**The Bible**

The English word ***Bible*** is derived from the Greek ***biblion,*** “roll” or “book”. The *biblion* was a roll of papyrus or *byblus*, a reed-like plant whose inner bark was dried and fashioned into a writing material widely used in the ancient world.

The word **BIBLE** refers to the Book par excellence, **the recognized record of the divine revelation.** It is the revealed will of God and therefore binding upon the people. The **“oracles of God”** were held in highest esteem, and this attitude toward the Scripture was quite naturally carried over into the early church. **Oracles – is a command or revelation of God**

Jesus regarded the **Old Testament** as an inspired record of God’s self-revelation in history.He repeatedly appealed to the Scriptures as authoritative **(Matt 19:4, 22:29).**

* **Matthew 19:4 -** And he answered and said unto them, **Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female.**
* **Matthew 22:29 -** Jesus answered and said unto them, **ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.**

The early church maintained this same attitude toward to **Old Testament**. While the **Old Testament** canon has been formally closed, the coming of Christ has, in a sense, opened it again; God was once again speaking.

Since the cross was the central redemptive act of God in history, the New Testament became a logical necessity. Now the voice of the apostles, and later their writings, were accepted as the divine commentary on the Christ event.

**The Bible, Authority:**

**Authority - it is the right and power to command, enforce laws, exact obedience, determine, or judge.** **Authority also has an application to words spoken or written whose accuracy has been established and whose information can consequently be trusted.** **Authority may be bestowed or inherent.** Jesus taught with authority **(Matt 7:29),** and “with authority and power” expelled unclean spirits **(Luke 4:36**), the locus of such authority was in his own being; an **ontological authority**. The authority for his words and **acts was** not **his own** but came from the one who sent him **(John 14:10; 17:8);** in his own person because they were grounded in his relationship with **God the Father**. **The authority of God is, then the authority of what God is, which is made known in his self-disclosure, since only in his revelation can God be known.**

* **Matthew 7:29 -** For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.
* **Luke 4:36 -** And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, what a word *is* this! For with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.
* **John 14:10 -** Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.
* **John 17:8 -** For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

Jesus read “all the Scriptures” of the **Old Testament** as a prophetic outline of what he came to accomplish. By his attitude to and use of the **Old Testament**, Christ truly validated its divinity. With the same conviction of its divine authority the New Testament writers accepted it and quoted it; and in its light they themselves, as the inspired interpreters of the saving significance of Christ’s person and work, put their own writings on an equal footing with the Old Testament Scriptures as divinely authoritative. The authority of the Bible is established by its own claims; it is **the word of God.**

* **Revelation – is a manifestation of divine will or truth.**
* **Ontology – is the branch of philosophy that deals with being.**
* **Inherent – is an existing as an essential constituent or characteristic; intrinsic – of or pertaining to essential nature of a thing; inherent.**

**Revelation** is therefore the key to God’s authority, so that two, **revelation and authority**, may be regarded as two sides of the same reality. **It is God’s communicating His message to man.**

1. Through nature: Roman 1:18-21; Psalm 19
2. Through providential dealing: Roman 8:28
3. Through preservation of the universe: Col 1:17
4. Through miracles: John 2:11
5. Through direct communication: Acts 22:17-21
6. Through Christ: John 1:14
7. Through the Bible: 1 John 5:9-13

**Bible, Inerrancy and Infallibility:**

The two words most often used to express the nature of scriptural authority are ***inerrant*** and ***infallible***.

* **Inerrancy is the view that when all the facts become known, they will demonstrate that the Bible in its original autographs and correctly interpreted is entirely true and never false in all it affirms, whether that relates to doctrine or ethics or the social, physical, or life sciences.**

Human knowledge is limited. If human beings misinterpret the data that exists, then wrong conclusions can be drawn from inscriptions or texts.

The definition relates inerrancy to hermeneutics. **Hermeneutics is the science of biblical interpretation.** It is necessary to interpret a text properly, to know its correct meaning, before asserting that what a test says is false.

**The primary arguments for inerrancy are biblical, historical, and epistemological in nature. It is listed below five arguments for inerrancy.**

* **Epistemology- is the division of philosophy that investigates the nature and origin of knowledge.**

**First, the Bible teaches its own inspiration, and this requires inerrancy.** The Scriptures are the **breath of God** **(2 Tim 3:16),** which guarantees they are without error**. Inspiration is a supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon divinely chosen agents in consequence of which their writings become trustworthy and authoritative.** The most important criterion for determining **canonicity is inspiration**. **Early Christians determine the presence of inspiration based on three elements:**

1. Church leaders often appealed to the agreement of the book with what they called **“the rule of faith”**. This meant that the teaching of the book followed the beliefs the church regarded as acceptable and correct.
2. The book has to demonstrate apostolicity. This criterion required authorship by an apostle or by the associated of an apostle (as in the instance of Mark and Luke.)
3. The church applied the test of universality. This required that the book be accepted by a broad geographical segment of the church.

**Second, it is divine message of total and absolute truthfulness.** In **Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and 18: 20-22**, Israel is given criteria for distinguishing God’s message and messengers from the false prophecies and prophets. The prophet’s word was usually oral, although it might be recorded and included in a book; the writers of Scripture communicated God’s word in written form. Both were instrument of divine communication, and in both cases the human element was an essential ingredient.

* **Deuteronomy 13:1-5:** If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: **for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.** Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.
* **Deuteronomy 18:20-22:** But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

**Third, the Bible teaches its own authority, and this requires inerrancy.** The two most commonly cited passages are Matthew 5:17-20 and John 10:34-35. Jesus says that Scripture cannot be broken and so is absolutely binding. While it is true that both passages emphasize the Bible’s authority, this authority can only be justified by or grounded in inerrancy. Something that contains errors cannot be absolutely authoritative.

* **Matthew 5:17-18:** Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.
* **John 10:34-35:** Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken.

**Fourth, Scripture uses Scripture in a way that supports its inerrancy.**

**Finally, inerrancy follows from what the Bible says about God’s character. Repeatedly, the Scriptures teach that God cannot lie. (Number 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Titus 1:2; Hebrew 6:18).** The Bible is from God and his character is behind it, it must be inerrant and infallible.

* **Numbers 23:19 -** God *is* not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?
* **1 Samuel 15:29 -** And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he *is* not a man that he should repent.
* **Titus 1:2 -** In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.
* **Hebrews 6:18 -** That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

**Bible, Canon:**

**Canon - the term in Christianity refers to a group of books acknowledged by the early church as the rule of faith and practice.** Deriving from the Greek (***kanon***), which designated a carpenter’s rule (possibly borrowed from a Hebrew term, ***qaneh***, referring to a measuring reed six cubits long), the word has been used to **identify those books considered to be spiritually superlative**, by which all others were measured and found to be valuable in general church use. It is the group of books and writings that passed the test of authority and authenticity.

**Old Testament:**

During the entire period of biblical history, the Jews lived their faith without a closed canon of Scriptures, such a canon thus not being essential to the practice of the Jewish religion during that time. These books were brought together evidently as an act of God’s providence. By the time of Jesus, the Old Testament was called **Targum** by modern Judaism, consisted of the Law, Prophets, and Writings.

**Septuagint** (*The seventy*) is the Greek version of the Old Testament; first translated in Alexandria, Egypt. It was begun in the time of the earlier Ptolemy’s, about 280 BC. The law (the Pentateuch) alone was translated at first. The Septuagint version was highly esteemed by the **Hellenistic Jews** before the coming of Christ. Wherever, by the conquests of Alexander or by colonization, the Greek language prevailed wherever Jews were settled and the attention of the neighboring Gentiles was drawn to their wondrous history and law there was found the Septuagint, which thus became, by divine Providence the means of spreading widely the knowledge of the one true God and his promises of it Savior to come, throughout the nations. It was the influence of the Septuagint in the spread of the gospel. For a long period the Septuagint was the Old Testament of the far larger part of the Christian Church.

The choosing of **six interpreters** from each of the **twelve tribes** and their names; the copy of the law, in letters of gold; the feast prepared for the **seventy two**, which continued for seven days; the questions proposed to each of the interpreters in turn, with the answers of each; their lodging by the seashore and the accomplishment of their work in **seventy-two** days, by conference and comparison.

**New Testament:**

**The formation of the New Testament canon occupied some 350 years. The canon was ultimately certified at the Council of Carthage (397).**

The first undisputed decision of an ecumenical council on the canon seems to be from **Carthage in 397**, which decreed that nothing should be read in the church under the name of the divine Scripture excepts the canonical writings; the **twenty-seven books of the New Testament** were then listed as the canonical writings.

Both Jews and Christians have canons of scripture. The Jewish **canon** consists of **thirty-nine** books; the Christians **canon** consists of **sixty-six** for Protestants and **seventy-three** for Catholics. It transpired under the influence of the Spirit of God is commonly accepted among Christian people. It is a collection of divines and spiritual books of Jewish and Christians that occurs over **sixteen centuries or more** with over **thirty-six or more writers**.

**Old Testament- 39 Books**

**Law (5) – Pentateuch:** is the Greek name given to the five books commonly called the **"five books of Moses."** This title is derived from "pente", five, and "teucos") which, meaning originally "vessel" "instrument," to mean "book" hence the fivefold book.

1. - Genesis; 2 - Exodus; 3 – Leviticus; 4 – Numbers; 5 - Deuteronomy

**History (12)**

1- Joshua; 2 – Judges; 3 – Ruth; 4 - 1 Samuel; 5 - 2 Samuel; 6 - 1 Kings; 7 - 2 Kings;

8 - 1 Chronicles; 9 - 2 Chronicles; 10 – Ezra; 11 – Nehemiah; 12 - Esther

**Poetry and Wisdom (5)**

1. - Job; 2 – Psalms; 3 – Proverbs; 4 – Ecclesiastes; 5 - Song of Solomon

**Major Prophets (5)**

1. - Isaiah; 2 – Jeremiah; 3 – Lamentations; 4 – Ezekiel; 5 - Daniel

**Minor Prophets (12)**

1- Hosea; 2 – Joel; 3 – Amos; 4 – Obadiah; 5 – Jonah; 6 – Micah; 7 – Nahum; 8 - Habakkuk

9 - Zephaniah; 10 – Haggai; 11 – Zechariah; 12 - Malachi

**New Testament – 27 Books**

**Gospel (4)**

1 - Matthew; 2 – Mark; 3 – Luke; 4 - John

**History (1)**

1. - Acts

**Pauline Epistles (13)**

1. - Romans; 2 - 1 Corinthians; 3 - 2 Corinthians; 4 – Galatians; 5 – Ephesians; 6 – Philippians;
2. – Colossians; 8 - 1 Thessalonians; 9 - 2 Thessalonians; 10 - 1 Timothy; 11 - 2 Timothy;
3. - Titus; 13 - Philemon

**General Epistles (8)**

1. – Hebrews; 2 – James; 3 - 1 Peter; 4 - 2 Peter; 5 - 1 John; 6 - 2 John; 7 - 3 John; 8 - Jude

**Prophecy- Apocalypse (1):** A Greek word meaning revelation, applied chiefly to the book of Revelation by John

1. - Revelation

**The Scriptures – First Articles of Faith**

We believe that the **Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired**, and is a **perfect treasure of heavenly instruction**; that it has **God for its author**, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

**“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” – 2 Tim 3:16, 17.**

**Also the following scriptures:**

**2 Peter 1:21 -** For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

**2 Samuel 23:2 -** The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue.

**Acts 3:21 -** Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

**Luke 16:29-31 -** Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

**“Every word of God is pure. Add thou not unto His words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” – Proverbs 30:5, 6**.

**Revelation 22:18-19 -** For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:  And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

**John 12:47-48: And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.**

**The Scripture**

1. What is the Bible?
2. How many books in the Bible? How many in the Old Testament? How many in the New Testament?
3. How many parts is the Bible (Old Testament) divided as to matter? What are they?
4. How many law books have we in the Old Testament?
5. How many historical books in the Old Testament?
6. How are the prophets divided? What are they?
7. How many major prophets? Why are they called Major Prophets?
8. Why are they called Major Prophets?
9. How many prophetic books are in the Old Testament? How many men wrote these
10. Name the minor prophetic books.
11. How many poetic books are these in the Bible?
12. How long did it take to write the Bible?
13. How many men wrote the Bible?
14. What kind of men were they?
15. What is meant by inspired? What effect has this inspiration on the writers?
16. Who is the author of the Bible?
17. Who is the author of the Bible as to composition?
18. How is the New Testament divided as to matter? What are they?
19. What are they?
20. What is the historical book of the New Testament?
21. What is the prophetic book of the New Testament?
22. What is the Greek word for the book of Revelations?
23. How many doctrinal books are there in the New Testament?
24. What is the great end of the Bible (The over-all objectives)?
25. What does the Bible teach?
26. What is the matter of which the Bible is composed?
27. What principles does the Bible reveal to us? How long these principles shall exists?
28. What kind of standard is the Bible?
29. By the standard what ought to be tried?
30. What kind of center is the Bible?
31. Are there any errors in the Bible?
32. Is the Bible necessary?