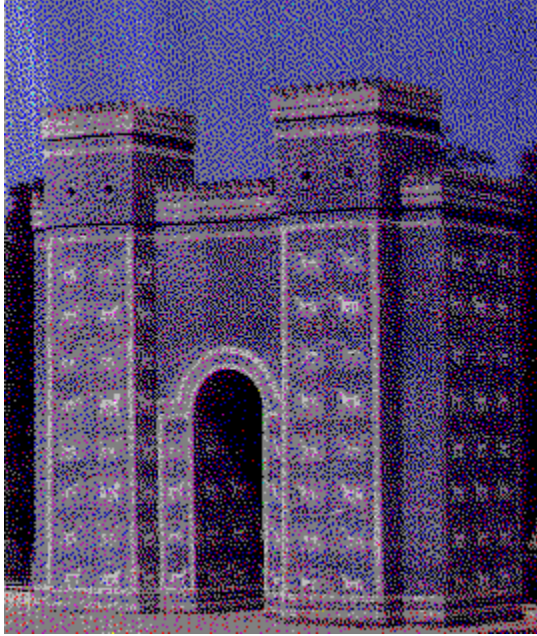
Its hard to imagine That there were ancient cities like this one  
This painting shows Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon.  
Notice the bridge over the Euphrates, the Great Ziggurat, and the Temple of Marduk



Painting by Mauria Bardin



An artists depiction of Babylon



The fabulous Ishtar Gate was the only structure still partially standing when archaeologists excavated Babylon. The gate which stood at the city's entrance, was covered with a layer of glazed brickwork. This reconstruction is at *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin* , Germany



This is what remains of the glory of Babylon





## The Moabite Stone



*"I am Mesha...king of Moab..."*

This black 3 1/2 foot stone monument was discovered in 1868 at Dibon in Moab and contains the account of King Mesha of Moab and his campaign against Israel and Judah (851 BC.) after he refused to pay tribute any longer. This is in perfect harmony with the Biblical accounts. After the exhausting task of hoisting the stone out of the sand, it was shattered so that it would sell at a higher price in individual smaller pieces. Notice the cracks. It is now in the Louvre in Paris.

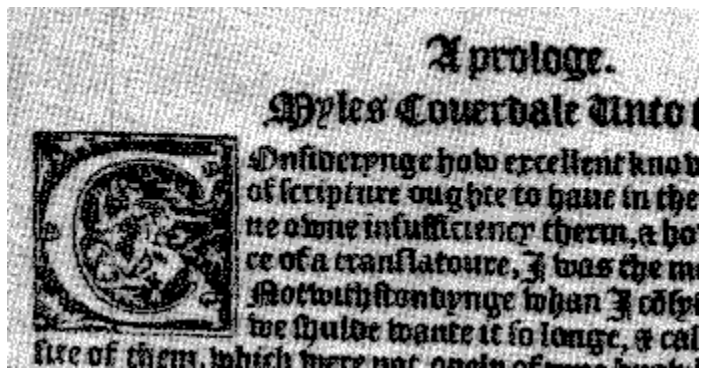
*II Ki 3:4-5 "Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepbreeder, and he regularly paid the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs and the wool of one hundred thousand rams. But it happened, when Ahab died, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel."*

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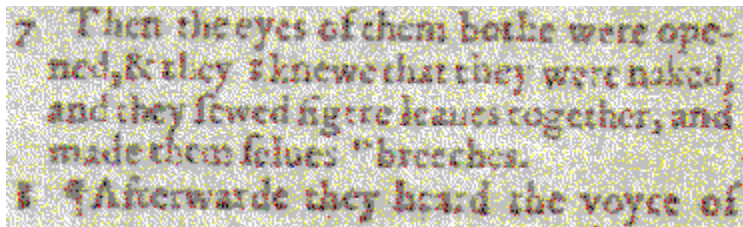
## Miles Coverdale



Cover page to the first printed Bible.



## The Geneva Bible



7 Then the eyes of chem bothe were opened, & they knewe that they were naked, and they sewed figre leaues together, and made them selues "breeches.  
8 ¶ Afterwarde they heard the voyce of

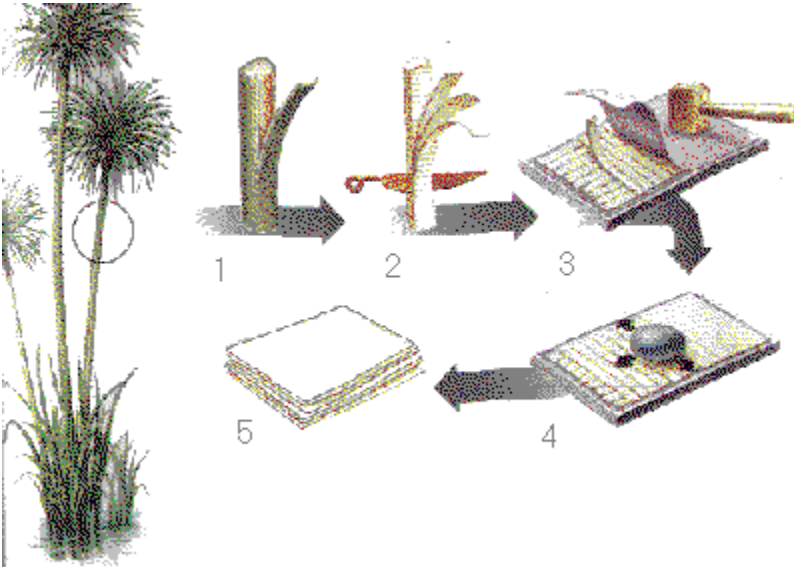
The Geneva Bible. Published in 1560. It became known as "The Breeches Bible" because of its reference to breeches in Gen. 3:7

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## Papyrus



Ancient Egyptian relief showing workers harvesting the rich produce of Papyrus from the Nile River.

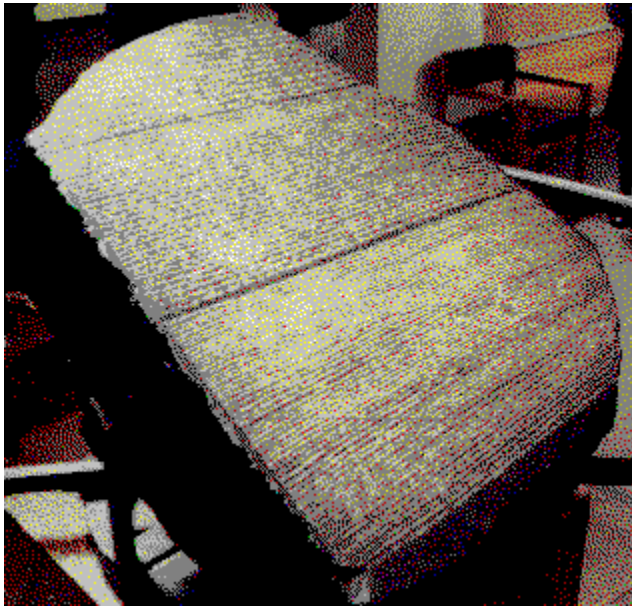


(1) Paper makers cut the stem of the papyrus and removed its inner pith. (2) Then they cut the pith into strips, (3) put one layer across another, and beat the layers into a single sheet. (4) They polished the sheet with a stone, and (5) finally, they trimmed the edges.

## Hieroglyphs



Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs

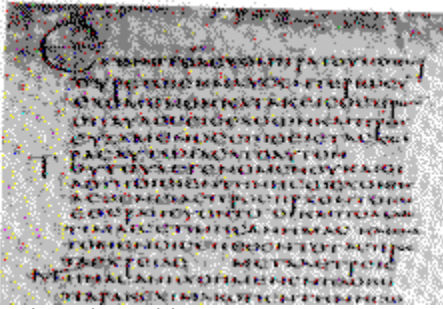


The Rosetta Stone revealed the key to deciphering the ancient hieroglyphs

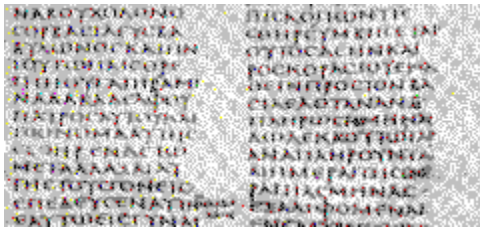


Ancient Egyptian Sarcophagus

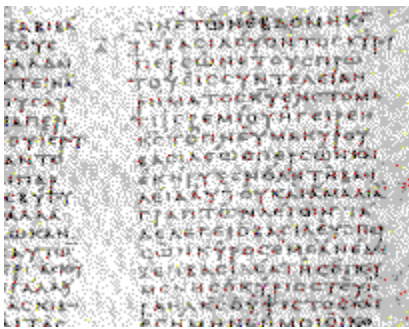
## New Testament Manuscripts



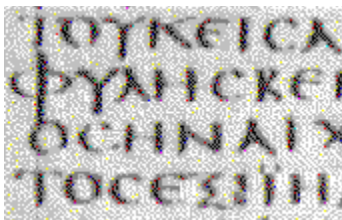
Codex Alexandrinus



Codex Sinaiticus



Codex Vaticanus



Close up of Vaticanus

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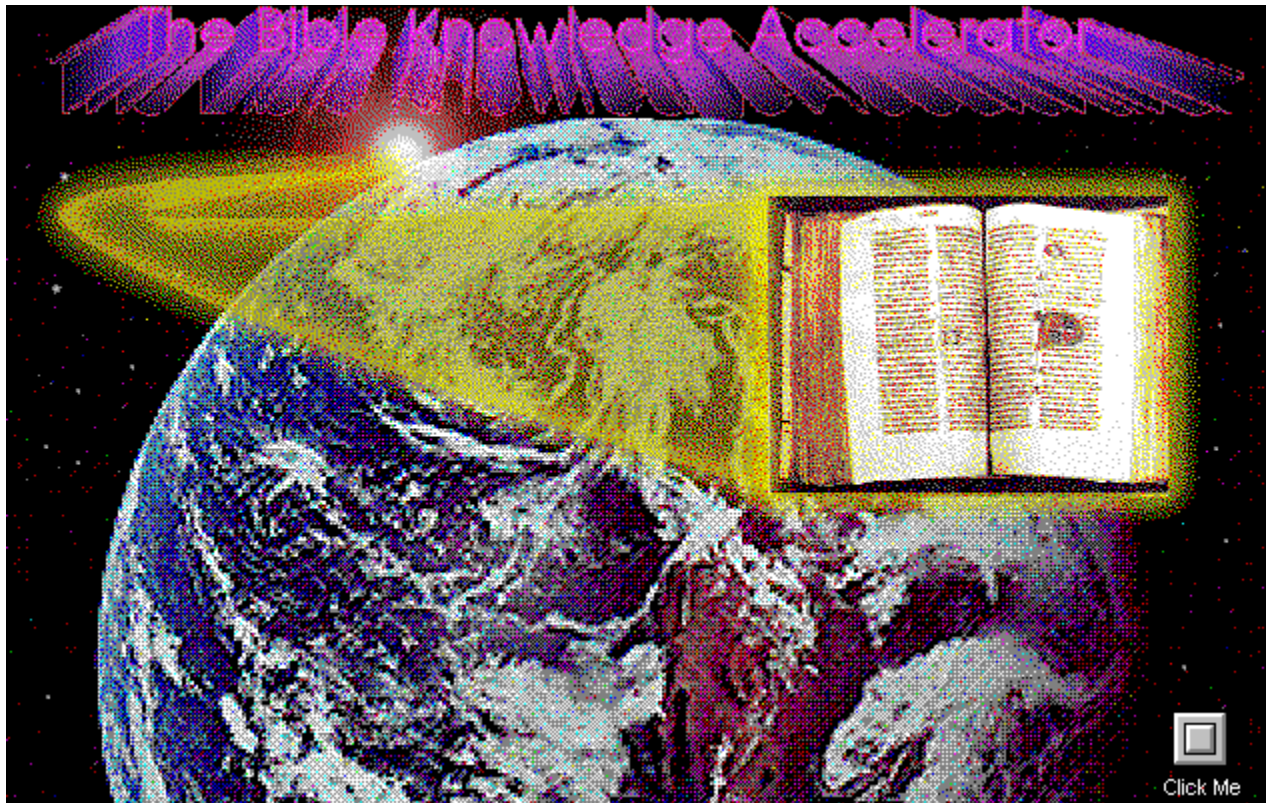
Courtesy of the Louvre, Paris

Courtesy of the Staatliche Museen, Berlin

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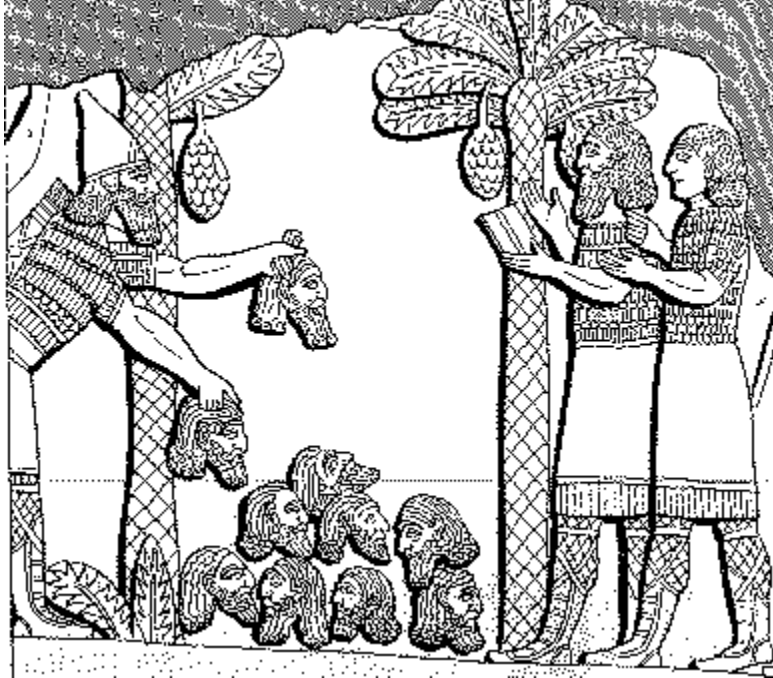


Sumerian Pictograph Tablet, 3000 BC

The Sumerian culture was very advanced in their development of pictograph writing which quickly spread around the ancient world. Eventually cuneiform came from the ancient Sumerian picture-writing.



Among the Sumerian deities was the Snake Goddess



Scribes used Wooden tablets to document the number of those of a defeated tribe of Chaldeans slain in battle. Relief from hall 18 in the palace of Sennacherib, Ninevah, 7th Cent. BC. (See Below)

The counting of heads of the enemy dead on this Assyrian relief vividly illustrates the Biblical account of 2 Kings:

*II Ki 10:6-8 "Then he wrote a second letter to them, saying: If you are for me and will obey my voice, take **the heads** of the men, your master's sons, and come to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow. Now the king's sons, seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, who were rearing them. So it was, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons and slaughtered seventy persons, put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel. Then a messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." And he said, "Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning."*

## Glossary

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

"biblos"

"yada"

(ASV)

(KJV)

(NASB)

(NEB)

(NIV)

(NKJ)

(RSV)

(RV)

(TEV)

(TLB)

### **A**

Albigenses

Alexandrinus

Apocrypha

### **B**

Babylon

Bible

Buddhism

### **C**

Canon

Canonicity

Catholic

Chisel

Clay

Codex

Coverdale

Cunieform

### **D**

David

Dead Sea Scrolls

Docetics

### **E**

Egypt

Eternal life

**F**

Fruit

**G**

Gnostics

Greek

**H**

Hieroglyphs

Hinduism

History

honey

**I**

Illumination

Indestructibility

Inerrancy

Infallibility

Ink

Innocent III

Inspiration

Isaiah

Islam

**J**

Jeremiah

Jerome

Josephus

jot

**K**

Koran

**L**

Leather

**M**

Manuscripts

Masorettes

Matthew

Miracles

Mohammed

Monophysites

Moses

## **N**

Nebuchadnezzar's

New Testament

Note

## **O**

Old Testament

## **P**

Papyrus

Parchment

Paul

Pen

Peter

Pope

Prophecies

Ptolemies

## **R**

Revelation

Rusty

## **S**

Scribes

Scrolls

Seleucids

Septuagint

Sinaiticus

Solomon

Stone

Stylus

## **T**

Talmud

Testament

tittle

Translations

Tripitaka

Tyndale

## **U**

Unique

Ussher

## **V**

Vaticanus  
Vedas  
verses  
Version  
Vulgate

**W**  
Waldenses  
Wood  
Wycliffe

## **honey**

Something Bee's Make



## **"yada"**

"yada" is the Hebrew word for "intercourse." Its equivalent translates into the English word "know." The Bible says, "when Adam 'knew' Eve they begat Cain." The sexual union of a man and his wife becoming one depicts what kind of union exists when a man becomes one with God through the Word of God. That's the essence of the profound statement, "We need to know the Lord."

## **Eternal life**

When we think of eternal life we usually think of living forever but according to the Bible eternal life is much more than that. It is a quality of life. A taking in of the knowledge of God and being inseparably united with Him as in marriage. As Jesus said when praying to the Father:

John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may "know" You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

## **Fruit**

The fruit of God is His character and life working within us transforming us into the image of Jesus Christ Himself. The Bible makes this clear:

Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Jn 15:5-8 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

**Unique**

The word "unique" means, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "being the only one of its kind".

## **Moses**

Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. He was raised in the Courts of Egypt as a princely Epyptian until the age of 40. Then he spent another 40 years in the wilderness of Midian as a family man, shepherding his father-in-laws flocks, until finally he was called by God to lead His people Israel out of Egyptian slavery and give them the Ten Commandments (God's moral laws) as well as the Ceremonial and Civil Laws.

**David**

David was a shepherd boy from a little city called Bethlehem. After years of running from king Saul he eventually became king of Israel. David did much of his writing while on the run. He grew into a valiant man of war and wrote also in times of war. He was from his youth a musician and songwriter. (1000 BC)

## **Solomon**

Solomon (Peaceful), the son of David, was also king. He reigned at a time when the kingdom of Israel was at its climax. It was so rich and beautiful that people came from all over the world to see it. Solomon was probably the wealthiest man in the world at the time that he did most of his writings. (950 BC)

## **Jeremiah**

Jeremiah, who was called "the man that hath seen afflictions" was a tenderhearted, affectionate son of a priest. He wept continually as he witnessed Israel's fanatical addiction to idolatry and apostasy. Jeremiah was often writing in a dungeon and courageously prophesying about the tragedies soon to come, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the people being deported to Babylon. (600 BC)



**Matthew**

Matthew or Levi was a tax collector. Though he was Jewish, he was hated for serving Rome. Matthew was more than just a tax collector, he was the kind that would sit in a little Roman booth at seaports & trade routes. The Jews called them "beasts in human shape". (1st Cent. AD)

**Peter**

Peter was a simple fisherman with no formal education. He did most of his fishing at the sea of Galilee where the society was greatly influenced by Greek culture. (1st Cent. AD)

**Paul**

Paul (Saul of Tarsus) was a Pharisee of Pharisees, a student of Gamaliel who was a noted teacher in Israel. Paul was apparently wealthy seeing that he had a Roman citizenship. Before he became a Christian he terribly persecuted the Christians from house to house, throwing both men and women into prison. He was the pride of the Jewish aristocracy until he became a believer in Christ. He wrote most of the New Testament and did much of his writing in prison.  
(1st Cent.A.D.).

## **History**

History is very important and does have a purpose. The ancient Sumerians, Babylonians, and Egyptians knew this and often wondered the meaning of history and where it was heading. They carefully preserved the ways of their ancestors and treasured whatever they had of the past. But this sense of history was lost with the fall of Rome and the coming of the dark ages. Western society lost contact with its heritage. In fact, medieval art and literature had to illustrate Scripture with people who wore medieval clothing and lived in castles. Even today modern technology has blinded us from the depths of the past.

"Behind 10,000 events stands God, the builder of history, the maker of the ages. Eternity bounds the one side, eternity bounds the other side, and time is in between---Genesis-origins, Revelation-endings, and all the way between God is working things out. You can go down into the minutest detail everywhere and see that there is one great purpose moving through the ages, the eternal design of the almighty God to redeem a wrecked and ruined world. The Bible is one book, one history, one story, His story."

## **Miracles**

If there's a God than surely He can do anything He wants to do, including things that our finite minds cannot understand. Surely if He created the natural laws, than He could at any time set them aside to do whatever He purposed.

Miracles are occasions on which God comes forth from His hiding place and shows to man that He is a living God, that He is still on the throne of the universe, and that He is sufficient for all of man's problems. The Bible is a Book about God. It has to have miracles. The only other option is that there is no God. Therefore there is no Bible, or salvation, or resurrection, or any kind of hope for mankind. But with this little book there is hope. We have God's Word that "everything is possible to him who believes."

## **Prophecies**

Prophecy here means the foretelling of events through direct communication from God.

Is 46:9-10 9 Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, `My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,`

## **Indestructibility**

Indestructible according to the American Heritage Dictionary means, "Incapable of being destroyed."

There is definitely something supernatural about the indestructibility of the Bible. Throughout every century the Bible has been attacked. There have been many geniuses, philosophers, psychologists, scientists, historians, critics, political leaders, etc. etc., who have criticized the Bible over and over again and here it stands. Many have even tried to do away with it completely or keep people from reading it, and yet even today almost every home in America has a Bible. There is certainly great truth in this scripture:

Is 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

## **Tripitaka**

The Tripitaka is a collection of Buddha's teachings, rules of monastic life, and commentaries. It is about 10 times larger than the Bible. The basic belief is that life is misery and decay, and there is no ultimate reality in it or behind it. The cycle of endless birth and rebirth continues because of desire and attachment to the unreal "self". Right meditation and deeds will end the cycle and achieve Nirvana, the Void, nothingness.



## **Buddhism**

An Eastern religion which began in India by Siddhartha Gautama (563-480 B.C.). Buddhism teaches that suffering and existence are inseparably united and salvation is merely being set free from suffering only through realizing oneself as a part of this inseparable connection. This knowledge brings one away from himself and the senses to the final state of illumination called "nirvana."

Gautama became "the Buddah" ie. "the enlightened one." There have been many other Buddah's in history but he set a unique precedence for others to follow. For one to achieve "nirvana" he had to fully comprehend the teachings "dhamma" (rather than the person) of Gautama Buddah. The essence of that teaching is summarized in four statements known as the Four Noble Truths:

1. Everything is suffering.
2. Suffering comes from the desire for existence.
3. Suffering is eliminated when desire for existence is eliminated.
4. Desire for existence is eliminated by following the eightfold path

The eightfold path is basically the path of a good ethical life from actions to speech and even the very motives in the pursuit of religious truth.

Buddhism began in India about 525 BC. The founder was Gautama Siddhartha (563-480 BC) who claims to have achieved enlightenment through intense meditation.

## **Vedas**

The Vedas are a collection of rituals and mythological and philosophical commentaries with a vast number of epic stories about gods, heroes, and saints. They were written over a period of about 2000 years, (approx. 1400 BC-500 AD). It is interesting to note that it is the Hindu Vedas that worship the cow.

## **Hinduism**

Hinduism like Buddhism began in India, but much earlier than Buddhism, about 1500 B.C. To summarize the Hindu belief would be impossible because there are so many different ways to look at it. That is why there is so many different sects. But they all believe in Brahman (the three-in-one god), Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the destroyer). Man is subject to fate since he is part of Brahman.

**Islam**

Islam was founded in 622 AD by Mohammed (570-632 AD), the prophet, in Medina, Arabian peninsula. Today, the Muslim faith is the fastest growing religion in the world (over 1 billion), spreading to over 40 countries on three continents.

## **Mohammed**

The founder of Islam, Mohammed, was born in Mecca, Arabia (570 AD). He received his first revelation by the angel Gabriel at the age of 40. Though he could not read or write, his revelations were apparently written down by his secretaries for about 22 years until he died in 632 AD. He denied Polytheism and only worshipped Allah, the only God who sent his last and greatest prophet, Mohammed, to give the word of God, the Koran, to mankind.

**Koran**

The Qur'an or Koran are the holy scriptures in Islam. A replica of the original in heaven.

Almost as large as the New Testament, it contains 114 chapters.

## **"biblos"**

The word "Bible" comes from the Greek word "biblos" which means "a little book", and it comes from the word given to the inner pulp of the papyrus reed that ancient books were written on. Here are two Scriptures in the New Testament that use this word "biblos":

Matt 1:1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

Lk 4:17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

## **Testament**

The Greek word "diatheke" which means, a will (last disposal of one's possessions after he dies) or a covenant (made by God to fulfill every promise of His Word, sealed and then sprinkled with the blood of the Testator.)



## **Canon**

The word "canon" comes from the Greek "kanon" which means "a measuring rod or reed", and signifies a rule, a standard. Therefore, canon means those books which have been measured, found satisfactory, and approved through the decision of Rabbi's or a church council to be inspired of God and therefore a standard for men. Notice that these Ecclesiastical councils did not give these books their divine authority, but merely recognized that these books already possessed canonicity.

## **Josephus**

Flavius Josephus (Joseph ben Mattathias) 37 A.D. - 101 A.D. The famous Jewish historian who began public life as an army officer in Israel but his military career ended in 67 A.D. when he was captured in a revolt against Rome. Later he turned to writing history and was considered as one of the greatest "chroniclers" of all time. He wrote his 'History of the Jewish War' to the greater glory of Vespasian and received the name "Flavius." He also published his 'Jewish Antiquities' for the purpose of stirring the world to admiration of the Jewish nation.

His first work, History of the Jewish War in 7 volumes, also Jewish Antiquities in 20 books containing the history of the Jews from creation to 66 A.D., using both Biblical, historical, and other sources. Josephus wrote other books including his own so-called Autobiography. In his writings Josephus refers to Christ, John the Baptist, and the early Christians.

## **Old Testament**

The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into 3 sections:

-The Law (Torah), 5 books:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

-The Prophets (Nebhim), 8 books:

Former Prophets - Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings

Latter Prophets - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve

-The Writings (Kethubim), 11 books:

Poetical Books - Psalms, Proverbs, Job

Megilloth - Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Esther, Ecclesiastes

Historical Books - Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles.

In the Hebrew Bible Genesis (Bershiyt) is the first book and Chronicles (Dibre Hayamim) is the last book.

## **Bible**

The name commonly used for the 39 books in the Old Testament and the 27 books in the New Testament. The English word "Bible" came originally from the name of the 'papyrus' or "biblos" reed used in ancient times (esp. Phoenicia) for making scrolls or books.

The word "Bible" comes from the Old French through the Latin "Biblia," from the Greek. The Greeks called a book "biblos" and a small book "biblion."

By the 2nd century A.D. Greek Christians called their Holy Scriptures "ta Biblia" (ie. "the Books") and transferred to Latin in the singular and through Old French came the English word "Bible."

## **New Testament**

The New Testament (27 Books)

-Biography of Jesus (4 books): Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

-Historical (1 book): Acts

-Epistles (21 books): Romans - Jude

-Prophetic (1 book): Revelation

## **Apocrypha**

The word "Apocrypha", refers to the 14 "Apocryphal Books" which have been added to the Old Testament by the Roman Catholic Church, who believe them to be part of the Old Testament Canon. "If anyone receives not as sacred and canonical the said books (including Apocrypha) entire with all their parts...let him be anathema". (C. Trent 1546)

The books are as follows:

1 & 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, The Rest of Esther, The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, with the epistle of Jeremiah, The Song of the Three Holy Children, The History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, 1 & 2 Maccabees.

These books were written during the first two centuries BC. and kind of fill the gap between the Old Testament (which ended about 400 BC.) and the New Testament.

There are several reasons for rejecting these books, heres a few:

External Reasons:

- a. They were never considered canonical by Christians or Jews until the Council in 1546, which was an obvious lash at Martin Luther.
- b. They were never accepted as canon by Jesus, or the N.T. writers.
- c. Virtually all of the early Church leaders rejected their canonicity.
- d. Jerome, the great Hebrew scholar and translator of the Roman Catholic Latin Vulgate, strongly rejected the Apocrypha.

Internal Reasons:

- a. The Apocrypha doesn't claim to be the Word of God.
- b. It doesn't speak with God's authority as the O.T. books.
- c. It contains historical errors (see Tobit 1:3-5 and 14:11).
- d. It contains theological heresies such as praying for the dead (2 Mac), and intercession to the saints.
- e. It doesn't contain any prophesy and adds nothing to the messianic hope.

## **Catholic**

Transliteration of the Greek "katholikos" which means "universal" or "throughout the whole."  
The phrase "he katholike ekklesia" (the catholic church) was first used by early Christian leaders (esp. Augustine) to denote the entire body of believers as opposed to individual bodies.

The universal Christian church in the world today is technically catholic but is called "Christian." which had its beginnings in the first century A.D.

The recognized "Catholic Church" with the various non-Christian traditions is technically the church of Rome where the Pope is supreme Pontiff, which had its beginnings in the 2nd - 4th Cent. A.D.

**Jerome**

Jerome. Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, (340-420 A.D.) The great Hebrew scholar and translator of the Latin Vulgate. He strongly rejected the Apocrypha.(See Vulgate)



## **Canonicity**

That which marks a book as divinely inspired.

The process of collecting authentic apostolic literature began in the first century. Though many books were written, there were tests to prove a book's canonicity. The following principles were used to determine this:

- a. Apostolicity. Was the book written by an apostle, or one who was closely associated with the apostles?
- b. Spiritual Content. Was the book read in the churches and did its contents spiritually edify the body?
- c. Doctrinal Soundness. Were the contents of the book doctrinally sound? Any book containing heresy, or any teaching contrary to the already accepted canonical books was rejected.
- d. Usage. Was the book universally recognized in the churches, and was it widely quoted by the church leaders?
- e. Divine Inspiration. Did it claim or give true evidence of divine inspiration? This was the ultimate test!

**Gnostics**

Heretics who believed they were given special revelations. They denied the incarnation of Christ

**Docetics**

Early Christian heretics who admitted the reality of Christ's deity but denied His humanity.

## **Monophysites**

They rejected the dual nature of Christ

## **Stone**

Many famous inscriptions have been found in Egypt and Babylon inscribed on stone.

The 10 commandments were written on two tables of stone (Ex 31:18). Two other examples are the Moabite Stone (850 BC), and the Siloam Inscription found in Hezekiah's tunnel by the Pool of Siloam (700 BC).

## **Clay**

The predominate writing material used in Assyria and Babylonia was clay, formed into small tablets and impressed with wedge-shaped symbols called cunieform writing, and then baked in an oven or dried in the sun. Thousands of clay writing-boards have been uncovered by archaeologists. (Ez 4:1; Is 8:1).

## **Cunieform**

Ancient wedge-shaped writing symbols

**Wood**

Wooden tablets were used extensively by the ancient writers. For many centuries this was the common writing material in Greece and Rome. They were made of wood or ivory with a recess to hold a wax surface. (Is 30:8; Hab)



## **Leather**

The Jewish Talmud specifically required that the Scriptures should be copied on the skins of animals, on leather. It is most certain, that the Old Testament was written on leather. Rolls were made by sewing skins together that were from 3 to 100 feet or more in length. The text was written in columns perpendicular to the roll. The rolls were 18-27 inches high and rolled on one or two sticks.

## **Talmud**

Talmud comes from the Hebrew word "Lamad" which means (to study or learn). This and the Old Testament are the main religious works of the Jews. The Talmud is a very extensive collection of rabbinical discussions and decisions relating to the Torah over a period of several centuries.

When the work of the first generation of rabbis (the tannaim) was brought to its conclusion in the Mishnah, their task was taken over by the "amoraim" (expounders) who developed practical living standards by determining what was right or wrong. Their annotations to the Mishnah are called the Gemara. Together the Mishnah and the Gemara form the Talmud.

The study of the Talmud is extremely important for a proper understanding of the Old and New Testament. We learn of Jewish customs as well as insight into the thought and idiom of the Jewish people.

## **Scrolls**

Rolls or Scrolls were made by sewing skins together that were from 3 to 100 feet or more in length. The text was written in columns perpendicular to the roll. The rolls were 18-27 inches high and rolled on one or two sticks.

## **Papyrus**

Papyrus is made by shaving thin sections of the papyrus reed into strips, soaking them in several baths of water, and then overlapping them to form sheets. One layer of the strips was laid cross ways to the first, then these were put in a press or rubbed with a rock that they might adhere to each other. The sheets were made 6-15 inches high and 3-9 inches wide, pasted together, forming rolls that were usually 30 feet long, though one was found to be 144 feet in length. our English word "paper" comes from the Greek word for papyrus.

Papyrus almost never rots in hot dry climates.

## **Parchment**

Developed in Pergammum (180 BC) when the king was refused any more Papyrus from Egypt to build his library. So he developed a new type of writing material through a new process for the treatment of skins. This was called vellum or parchment. From the skin of sheep or goats a fine quality of leather was specially and carefully prepared for writing on both sides. Most of the known manuscripts are on vellum. Later they were glued into book form, this was called a Codex. The codex made it possible to have much more Scripture in one place.

## **Codex**

From the skin of sheep or goats a fine quality of leather was specially and carefully prepared for writing on both sides. They were glued into book form, this was called a Codex. The codex made it possible to have much more Scripture in one place.

The main Old Testament Codex manuscripts that have been discovered are:

- The Leningrad Codex or St. Petersburg Codex, written in 916 AD.
- The Cairo Codex or Codex Cairensis, 895 AD.
- The Aleppo Codex, written in 930 AD.
- The British Museum Codex, written in 950 AD.

The main New Testament Codex manuscripts that have been discovered are:

- The John Rylands Fragment (125 AD).
- Papyrus Bodmer II (200 AD).
- Codex Sinaiticus (340 AD).
- Codex Vaticanus (350 AD).
- Codex Alexandrinus (450 AD).

## **Ink**

Black ink was made from powdered charcoal, soot or lampblack mixed with gum and diluted with water. Both the Egyptians and the Hebrews made use of different colors. Josephus, the ancient Jewish historian mentions red, blue, purple, gold, and silver tints.

The Essenes, who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls, used burned lamb bones and oil. It is remarkable how well the writing has been preserved to this day.

**Chisel**

An metal instrument used on stone.



**Stylus**

Made of metal or hard wood, for use on the clay tablets

**Pen**

For use on papyrus or vellum. These pens were made from the hollow stalks of coarse grass or reeds. The dry reed was cut diagonally with a knife and shaved thin at the point, which was then split. In order to keep these in good condition, scribes carried a knife with them, a "penknife".

## **Scribes**

Professional copyists of manuscripts and documents

**Manuscripts**

A hand-written document or other composition.

## **Masoretes**

Masoretic Jewish scribes (6-10th Cent. AD)

After the Jews returned from Babylon, they formed communities of scribes to preserve and circulate the precious Scriptures. These scribes, later called "Masoretes" were so careful that they wouldn't write a word or even a letter from memory, they would be seated in full Jewish dress after having washed their bodies, and if a king should come in and address him he was not to look up. After the scribe finished copying a particular book, he would then count all the words and letters it contained. Then he checked this number with the count for the manuscript he was copying. If they didn't match, the copy was immediately burned. In fact the Masoretes destroyed all other manuscripts except their own and that is why we have so few Old Testament manuscripts, and also why the Dead Sea Scrolls were so important.

## **Dead Sea Scrolls**

In 1947, young Bedouin shepherds, searching for a stray goat in the Judean Desert, entered a long - untouched cave and found jars filled with ancient scrolls. That initial discovery by the Bedouins yielded seven scrolls and began a search that lasted nearly a decade and eventually produced thousands of scroll fragments from eleven caves. During those same years, archaeologists searching for a habitation close to the caves that might help identify the people who deposited the scrolls, excavated the Qumran ruin, a complex of structures located on a barren terrace between the cliffs where the caves are found and the Dead Sea.

Within a fairly short time after their discovery, historical, paleographic, and linguistic evidence, as well as carbon-14 dating, established that the scrolls and the Qumran ruin dated from the third century B.C. to 68 A.D. They were indeed ancient! Coming from the late Second Temple Period, a time when Jesus of Nazareth lived, they are older than any other surviving Old Testament manuscripts by almost one thousand years.

There have been about 350 rolls uncovered and this discovery has been considered one of the greatest archaeological finds of the twentieth century. Since their discovery nearly half a century ago, the scrolls and the identity of the nearby settlement have been the object of great scholarly and public interest, as well as heated debate and controversy. Why were the scrolls hidden in the caves? Who placed them there? Who lived in Qumran? Were its inhabitants responsible for the scrolls and their presence in the caves?

Portions of every book of the Old Testament, with the exception of Esther, have been found. What's really interesting is the scrolls of Isaiah, because one of the two that have been found gives the entire book of this great prophet, and it dates to before Jesus was born. That's incredible! Here is a Hebrew manuscript of Isaiah 1,000 years older than our oldest manuscript (Masoretic) and confirming the accuracy of the Masoretic text of the Old Testament.

## **Isaiah**

Hebrew name- "Yesha Yahu" (Yahweh is Salvation)

The Jewish prophet who spoke more concerning the life, ministry, death, and kingdom of the Messiah, than any other prophet in the Bible. He lived and ministered in Jerusalem around 750-700 BCE. Jewish tradition teaches that Isaiah was "sawn assunder" between two planks.

**tittle**

The little mark or accent (diacritical point) on the Hebrew letter that distinguishes a "D" (dalet) from a "R" (resh).



**jot**

The smallest Hebrew consonant. "yod"

## **Sinaiticus**

Codex Sinaiticus (340 AD). It is considered one of the two most important manuscripts in existence. In 1844 Dr. C. Tischendorf, a German Bible professor and scholar, at the monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai, found monks lighting their fires with this manuscript. When he rescued it, it contained copies (4th Cent. A.D.) of the whole New Testament and half of the Old Testament in Greek. Because of its importance he called it "aleph" after the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In 1933, the (USSR) sold it to the British Museum for 100,000 pounds (\$500,000) where it is today.

## **Vaticanus**

Codex Vaticanus (350 AD) This manuscript as well as Sinaiticus were written on vellum. It contains most of the New and Old Testaments in Greek and the Apocrypha. It was discovered in 1475 and was brought to the Vatican Library where it is today. It is considered to be highly accurate and one of the two most important manuscripts in existence.

## **Alexandrinus**

Codex Alexandrinus (450 AD).

It contains much of the Old and New Testaments. Although it is one of the three greatest uncial (large capital letters) manuscripts, it does not measure up to the high standard of the other two, the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts. It is now in the British Museum in London.

## **Revelation**

The Biblical definition for natural "Revelation" is the Greek word "apokalupsis" which means an uncovering or unveiling. Revelation is the Spirit of God revealing to man that which is otherwise unknowable. He gives to us the knowledge of God:

1Cor 2:10 But God has revealed Himself to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes the deep things of God...

14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

## **Infallibility**

The Bible is the Word of God and therefore carries with it divine authority. It is binding upon every man, whether he admits it or not, and it is the ultimate standard for our mind, conscience, will, and heart. The reason for this is because it is truth, and it is God's Word, and it is right. That is exactly what the word infallible means, "right", or "perfect". God is God, and He Knows everything, and He has spoken, and it is right, and we must submit. That is the essence of the word infallible.

Ps 19:7-11 7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

## **Inerrancy**

The word "inerrant" is very closely related to the word "infallible". The Bible is infallible in total, and inerrant in every part. Inerrancy means that not just all the truth in the Bible is God's word, but every scripture down to the dotting of the "i" and the crossing of the "t" is the embodied Revelation of Almighty God, and is entirely true and never false in all it affirms, whether it be in doctrine, or ethics, or science, or history, or the future, or whatever the case may be. Jesus said,

Matt 5:18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Jn 10:35 "...the Scripture cannot be broken.

## **Illumination**

Illumination is when the Holy Spirit reveals God and makes His Word "come alive." A person who has not accepted Jesus and made a partaker of the Holy Spirit cannot comprehend spiritual things for the Bible says:

1 Cor 2:14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.



## **Inspiration**

According to the Websters dictionary it means to "inhale". But the Biblical definition is different,

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

The word "inspiration" here is the Greek word, "theopneustos", which literally means "breathed out by God". To exhale.

The great scholar B.B. Warfield defined inspiration as, "a supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of god, by virtue of which their writings were given divine trustworthiness."

**verses**

The Bible wasn't originally divided into chapters and verses as we know it today. In fact, they were first introduced by Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, around 1201 AD. The first Bible to be published which was divided into chapters and verses was the Geneva Bible of 1560. But nevertheless we have to remember that chapters and verses were not inspired, though they are helpful, they can mislead us if they come right in the middle of a subject being dealt with.

## **Hieroglyphs**

Hieroglyphs means "holy writing." The priests and scribes of ancient Egypt used this form of picture - writing (Phonetic) with its several hundred signs, to record the nation's historical and religious texts. Common people wrote in demotic script. One interesting fact is that in 1798 one of Napoleon's soldiers found a stone in an egyptian village called Rosetta. The famous Rosetta Stone's message, written in trilingual (Koine Greek, ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, and demotic script), gave scholars the key to deciphering most of the ancient Middle Kingdom Egyptian hieroglyphics.

## **Greek**

Spoken for over 3000 years, the Greek language was the first to have a completely alphabetic system. The influence of Hellenism through Alexander the Great promoted Greek culture in every land around the Mediterranean and thus spread a simple dialect of Greek called "koine" (Language of the market place).

The enormous and elaborate Greek vocabulary with its precise system of grammar made it the premier language of philosophy. The tonal system made it especially suitable for poetry. The work of poets such as Homer, Sappho, and Pindar is virtually impossible to reproduce in English. One scholar put it this way, "The koine Greek of the New Testament rises to levels of expression that defy translation." God had clearly ordained that this centrifugal language be the means to spread the gospel to "the whole world."

## **Rusty**

Other Bible Knowledge Accelerator books available by Rusty Russell in the Windows Help Format are:

The Life of Jesus Christ, The Historical Jesus, The Incredible Bible (free), The Greeks, The Romans, Jerusalem at the Time of Christ, Religion at the Time of Christ, Sociology at the Time of Christ, The Crucifixion, The Destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., The Tabernacle, The 7 Jewish Feasts and their Significance, The Five Levitical Offerings, The Special Garments of the High Priest, Solomon's Temple, Messianic Prophecy, Prophets and Prophecy, Old Testament History, New Testament History, Between the Testaments, Bible Survey, Basics of Christianity, The Attributes of God, The Trinity, The Hebrew Names of God, The Names of Jesus, Great Men of the Bible, The Rapture, The Great Tribulation, The Second Coming of Jesus Christ, The Antichrist and 666, Heaven, Hell, The Hebrew Language, The Greek Language, How to Make Your Own Windows Help Book.

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Please send your questions and replies to this email address and we will respond promptly.

## **Wycliffe**

John Wycliffe (1320-1384) "The Morning star of the Reformation" born of Saxon blood in Hipswell, England. He entered Balliol College as a student and later became master. He was soon esteemed the ablest member of the faculty and having become a doctor of theology he was given appointment by the king to the rectory of Lutterworth.

Soon he began to speak as a religious reformer, preaching in Oxford and London against the pope's secular sovereignty and publicizing his ideas by tracts and leaflets. In 1377 the pope condemned Wycliffe's writings. But Wycliffe had strong support from the people, the scholars, and the nobles of England. He provided England with a new and "pure" Gospel, establishing the Bible as the only source of truth and stating that the clergy were not to rule, but to serve the people. He also denounced the doctrines of transubstantiation and purgatory and many others. He raised up preachers from the students at Oxford known as "the Lollards" and spent most of his time writing and translating.

He died in 1384 having "lit a fire which shall never be put out." The Catholic Church ordered his books burned and his body exhumed and burned. Nevertheless, about 150 copies of Wycliffe's version have survived, but only one is complete.

## **Tyndale**

Another Englishman, William Tyndale (1494-1536) was a capstone figure in providing an English translation of the Bible. Tyndale attended Oxford and Cambridge becoming a very proficient Greek scholar. The Greek New Testament of Erasmus and the works of Luther awakened in him the desire to give the Bible to the common people in their own language. He then went to Hamburg and studied Hebrew with some prominent Jews and then to Germany to confer with Luther. It was in Worms, Germany that Tyndale printed his first New Testament (1525) and they were smuggled into England.

He produced several other works while he was in hiding (no one knows where) that greatly affected England. By 1534, believing that the Reformation in England had reached a point that it would be safe for him to come out from hiding, he settled in Belgium and continued his writing. He was soon arrested, imprisoned in the castle of Vilvorde, (near Brussels) Belgium, tried for heresy and treason, and convicted. He was first strangled and then burned him at the stake in the prison yard on October 6, 1536.

## **Coverdale**

Also in 1535, an Englishman named Miles Coverdale published the first English translation of the entire Bible in the city of Zurich. This edition had the support of King Henry VIII because Coverdale was an ordained priest and translated the Bible in a way that supported Anglican Catholic doctrine and therefore favored over the Latin Vulgate. In 1539 He incorporated the best of Tyndale and other translators and prepared a huge (9 in. x 15 in.) book which earned the name "the Great Bible." The British government ordered that the book be displayed prominently in every church throughout England.

In 1553, Queen Mary (Tudor) banned the use of all English Bibles by the people. Coverdale and most of the Bible translators fled to Geneva, Switzerland, where John Calvin structured a Protestant stronghold. William Whittingham of Geneva encouraged many of these scholars to begin work on a new English Bible, which was published in 1560. This was the first Bible that was divided into verses by a printer named Robert Estienne. It was called the Geneva Bible. This translation was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I, who had taken the throne of England in 1558. This translation became the most popular at the time.



## **(KJV)**

### The King James Bible (KJV)

In 1604 James VI, King of Scotland from his youth, became King James I of England the first ruler of Brittain and Ireland. Because of the growing animosity of James toward the Puritans, a leading Puritan spokesman, Dr. John Reynolds, proposed that a new English Bible be issued in honor of the new King. King James appointed 54 learned scholars in the making of this new translation from the original Greek and Hebrew into English. For the Old Testament they used the ben Asher text, and for the New Testament they used the Greek text of Erasmus and a Greek and Latin text of the 6th Century found by Theodore Beza.

They used Chapters (developed by Archbishop Stephen Langton in 1551) and Verses (the verse divisions of Robert Estienne). It was completed and published in 1611 and became known as the "Authorized Version" because the making of it was authorized by King James. It became the "Official Bible of England" and the only Bible of the English church.

There have been many revisions of the King James Bible ie. 1615, 1629, 1638, and 1762. Some of them include marginal notes containing the chronology of Biblical events laid out by Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656), which dates Adam and Eve at 4004 B.C. The 1762 revision is what we now presently know as the King James Version.

**(RV)**

The English Revised Version (RV)

In 1881 two respected Anglican leaders, Bishop Harold Browne and Bishop C.J. Ellicot along with an American committee produced a Revised Version of the New Testament. The RV was received well in Britain and the U.S. By 1885 the committee introduced the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments. The RV later lost its reputation in the United States because of its semi British slant.

**(ASV)**

The American Standard Version (ASV)

This version was published in 1901. Some members of the American committee produced their own scholarly version of the King James headed by J. Henry Thayer. Their aim was for a word for word rendering of the Greek and Hebrew wherever possible. This made it a little harder to read and kind of lost its King James, Old English flavor.

**(NKJ)**

The New King James Version (NKJ)

In 1979, Thomas Nelson Publishers issued a new edition of the of the KJV New Testament. The Publisher assembled 119 scholars to work on this new version. By 1982, the entire NKJV was published and immediately widely accepted. The New King James version was based on the 1894 version of the Textus Receptus. It is known for its integrity in preserving the true meaning of the text and also for easy readable style (or at least much easier than the KJV). It preserves some of the old archaic expressions.

**(RSV)**

The Revised Standard Version (RSV)

In 1929, the ICRE (International Council of Religious Education) which is part of the WCC (World Council of Churches) began work on a revision of the ASV. They decided on an entirely new translation, based on the latest scholarly Greek texts. It was much different than Westcott and Hort although it was scholarly and very readable. The New Testament was published in 1946, and the Old Testament in 1952. The RSV had its praises and its criticisms (theologically liberal at some points).

**(NEB)**

The New English Bible (NEB).

This was not a revision like the RSV but a completely new translation from the Hebrew and the Greek. Many scholars from Great Britain headed up by C. H. Dodd worked on this project. The New Testament was released in 1961, exactly 350 years after the first publishing of the KJV and the complete version in 1970. The NEB was immediately loved in Britain having been written in a very modern yet dignified way. It was criticized for being a little too sophisticated and therefore less popular in the United States. Some scholars say that there are many theological problems with the Greek renderings of the NEB and can be misleading to the person who doesn't know any Greek.

## **(NASB)**

The New American Standard Bible (NASB)

This is the American Standard version of 1901 with the English a little more modernized and some criticisms corrected. The emphasis of the writers were stated as three goals: accuracy of translation, clarity of English, and adequacy of notes. They mainly used Nestle Greek text by Nestle (23rd ed.) based on Westcott and Hort, and the Hebrew text taken from Kittel. They made it a point to transliterate (write in English letters) the Hebrew and Greek names, and they capitalized the personal pronouns referring to God. It also included lots of marginal notes that are very helpful to the reader. The NASB was complete and released in 1971 and well received. Some scholars say that the NASB is the best literal work done by a committee and an exceptionally valuable word for word study Bible.

**(NIV)**

## The New International Version (NIV)

In 1965 several scholars representing several denominations with ample financial support devoted their time and efforts wholeheartedly to the establishing of a critical text made from the originals that would be known by its accuracy, clarity, and literary quality, and secondly, to translating a number of Old and New Testament passages with a "dynamic equivalent" principle in mind. This principle would allow for the choosing of words or phrases that the original had on its first readers, which made it easier to grasp in our changing culture. It was complete both Old and New Testament by 1978 and is similar in some sorts to the RSV. The NIV is a prime example of contemporary evangelical scholarship.



**(TEV)**

The Good News Bible (TEV)

Known as TEV "Today's English Version," was sponsored by the American Bible Society. This translation was complete and available by 1976. The main writer, Robert Bratcher used a critical text of the Bible and made a paraphrase that is considered an excellent tool for learning the simple panorama of the Biblical events but departs radically from the exact meaning of the original in many places.

**(TLB)**

The Living Bible (TLB)

Another paraphrase known as the Living Bible was published by Kenneth Taylor, an editor at a Chicago publishing house, in an effort to make the Bible more understandable to his children. His version gained exceptional popularity and he founded his own publishing company (Tyndale House). The Living Bible was complete and available by 1972. This paraphrase is of great benefit just as the Good News Bible for clarity and simplicity but readers should be cautioned that paraphrases can be misleading.

## **Ussher**

James Ussher (1581-1656), Archbishop of Armagh born in Dublin, Ireland and educated at Trinity College in Dublin. He was an ordained priest and esteemed for his goodness and sincerity. He was held in respect by all classes, by the Puritans for his Calvinistic theology, by the churchmen for his reverence for antiquity and tradition, and by the royalists for his devotion for the king.

He wrote "Annals of the Old and New Testament" which forms the basis of the Biblical chronology in the King James Version of the Bible, and he wrote many other historical works.

## **Translations**

The American Heritage Dictionary defines a translation as "the act or process of translating, especially from one language to another."

Because most people who want to read the Bible have not learned how to read the original Hebrew and Greek there is an obvious need for translations of the Scriptures into every language in the world. Our desire is to study the English translations or versions and their progressive revisions and improvements as new resources develop.

The English language continues to change. Since the first English translation of the Bible, the language has changed so much that it barely seems intelligible today. The language is still changing, with new words and expressions coming in and old ones going out.

Because the Bible being the message of God to man is so important to be understood properly it should be made available with the best versions possible, which will reproduce in the modern language, the thought of the original. This will therefore clear the way for a person to find out for himself what the Bible has to say.

**Version**

See Translation

## **Albigenses**

The Albigenses

They were known as the "Cathari" or "Puritans" of that time period, having been organized in Southern France about 1170. They strongly opposed the Roman Catholic Church, called for reforms, and circulated the New Testament as widely as possible. Pope Innocent III called for a crusade against them in 1208, even after many of their numbers had been burned at the stake. There were many more crusades against them until they were finally exterminated.

## **Waldenses**

The Waldensians

This group was found around 1170, about the same time as the Albigenses, by a man named Peter Waldo. He was a rich merchant in Lyons, Southern France and circulated the Bible through his business. He wrote many tracts against the Catholic church. He deposed of his property, took a vow of poverty and gathered a group of likeminded men to go around preaching. They were known as "the poor men of Lyons," and later as Waldenses. The movement spread rapidly until Pope Lucius III excommunicated them in 1184 and officially condemned them as heretics along with the Albigenses.

In 1229 the Council of Toulouse decreed to forcefully suppress the heresy. The inquisition came down upon the Waldenses with great force. They were eventually driven from France where they escaped to caves in the valleys of Northern Italy. Peter Waldo died about 1217 but his movement has survived until the present day.

## **Babylon**

Babylon. "babilu" (gate of god). An ancient city in the plain of shinar on the Euphrates River, about 50 miles south of Modern Baghdad. Babylon was founded by Nimrod of Gen. 10, who developed the world's first organized system of idolatry which God condemned ie. Gen. 11. It later became the capital of Babylonia and the Babylonian Empire. It was of overwhelming size and appearance.

According to the historian Herodotus (Bk 1, 178-186) the city was in the form of a square, 13 miles on each side, and of enormous magnitude. The brick wall was 56 miles long, 300 feet high, 25 feet thick with another wall 75 feet behind the first wall, and multiple towers that were 450 feet high each with a moat that encircled the city. The Euphrates River also flowed through the middle of the city. Inside the city was the "Hanging Gardens" (one of the wonders of the ancient world) and eight massive bronze gates that led to the inner city and there were 50 temples including the "Great Temple of Marduk."

In 539 B.C. Cyrus led the Persian army into victory over Babylon by diverting the Euphrates River during a Feast. Nothing remains today of Babylon except a series of widely scattered mounds to study.  
(See Isaiah 13-14)



## **Vulgate**

In 384 A.D. because of a growing need for a universal text of the whole Bible, Pope Damasus instructed his secretary to revise the Latin New Testament. The secretary's name was Jerome. So he did and his Latin translation was called the "Vulgate" from the Latin, "vulgatus" meaning common, or to make commonly known (where we get our word 'vulgar'). He also translated the Old Testament. This has been the standard version for the Roman Catholic Church ever since. They later added the Apocrypha.

## **Innocent III**

Pope Innocent III (1198 - 1216 A.D.) He was the most powerful of all the Popes. Claimed to be "Vicar of God," and "Supreme Sovereign over the Church and the World." Claimed the authority to depose kings, and that "All things in earth, heaven, and hell are subject to the Vicar of Christ."

He brought the church into supreme control of the state. The kings of Germany, France, England, and almost all of Europe obeyed his will. He ordered 2 crusades, decreed transubstantiation, and auricular confession. Declared that a Pope "can never in any way depart from the catholic faith," Papal Infallibility, condemned the Magna Charta, forbade the reading of the Bible in the vernacular (native language), ordered the extermination of heretics. Instituted the Inquisition. More blood was shed under his authority than in any other period in church history except in the Papacy's effort to crush the Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries.

## **Pope**

The word "Pope" means "papa" or "father." At first it was applied to all Western Bishops. About 500 A.D. it began to be restricted to the Bishop of Rome, and soon, in common use, came to mean Universal Bishop. The Roman Catholic list of Popes includes the Bishops of Rome from the 1st century onward. But for 500 years Bishops of Rome were not Popes. The idea that the Bishop of Rome should have authority over the whole church was misleading and non - Biblical. The Roman Catholic tradition that Peter was the first Pope is fiction due to a lack of any Biblical or historical proof. (See Innocent III)

## **Ptolemies**

Greek kings of Egypt (about 323-117 B.C.)

## **Seleucids**

Greek Kings of Syria (about 312-130 B.C.)

## **Nebuchadnezzar's**

Nebuchadnezzar (Nabu-kudurri-usur II) was the real genius and builder of Babylon. Of its 70 years in existence he ruled 45 years. As the commander of Nabopolassar's armies he was unstoppable. He broke the power of Egypt at the battle of Carcemish and proved to be one of the mightiest monarchs of all time.

Among the cities he invaded and plundered were Tyre, Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Jerusalem.

Inscriptions, documents and letters written during the 43 years of his reign (604-562 BC.) give an idea of the power and wealth of Babylon. Here are some interesting facts according to the historian Herodotus (Bk 1, 178-186) about Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon:

- In the form of a square, 14 miles on each side, and of enormous magnitude
- The brick wall was 56 miles long, 300 feet high, 25 feet thick with another wall 75 feet behind the first wall, and the wall extended 35 feet below the ground
- 250 towers that were 450 feet high
- a wide and deep moat that encircled the city
- The Euphrates River also flowed through the middle of the city. Ferry boats and a 1/2 mi. long bridge with drawbridges closed at night
- "Hanging Gardens"(one of the wonders of the ancient world) and water was raised from the river by hydraulic pumps
- eight massive gates that led to the inner city and 100 brass gates
- streets were paved with stone slabs 3 feet square
- The great Tower (Ziggurat) and 53 temples including the "Great Temple of Marduk." 180 altars to Ishtar
- Golden image of Baal together with the Golden Table (both weighing over 50,000 lbs of solid gold.)
- 2 golden lions, a solid gold human figure (18 feet high)
- Nebuchadnezzar's palace was considered to be the most magnificent building ever erected on earth.

## **Septuagint**

The Latin word "70" or LXX. Third or second Cent. B.C. translation of the Old Testament into Greek supposedly by 72 Hebrew scholars (six from each of the tribes of Israel). According to a legend in the "Letter of Aristeas" it was translated in 72 days.

**Note**

- All Scriptures are in blue
- Words of Christ are in red
- Pop-up definitions are in green with a dotted-line
- Jump texts are in green with a solid line
- Camera's have hot-spots if you click on them.
- Don't forget to experiment with copy and paste, annotations, print, search, and bookmark. These are handy tools and simple to use.



## **Egypt**

The lush land of the Nile, called "Mizraim" in Hebrew was one of the oldest cradles of civilization and truly the land of history. A fertile and powerful land to the south of Israel, prominent throughout the history of the Old Testament, especially during the time of the Exodus.

Egypt enjoyed three periods of greatness:

1. The "Old Kingdom" or "Pyramid Age" from about 2600-2200 BC.
2. The "Middle Kingdom" (12th Dynasty) was about 2060-1786 BC.
3. The "New Kingdom" or the "Empire" included the 18th-20th Dynasties, and covers the period from about 1500-1070 BC. Memphis was capital and Thebes was the sacred city.

Egypt began to decline during the Late Period from about 1070-330 BC.



