

# The Holy Bible

## *The Book of the LORD*

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**N**o book is so unique as the Holy Bible. While many writings have sought to assert their superiority over this Book of books, all such attempts are futile and only seek to distract from the sublime truths and the central theme disclosed within its pages – God’s redemptive plan for sinful man through Christ Jesus, His Eternal Son.

While it is a collection of 66 books written over a period of nearly 16 centuries in three languages by some 40 writers of various backgrounds and experience, in diverse writing styles to varied recipients, there is consistency, authority, simplicity and yet profoundness in its message throughout the volume of the Book. Little wonder as ***“holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”*** (2Pet. 1:21) to give mankind a Book which itself is able to attest that ***“all scripture is given by inspiration of God...”*** (2Tim. 3:16).

Yet its message is not limited to the timeframe of its compilation. It transcends the domain of time into the eternal realm bringing before the reader the character and workmanship of the True and Living God from the creation of this present world to that of the next and the unveiling of His ultimate purpose in bringing many people into divine blessing through faith in His glorious Son.

## An Overview of God's Inspired (Breathed) Book

The Bible's two main divisions are known as the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT). While they are bridged by a silent period of 400 years, God in His sovereignty was still working, allowing the rising up of the Roman Empire, thus setting the scene for events of the NT.

The book of Genesis details creation's week with man's unique origin, the formation of a wife for him within the marriage union, man's fall into sin via Satanic intrusion and the entry of death as a result. While God graciously promises a Deliverer at this juncture, man's further demise necessitated the global judgmental flood in Noah's day. These very literal events are constantly referred to throughout the Bible, the writers and Christ Himself stamping their authority upon them. Man's condition and earth's scars supply further endorsement of these records.

The remaining OT narrative details God taking up His purpose with a man, Abraham, and a nation, Israel, from whom His Redeemer would come. Israel enters a covenant relationship with God via a law code and animal sacrifices, enabling approach to God but they forsake Him and suffer foreign servitude as discipline. While their failure proves that a just law only exposes sin, throughout their history, God continually promised a Saviour to be born out of them by whom they, and all nations of the world, could be blest.

The NT unfolds Jesus Christ that Saviour to us. It details His life, His death on the cross and resurrection to establish a New Covenant, the forming of His Church, explaining of the Gospel and teaching on Church doctrine and order. The final book of Revelation, much hated and maligned by the devil and his servants, details their final overthrow, the creation of a new Heaven and Earth where those born of God will dwell with Him in peace and unity and the awful fate of eternal Hell Fire for the unbelieving Christ rejecter.

While the Bible is geographically and historically accurate, its central theme is the Person of Christ and His work of salvation, determined by counsel within the Godhead before one atom existed or one second of time had elapsed. He is the Lamb of God **"foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you"** (1Pet. 1:20). The Bible as God's spokesman speaks the truth, being decisive in its message, and we do well to embrace its teaching and the Saviour it presents.

## Prophecies and Promises

One of the remarkable features of the Bible is its prophetic utterances and promises; these are recorded throughout its sacred pages. The men who were moved to state them acknowledged their origination as from the true God with statements like, **"The word of the LORD came..."** or **"Thus saith the LORD..."**. Some were fulfilled shortly after their declaration, some after many years while yet others are still awaiting the season for their ultimate ripening. The OT and the NT speak in harmony with each other. Not ONE prophecy has failed that should have been fulfilled; not ONE will fail that has been foretold. This is a comfort to the true child of God and a warning to the wayward sinner.

They provide powerful testimony to the inspiration of the Bible by the God of Heaven, who is able to foretell the future and possesses the power and ability to bring His word to fruition. They are particularly notable in the NT respecting the first advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, 2000 years ago, when so many prophecies recorded throughout the OT, the first 4000 years before His birth, were fulfilled in minutest detail and in the most incredible manner. Only the overruling hand of God could have accomplished their fulfilment, even using the decree of a heathen emperor and ignoble kings to bring them to pass!

These include details of His virgin conception, lowly birth and childhood, the character of Man He would be, the miracles He would perform, the doctrine He would teach through to the extent of His sufferings and crucifixion and glorious bodily resurrection and exaltation to Heaven above as He worked out God's great redemptive plan for sinful man in unyielding faithfulness, love and obedience.

His own words carry divine authority and are life giving, as One being on equality with God. His own prophecies and promises have been a comfort to His believing people for many centuries. He could declare **"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away"** (Matt. 24:35). Again, He could say of His Sheep **"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish..."** (John 10:28).

The prophecies of the Bible bear undeniable witness that it is God's Book, and whoever tampers, discredits, or scorns it is playing with fire that will ultimately scorch them, for to attack the Bible is to attack God its author, who is **"a consuming fire"** (Hebrews 12:29).

## Frankness and Penetration

The Bible is frank and makes no attempt to flatter man. It tells us what we need, not what we want to hear. It is applicable to all peoples, cultures, races and generations, not partial to age or gender, for inherently man changes not from century to century. Although natural learning is increasing, man's heart remains distinctly dark and sinful. The Bible alone is the true scrutiniser and revealer of our motives, its perception cutting finer than a physician's scalpel, piercing deeper into the soul than a psychiatrist's insight. Working in harmony with the conscience given of God, it alone can expose the true guilt and deceitfulness of the heart of man. The Bible as **"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"** (Hebrews 4:12). The Psalmist could faithfully write, **"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple"** (Psalm 119:130). The Bible not only cuts a man down but can impart new life; it is the instrument that God uses to convince a sinner of their need of forgiveness and points them to Christ as the Saviour. **"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"** (Romans 10:17).

## Are there Contradictions?

It is often claimed that the Bible is full of contradictions. While it is admitted that there are a number of minor seeming conflicts which are hard to consolidate, the vast majority of so called "objectionable points" are usually a failure to consider the context and objective of the writers. This is particularly the case within the four Gospel records each of which present the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus in various perspectives to yield different aspects of His glory and character, as one could hold a precious stone and view from different orientations.

There is incredible coherency and consistency throughout the Bible in its structure and teaching as it unfolds God's dealings with man in different eras as He prepared for the visitation of His eternal Son to deal with the matter of sin completely. Men find fault with that which exposes them in their evil tendencies. Much of the Bible's wealth lies buried beneath the surface, hidden from the proud and arrogant but extractable to those, who through humility of mind and sensible to their own limitations, allow the Spirit

of Truth to bring them to faith in Christ Jesus ***“in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”*** (Colossians 2:3) – those true and enduring riches.

### **Are there Alternatives?**

There are many writings that masquerade as originating from God yet apart from the Bible, all can be shown to be anything but that. While the Bible can inherently defend itself, three such writings are considered briefly below:

- 1). So called Jehovah’s Witnesses may invite you to study “the Bible”, in fact their 1950’s “New World Translation”. In reality this book is very far removed from “the Bible” being wilfully modified to entertain their doctrines. They deny some of the cardinal truths of the Bible in particular, the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. While they may protest, it is not difficult to expose their error.
- 2). The “Book of Mormon” assumes itself, like the founder of this movement. Joseph Smith was an habitual liar who had no vision of angels and saw no golden tablets despite his followers claims. The Bible is God’s final voice to mankind in this present era; any individual or book that claims to have received additional revelation can be rejected outright as being spurious. As expected, this cult’s doctrines deviate markedly from those of the Bible.
- 3). The “Qur’an”, while lifting a framework for some of its doctrine from the Bible, contends with its teaching on many aspects. Its most notable and serious affront to the Bible is the denial of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, going as far to deny His death on the cross! To remove all direct or indirect references to this from the Bible would leave a large percentage of it blank, being so central a theme. All hinges around His sacrifice on man’s behalf as the basis for man’s forgiveness. How tragic that like the Jews of old, the very Man who can save followers of Islam is the very Man they reject: the Jews by putting Him on the cross and Muslims by removing Him from it.

The writings of the worlds religions, ‘isms’ and cult’s primarily offer an affront to the Person of Christ, denying His deity, death, bodily resurrection, eternal salvation as a gift, and the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit and even Hell out of which Christ came to save us. It is most notable that many of the so called established churches (Anglicanism, Orthodox, Church of Rome etc.) and recent

‘Christian Movements’ deny the teachings of the Bible, and would rather exalt their own doctrines or theories and individuals in lieu of Christ Jesus the Lord. The Bible gives many warnings of such groups and we do well to take note as it will be a solemn matter upon our death to discover that we have been deceived. The Lord Jesus Himself warned the religious men of His day quoting from Isaiah’s prophecy; ***“Ye hypocrites ... This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”*** (Matt. 15:7-9). Be sincerely warned.

The Bible is God’s Book. Study it and the errors of other writings will become evident, like black tar on a white cloth.

### **Which Translation?**

Most of us rely on “a Bible” translated from the original Hebrew, Syriac and Greek languages. While many versions are available, many have no right to be called Bibles and are paraphrases and worst; watered down works which undermine and dilute the authority of the Bible. No doubt the devil is even at work here; by ferocity or craft he has no scruples about turning us from the truth. Three vital ingredients for a faithful translation are, (i) accurate baseline texts, (ii) God fearing translators and (iii) a sound translation technique. Few translations satisfy all three.

One of these commendable few with its later minor revisions is the 1611 AV (KJV) Bible. Largely indebted to martyred William Tyndale’s translation (circa 1536), it is a faithful and accurate work and can confidently be called “The Book of the LORD”, able to guide us into all God’s revealed truth as given by His Holy Spirit centuries ago.

**I**n concluding, it is hoped this brief article which could be expanded on any point, will enable you to grasp the majesty and significance of the Holy Bible with desire that you may search its pages and be blessed with God’s salvation in Christ and know the true essence of life.

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To request a Bible, New Testament or Gospel by John, please contact: