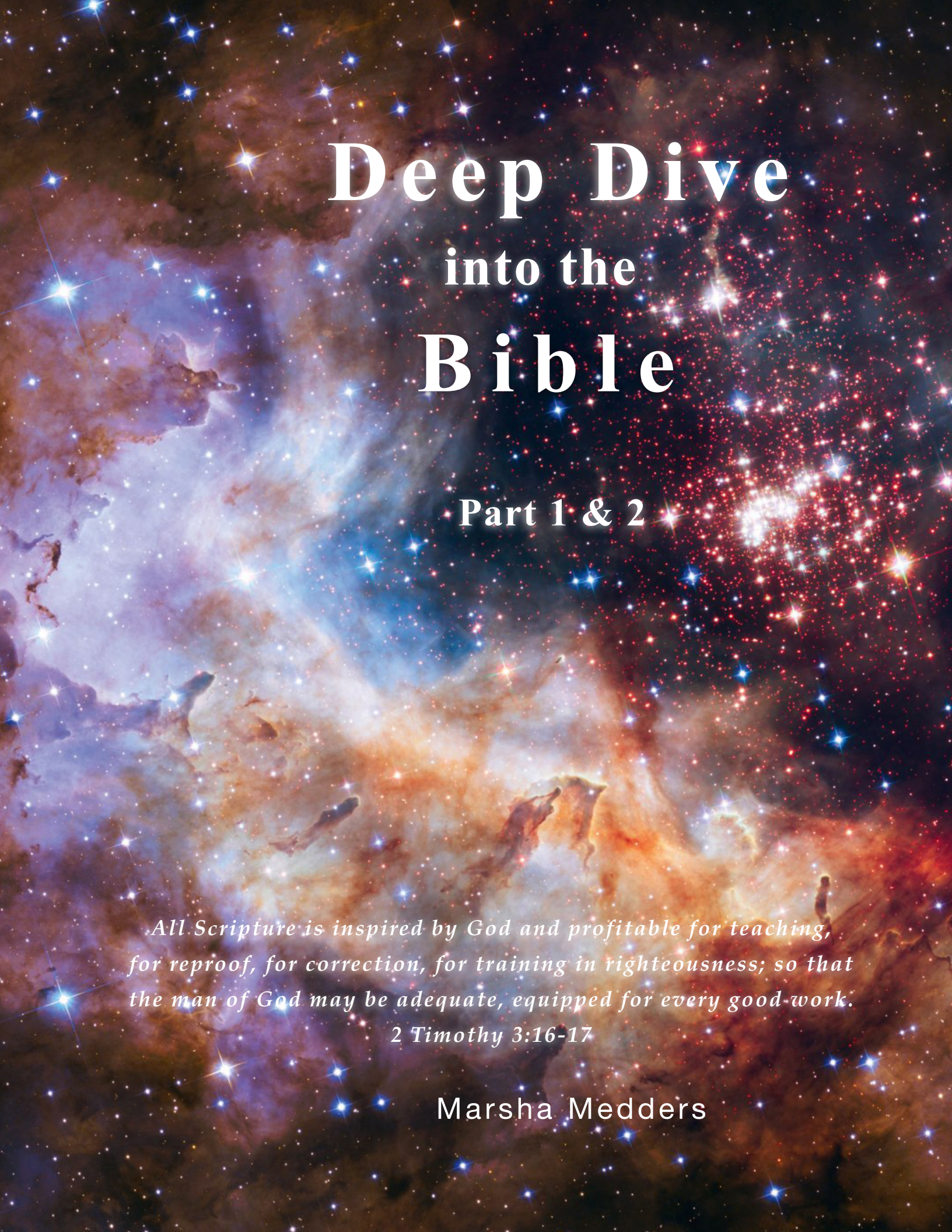




Deep Dive into the Bible

Part 1 & 2

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching,
for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that
the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Marsha Medders

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Hubble Picture Acknowledgements: Cover Page: 229 Westerlund-21. Produced by NASA and the Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI). Westerlund 2 is a remarkable star cluster located in the Milky Way galaxy, renowned for its collection of some of the most brightest, hottest, and massive stars known. It is a giant cluster of about 3,000 stars located 20,000 light-years away in the constellation Carina.

Deep Dive into the Bible

Outline

Chapter 1 - Tracing the Bible's Ancient Roots

Chapter 2 - Exploring Bible Translations & Study Techniques

Chapter 3 - The Grand Tapestry of Biblical Times

Chapter 4 - The Great Story, Inspired by God

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Chapter 1 - Tracing the Bible's Ancient Roots

The Bible is said to be the most unique book ever produced. How many ways can you think of that make the Bible unique?

Exercise 1 - What Makes the Bible Unique? List all the ways that the Bible is unique below.

The Bible is the ultimate adventure, involving each of us in the interval between the miracle of our origin and our final destiny. It is the only Book on earth and in the history of mankind that has transcended over time and space.

The Bible proves itself by recording history accurately before it happens. It is the only religious book that stands on whether what it says actually happened in history or will occur in the future. According to Dr. John Walvoord, one of the foremost prophecy scholars in the twentieth century, there are at least 1,000 prophecies in Scripture, 500 of which have been fulfilled literally.

No other book has been so loved or hated. Many whom have loved the Bible have had life-changing experiences as they read, studied and followed it's timeless guidelines for living. It has been hated by atheist, freethinkers and other humanists whose belief systems assume

there is no God. The Bible has been the subject of more persecution and book burning than any book in history, yet it is the bestselling book of all time.

It is the only reliable source of information about God and the future. It is the one Book that holds the key to your eternal destiny with the ultimate love story written in blood on a wooden cross some two thousand years ago.

The poet Henry VanDyke wrote:

Born in the East and clothed in Oriental form and imagery,
the Bible walks the ways of the world with familiar feet
And enters land after land to find its own everywhere.
It has learned to speak in hundreds of languages to the heart of man.
Children listen to its stories with wonder and delight,
The wicked and the proud tremble at its warnings,
but to the wounded and penitent it has a mother's voice.
It has woven itself into our dearest dreams;
so that Love, Friendship, Sympathy, Devotion, Memory, Hope,
Put on the beautiful garments of its treasured speech.
No man is poor or desolate who has this treasure for his own.
When the landscape darkens,
And the trembling pilgrim comes to the Valley of the Shadow,
He is not afraid to enter;
He takes the rod and staff of Scripture in his hand;
he says to friend and comrade, "Goodbye; We Shall Meet Again"; and,
comforted by that support, he goes toward the lonely pass
As one who walks through darkness into light.

Origin

The Bible was first inspired, then canonized, read as sacred literature, copied in ancient Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and translated into the languages of the world. The word Bible is derived through Latin from the Greek word "bible" or books. A term synonymous with Bible is "the writings" or "the Scriptures", or "the books." In Daniel 9:2, Daniel uses

the term the books in some translations and others such as New Living Translation, the word of the Lord.

*During the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, learned from reading the word of the Lord, as revealed to Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years.
Daniel 9:2. NLT*

The terms writings and Scriptures were used in the New Testament frequently to denote Old Testament documents.

*Jesus *said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures,
'The stone which the builders rejected,
This became the chief corner stone;
This came about from the Lord,
And it is marvelous in our eyes'?" Matthew 21:42*

*Have you not even read this Scripture:
'The stone which the builders rejected,
This became the chief corner stone; Mark 12:10*

and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15

as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. 2 Peter 3:16

Among Christians, not all agree on the content or the books to be included in the Bible. Some branches of the Syriac church do not include 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John, Jude and Revelation. The Roman and Greek churches include a number of books in the Old Testament that are not included by other churches.

Some churches, such as the Church of England hold that these additional books may be read for examples of life and instruction but not applied to establish doctrine. Other Reformed churches give them no canonical status at all.

The ultimate authority in the Roman and Greek churches lies with the Bible and the living church. In the churches of the Reformation, the Bible is the final authority.

Exercise 2 - Comparisons of the Old Testament Canon

See if you can identify the differences between the Hebrew, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Bibles in the charts on the following pages. Write your answers below or circle the ones that don't match.

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Comparisons of the Old Testament Canon

Catholic and Protestant Bibles all contain the same 27 New Testament books.

Hebrew Bible	Roman Catholic	Protestant
Genesis	Genesis	Genesis
Exodus	Exodus	Exodus
Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus
Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy
Joshua	Joshua	Joshua
Judges	Judges	Judges
1 Samuel	Ruth	Ruth
2 Samuel	1 Samuel	1 Samuel
1 Kings	2 Samuel	2 Samuel
2 Kings	1 Kings	1 Kings
Isaiah	2 Kings	2 Kings
Jeremiah	1 Chronicles	1 Chronicles
Ezekiel	2 Chronicles	2 Chronicles
Hosea	Ezra	Ezra
Joel	Nehemiah	Nehemiah
Amos	Tobit	Esther
Obadiah	Judith	Job
Jonah	Esther (includes additions)	Psalms
Micah	1 Maccabees	Proverbs
Nahum	2 Maccabees	Ecclesiastes
Habakkuk	Job	Song of Solomon
Zephaniah	Psalms	Isaiah
Haggai	Proverbs	Jeremiah
Zechariah	Ecclesiastes	Lamentations

Hebrew Bible	Roman Catholic	Protestant
Malachi	Song of Songs (Song of Solomon)	Ezekiel
Psalms	Wisdom of Solomon	Daniel
Proverbs	Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)	Hosea
Job	Isaiah	Joel
Song of Songs	Jeremiah	Amos
Ruth	Lamentations	Obadiah
Lamentations	Baruch (includes Letter of Jeremiah)	Jonah
Ecclesiastes	Ezekiel	Micah
Esther	Daniel (includes Susanna & Bel & the Dragon)	Nahum
Daniel	Hosea	Habakkuk
Ezra	Joel	Zephaniah
Nehemiah	Amos	Haggai
1 Chronicles	Obadiah	Zechariah
2 Chronicles	Jonah	Malachi
	Micah	
	Nahum	
	Habakkuk	
	Zephaniah	
	Haggai	
	Zechariah	
	Malachi	

Authority

The Bible is authoritative because it is divinely authorized as stated in 2 Timothy 3:16.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Exercise 3 - What does inspired by God mean?

The word inspiration comes from Latin and English translations of “theophneustos” which means God having breathed out Scripture. Paul’s words mean that Scripture is a divine product and should be thought of and approached as such.

This means that the Scriptures are God-breathed; the actual written Scripture is a work of God. Like the words spoken by the prophets the Scriptures are not just man’s words but God’s word, spoken through man and written with man’s pen. The primary author is God, the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, we can conclude that Scripture is God’s own word and man’s part was to transmit what he had received from God. Each book is a literary creation of it’s author including linguistic style, however theologically it is entirely the creation of God. Jesus said that He spoke the words given Him by His Father.

So Jesus answered them and said, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. John 7:16

For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. John 12:49

The writer’s of the books of the Bible were not merely taking mechanical dictation but each author’s creativeness can be seen in their writing. Their personal style did not change God’s

meaning. The central authority of the Bible is that God's will is made known in the form of valid truths.

Inerrancy & Infallibility

There are two more theological terms used in defining the uniqueness of the bible: inerrancy and infallibility. Inerrancy means that inspiration extends to every word of Scripture. Early Christian scholars such as Irenaeus, Augustine, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Jerome all regarded God's word as incapable of deception or confusion.

Infallibility defines the Scripture as reliable and true to those who turn to it in search of God's truth. It will not fail or deceive. It should be noted that not all churches and theologians today recognize or use the concept of infallibility when it comes to the Bible.

Canon

The term canon is borrowed from Greek, *kanon*, which means a standard for measurement. In regards to the Bible, it refers to those books that met the exacting standard required for inclusion in the Bible. It is an authoritative list of the books belonging to the Old Testament or New Testament.

Over the years there has been discussion and controversy as to which books should be included in the Bible. The books of the Bible were collected and arranged and recognized as inspired sacred authority by councils of rabbis and councils of church leaders.

The work of canonizing the Old Testament was done during the days of Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. After Israel's captivity in Babylon, a council of 120 men was formed with Ezra as its president. Their purpose was to reconstruct the worship and religious life of the Jewish people after their return from Babylon. It's possible that this group of spiritual leaders or their successors brought together the many religious writings that now comprise the Old Testament. The list of the books of the Old Testament correspond exactly to the books in the Old Testament in today's Bibles. Our 39 books are exactly the same in content as their 22 books. They had combined several books, such as 1 and 2 Kings, however the content matches.

The compilation of the Old Testament was a natural and gradual process as God's prophets and leaders were inspired to write the books. These factors were generally used to determine which books were recognized as books of the Bible:

- Their writers were inspired by God
- Was it written by a prophet or spokesman for God
- Is it genuine and can it be traced back to the time and place as well as the writer?

Jesus and the apostles quoted from the Old Testament at least 600 times which indicated their approval of the selected texts.

There was more controversy about what books to include in the New Testament. From the start, the early church used the Old Testament in their services with the same authority as did the Jews in their synagogues. As the New Testament books were completed they were used right along with the Old Testament Scriptures. Paul quotes from Luke 10:7, citing it as Scripture in 1 Timothy 5:18.

For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." 1 Timothy 5:18

Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house. Luke 10:7

Peter placed his and the other apostles' writing on par with those of the Old Testament prophets.

This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles. 2 Peter 3:1-2

In general the criteria for which books were included in the New Testament were:

- The authoritative book had to be written by apostolic authors (or authors who were closely associated with apostles).
- Does it agree with the doctrine of the Lord and His apostles?
- Is it genuine with regard to facts, the date of writing and the author?
- They had been widely accepted in earliest churches from the beginning.

Text and Manuscripts

Below is a chart drafted from the *Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps & Timelines* showing the progression of writings of the Bible.

Bible	Written (approximately)	Written Method
Old Testament	1500-400 BC Stone, Clay, Leather	Bible copied on Papyrus Scrolls of leather & later of papyrus were used to make copies. A papyrus codex is a bound volume made from sheets folded and sewn together, sometimes with a cover. They were used more after AD 1-100 Fine quality animal skins from calves or antelope (vellum) and sheet or goats (parchment) were used for over 1,000 years to make copies 300-1400 AD
New Testament	45-100 AD Papyrus, Fine Animal Skins, Printing Press	Two of the oldest vellum copies that exist today are the Vatican Codex and the Synaptic Codes 325-350 AD. Bible printed by Printing Press after 1455. Wycliffe Bibles were inscribed by hand on vellum in the 1300-1400's. Some copies took ten month to two years to produce and cost a year's wage. The Bible was the first book to be printed with Gutenberg's printing press in 1455. Today the Bible is printed on paper in many languages. It is also available in many digital formats.

The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew with some Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek. Before the printing press was invented, the Bible was copied by hand.

The Bible was copied very accurately, in many cases by special scribes who developed intricate methods of counting words and letters to insure that no errors had been made.

The Bible was the first book ever printed on the printing press with moveable type. It was the Latin Bible printed in 1455 by Gutenberg Press. There is much evidence that the Bible we have today is remarkably true to the original writings. Of the thousands of copies made by hand before 1500, nearly 5,900 Greek manuscripts from the New Testament alone still exist today. The text of the Bible is better preserved than the writing of Plato or Aristotle.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls confirmed the astonishing reliability of some of the copies of the Old Testament made over the years. Although some spelling variations exist, no variation affect basic Bible doctrines.

God has revealed Himself through the heavens, through the Lord Jesus Christ and through the power of the cross to change lives today. The most detailed revelation He has given of Himself is the Bible. This wonderful book was compiled in the most unusual manner of any book every written. God inspired more than 40 holy men, mostly prophets, to write the 66 books that comprise this book. It contains what we need to know about salvation, how to live the Christian life, the nature and plan of God, the end times, and the second coming of Christ.

Answers to Exercises

Exercise 1 - What makes the Bible unique?

- Records history before it happens.
- Record of past events are accurate.
- Letters are written to world leaders from outside our time and space.
- More books are written about the Bible than any other book.
- It is the only book that contains short stories and is still called a complete book.
- It is the most extensively printed book of all time.
- It is the most widely translated.
- It is the most frequently read.
- More people have been persecuted over it's contents more than any other book.
- Includes heroes conquering enemies against all odds.
- It is full of miracles.
- Records time travel and space.
- Includes a biography of a Superman who accomplishes His "Mission Impossible."
- It includes a hyper-dimensional conflict between good and evil that will come to a climax soon.
- Shows we are participants in a Cosmic War.
- Addresses greatest mysteries ever to confront mankind: what is our purpose, why we are here, and where we are going; the nature of time, predestination vs free will, the nature of evil, where it comes from and why, how earth came into existence, how we came into existence.

Exercise 2: Comparisons of the Old Testament Canon

Exercise 3: What does inspired by God mean?

The actual written Scripture is a work of God; it is God's words.

Chapter 2 - Exploring Bible Translations & Study Techniques

The Bible has been translated into many languages from the original languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Hebrew over the years. What is your favorite translation of the Bible and why?

Exercise 1 - What is your favorite translation of the Bible and why?

Old Testament Manuscripts

The first translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into another language was called the Septuagint. Seventy scholars came to Alexandria, Egypt, to create this Greek translation. The work began around 280 BC and was completed about 100 years later. This also means that the Old Testament was canonized by this time. The two texts show agreement which means that the translators took great care to create an accurate work. Very few differences are found between the Hebrew texts, Greek Septuagint and Greek texts. The Bible has been preserved accurately like no other ancient book.

New Testament Manuscripts

The New Testament was originally written in Greek and the work of translating it into other languages began early. The Peshito or Syriac translation was written in Syrochaldaic, or Aramaic. It was translated before AD 150 and became the official Scriptures of the Eastern churches. Arabic, Persian, and Armenian translations have been made from it.

The Latin Vulgate, translated by Jerome in the fourth century became the Bible of the Western churches. It was the chief source of nearly every version of the Scriptures made in the west for over 1000 years.

Due to the timing of these translations we can see that the New Testament was completed by the second century and the authenticity of the New Testament can be traced back to within 100 years of less of the apostles. Even the book of Revelation written by John when he was

on Patmos in AD 95 was given instant acceptance by the early church and included in the Scriptures.

Hundreds of other manuscripts were destroyed by the Roman emperor, Diocletian, who ordered the destruction of the Scriptures. Emperor Constantine professed Christianity in AD 312 he ordered Eusebius, known as the father of church history to prepare 50 copies of the Scriptures to be used in churches. The Council of Carthage in AD 397 ratified the same 27 New Testament books that we use today. These were the same books that were used by the church for more than three centuries.

Ancient Manuscripts of the Bible

It has been stated by scholars that we have more the 5,800 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, and 19,000 copies of ancient versions which include mostly the Latin Vulgate for a total of around 25,000 manuscripts of the New Testament. In addition there are 1,700 fragments of the Hebrew Old Testament and the 350 copies of the Greek Septuagint. No other ancient document comes close to having such numbers to back up it's authenticity.

Exercise 2 - Match the ancient Greek Manuscript with the year it was written

See if you can match the ancient Greet Manuscript with the year it was written. Hear are the manuscript names: Ephraim, Alexandrian, Synaptic, Vatican

Manuscript	Year Written	Description
	AD 340	Is now in the British Museum. In 1844 Dr. Constantin Tischendorf discovered this manuscript by accident in the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai. Eventually the manuscript was given to the Czar of Russia and after the Revolution of 1917, it was sold to the British Museum for \$500,000
	AD 350	Is in the Vatican Library in Rome, Italy. Revealed in 1481, it was not opened to the public to see. In 1889 the pope permitted it to be photographed and released to the libraries of the world.
	AD 450	Was written probably in Alexandria, Egypt. Currently is in the British Museum. Presented to King James I of England in 1627.
	AD 450	Is in the National Library of Paris, France. Probably written in Alexandria.

Exercise 3 - A Walk Through How We Got The Bible

Match the year with the description given in each time period. Possible answers are given to select from.

Possible Answers: AD 1900, AD 1800, AD 1600, AD 1500, AD 1300, AD 600, AD 500, AD 300, AD 200, AD 100, AD 1, 200 BC, 500 BC, 2000 BC

Year	Events
	OT events written down in Hebrew with some portions in Aramaic over centuries. In Exodus the Lord tells Moses to write in a book. Other writers include leaders, kings and prophets. This makes up the OT. Written on leather scrolls.
	Ezra, a priest & scribe collects & arranges some of the books of the Hebrew Bible (OT) about 450 BC.
	Books are arranged by subject. Began using papyrus to record the Scriptures.
	Time of Jesus. Jesus quotes the OT often and says He did not come to destroy the Scriptures, but to fulfill them. (Luke 24:44-45)
	The apostles, followers, of Jesus write the Gospels, history, letter to other Christians & Revelation between AD 45 and 100. The writers quote from all but 8 of the OT books. Copied & distributed so that by 150 they are the New Testament.
	Earliest Translations 200-300 Latin, Coptic (Egypt) & Syriac (Syria). Church fathers accept Gospels and Paul's letters as canonical; 21 books.
	Roman emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in 313. 27 New Testaments books confirmed as canonical by the Synod of Carthage in 397. Jerome starts translating the Scriptures into Latin in 382 & finishes years later. Called the Latin Vulgate it remained the basic Bible for many centuries.
	Roman Empire declines & causes new languages to emerge. The Masoretes (Jewish scribes) develop method of counting words in each book to insure accuracy. Scrolls with errors are buried.
	Christianity reaches Britain before 300. Anglo-Saxon plans drive Christian Briton into Wales. In 596 Augustine of Canterbury begins evangelization again.
	Normans conquer England (1066) & make French the official language. No English translation work produced until 1300's. First English Bibles translated from Latin in 1382 - the Wycliffe Bible. Wycliffe advocated for common people to have a Bible. Bible is banned & burned. 40 yrs after his death, Wycliffe's bones are exhumed & burned for heresy. 1408 - England illegal to translate or read the Bible in common English without permission of a bishop. 1455 - First printing press, prints the Gutenberg Bible. One of most important events for spread of the Gospel.

	Erasmus, priest & Greek scholar, publishes new Greek edition & more accurate Latin translation of NT in 1516. Goal for everyone to read the Bible. Used later by Martin Luther, William Tyndall & King James translators. Martin Luther translates the NT into German in 1522. William Tyndall, priest & Oxford scholar translates the NT from Greek (1525) but cannot get approval to publish it in England. He moves to Germany & smuggles Bibles into England in sacks of corn & flour. In 1535 published part of the OT translated from Hebrew. In 1536 he is strangled & burned at the stake. His final words are, "Lord open the King of England's eyes." Tyndale is called the Father of the English Bible. His translation forms the basis of the King James Version. Much of the style & vocabulary we know as biblical English is traceable to his work. Coverdale Bible translated by Miles Coverdale in 1535 is the first complete Bible to be printed in English. It is dedicated to Anne Boleyn one of King Henry VIII's wives. Matthew's Bible in 1537 first Bible printed with king's permission. It is one year after Tyndale's death. Great Bible 1539 is placed in every church by order of Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of King Henry VIII. The Bible is chained to the church pillars to discourage theft. England's Queen Mary bans Protestant translations of the English Bible. John Rogers & Thomas Cranmer are burned at the stake. Later some 300 men, women & children are also burned. Exiles from England flee to Geneva, Switzerland and in 1560 print the Geneva Bible, a complete revision of the entire Bible. It contains theological notes from Protestant scholars John Calvin, Beza, Knox & Whittingham. It is the Bible carried to America by the Pilgrims in 1620.
	Bishops Bible, a new translation begins under Queen Elizabeth in 1568. Rheims-Douai Bible translated from the Latin Vulgate by Catholic scholar Gregory Martin, while in exile in France. It becomes the standard translation the Catholic Church. King James Version is commissioned by King James I of England. 54 scholars undertake the task over 6 years. The edition used today was revised in 1769. It was the most popular Bible for more than 300 years.
	Older manuscripts discovered between 1629 - 1947. Codex Alexandrines, a copy of the NT from circa 400 is the best copy of the book of Revelation, is made available to western scholars in 1729. Codex Sinaiticus earliest complete copy of the NT copied in circa 350 is found near Mt. Sinai. The Revised Version 1885 is revised version of the King James Version. Using manuscripts discovered during the previous 2 centuries their goal is to use better Hebrew and Greek texts to retranslate words.

	Dead Sea Scrolls found in a cave in 1947 by a shepherd. They contain the oldest known copies of portion of the OT. These copies were made between 100 BC and AD 100. A Scroll of Isaiah, part of the Dead Sea Scrolls, is the oldest complete manuscript of any book of the Bible. Copied around 100. They are remarkably close to the standard Hebrew Bible, varying slightly in the spelling of some names. Gives overwhelming confirmation of the reliability of the Masoretic copies. During the 1900's more than a 100 NT manuscripts are found in Egypt. Modern translations explode as knowledge from newly discovered manuscripts has led to hundreds of new translations.
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Exercise 4: How many Modern Translations of the Bible?

How many modern day versions of the Bible do you think there are?

How many languages has the Bible been printed in?

The number of languages the Bible has been printed in is in excess of 2,000. If you answered anything over 20 versions of the Bible in existence in modern times your answer is correct. Depending on the source one uses, it is reported that there are anywhere from 450 + versions of the Bible. We will look at some of the more popular ones.

Exercise 5: Purpose for Some Common Bible Translations

See if you can match the purpose with some of the more common Bible translations. Possible answers are given for you to match: NLT, NASB, KJV, NIV, MSG, NKJ

Bible Translation	Purpose
	Easy to read. Great for children and those who may not read the Bible much.
	Said to be the most accurate.
	Beautiful poetic language from another time period.
	Currently the best-selling Bible version. Placed in a lot of churches.
	Great for those who have difficulty understanding the Bible.
	Modern language but maintains beautiful poetic language from another time period.

Exercise 6 - What are some of the most common Bible Translations today?

List below some of the most common Bible Translations that you are aware of.

Bible Translations - gateway.com

TOP BIBLE VERSIONS COMPARISON			
VERSION	YEAR RELEASED	TRANSLATION TYPE	EXAMPLE PASSAGE (1 CORINTHIANS 15:50)
NIV	1978 (Rev. 2011)	Functional (slight)	<i>I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.</i>
KJV	1611	Formal (medium)	<i>Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.</i>
NKJV	1982	Formal (medium)	<i>Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.</i>
NRSV	1989 (Rev. 2021)	Formal (slight)	<i>What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.</i>
ESV	2001	Formal (slight)	<i>I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.</i>
NLT	1996	Functional (medium)	<i>What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever.</i>
NASB	1971 (Rev. 2020)	Formal (heavy)	<i>Now I say this, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.</i>
CSB	2004 (Rev. 2017)	Formal (slight)	<i>What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor can corruption inherit incorruption.</i>
AMP	1965 (Rev. 2015)	Paraphrase (Formal)	<i>Now I say this, believers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit nor be part of the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable (mortal) inherit the imperishable (immortal).</i>
MSG	1993	Paraphrase (Functional)	<i>I need to emphasize, friends, that our natural, earthy lives don't in themselves lead us by their very nature into the kingdom of God. Their very "nature" is to die, so how could they "naturally" end up in the Life kingdom?</i>

There are many popular Bible translations today. According to gateway.com the chart shows the ten most popular Bible translations. Below is a description of the translation type that gateway.com uses in their chart.

Formal equivalence prioritizes achieving word-for-word accuracy, focusing on a meticulous and precise translation of the original text's exact words as closely as possible into the target language.

Examples: The KJV and NKJV, ESV, NRSV, CSB, and NASB versions are all different approaches to formal equivalence translation.

Functional equivalence — also called dynamic equivalence or thought-for-thought translation — focuses on conveying the meaning of thoughts or ideas rather than a direct word-for-word translation, aiming to preserve the original writers' intent and context.

Examples: The NIV is among the most balanced translations available, but tends slightly more toward functional than formal equivalence. The NLT, CEV, and NIV are more strongly thought-for-thought approaches.

As the name suggests, **Paraphrases** rephrase and restructure sentences from the original text to enhance clarity and accessibility for a modern audience. In other words, paraphrases fall on the end of the thought-for-thought spectrum.

Examples: The Message and the Living Bible are paraphrased versions of the Bible. The Amplified Bible is, too, although it is unique in being a word-for-word paraphrase, where it provides multiple meanings of many words to help illustrate their various meanings.

Bible Study

Exercise 7 - Do You Have a Favorite Way to Study The Bible?

Bring up the subject of how to study the Bible and you will probably find as many possible answers as there are people in the room. First we must not make the mistake of the Pharisees and make Bible study legalistic. By this I mean that we should study the Bible because we want to spend time with the Lord and not out of some sort of ritual or because we feel like we need to do this to be a Christian. The Lord wants us to be excited to hear His Word, to be in His presence, and to hear what He has to say to us. As we learned earlier, the Bible is one of God's most prominent ways He reveals Himself to us.

Some people like to approach Bible study in a more structured method while others a less structured or more informal approach. Bible study should not be a one approach for all because God has made us all unique. One thing we do all have in common because God made us that way is a desire to know Him and His ways and plan for our lives. With that in mind let's take a look at some possible ways to study the Bible and some references or supporting material that can help in our studies.

Bible Study Methods

Our time in Bible study can be a very precious time in our day; one that leaves us with assurance that God is in control even though the world is chaotic, knowing that we have a Savior that loves us and He has a plan for our lives, even today when it may be a difficult day. For that reason, most people begin their day with a study or devotional (quiet) time first thing in the morning. That being said, I do know some people who spend their quiet time with the Lord in the afternoon. The important thing is that you spend time with the Lord daily.

As discussed earlier there are numerous methods of Bible study, so many that there are even Bibles to go along with some of the Bible study methods. We will not have time to go into all the approaches, so I have selected three types of studies to review: inductive, expositional, and devotional. You can easily research additional types of studies on the internet.

The Inductive Method

The Inductive Bible Study Method is a process by which you make observations of a passage and draw conclusions from those observations. The questions at the heart of this

approach typically follow the five Ws (and one H) approach many of us learned in elementary school:

- Who (who is speaking; who is the intended audience; who is present in the moment, etc.)
- What (what is this passage about; what problem is this addressing; what is happening; what is being said; what commands need to be obeyed, etc.)
- When (when is this event taking place?)
- Where (where is this event taking place, where does it fit in the larger context of the book and Scripture?)
- Why (why is this message needed, why is it relevant today?)
- How (how does this change what I know about God and humanity; how do I apply this to my life so that I can live more faithfully as a follower of Jesus?)

Many popular Bible study methods are variations of this tried-and-true approach. Kay Arthur uses an inductive study. It's also important to note that an inductive Bible study doesn't require asking all of these types of questions every time. All you need are the passages that help you to best understand the meaning of the message and apply it.

The Expositional Method

Expositional Bible study means studying individual Bible books verse by verse, using observation, interpretation, and application. The benefit of this method is that it reveals the flow of the author's thoughts throughout the book, which contributes to a more accurate understanding of individual verses. This method requires more thinking about how verses relate to each other but leads to greater understanding in the long run. Bible commentaries are especially helpful with this method.

The Devotional Method

Many Christians use the phrase "having my quiet time with the Lord" when referring to the devotional method. This type of study is less technical than the others and is primarily for personal inspiration and encouragement to deepen our relationship with God, drawing near to Him so that He might draw near to us. Bible reading, prayer, and perhaps reading a devotional book with a brief message are normally a part of devotions.

Meditation is a normal part of the devotional method. This is the practice of pondering and reflecting on the meaning of God's words and works and their application to our lives. Anyone who has received a letter from a loved one who is far away understands the meaning

of meditation. We read and reread the contents and then think about them. The psalmist said, “I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways” (Psalm 119:15).

Our meditation hopefully carries on throughout the day as we consider how God’s Word applies to our particular daily activities. Blessing waits for those who delight in the law of the Lord and meditate on it day and night (Psalm 1:2).

Meditation can be greatly aided by memorization of God’s Word. Being able to retrieve scripture from memory is useful when we’re discouraged; we’re able to ponder the uplifting promises of God. “I remembered Your judgments of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself ” (Psalm 119:52). The devotional method of study prepares us to meet each day with the knowledge that we have been redeemed by Christ and that He’ll strengthen us to do His will.

Resources

No matter what method you choose you may also find it helpful to have some resources that give you insight into the Scriptures. Here is a list of some reference materials:

- Study Bibles - A great way to gain understanding and application as most study Bibles will give you historical, cultural, and literary context of the passage(s). Many times difficult to understand passages will be explained, important ideas will be highlighted, questions will be asked that will help you apply the Scriptures to your life.
- Cross References in your Bible - Cross references are notes that direct readers to other Bible passages that relate to a specific verse. They can be found in the margins, footnotes, or body of the Bible text.
- Concordances - An alphabetical list of words and phrases in the Bible, along with the Bible references where they appear. Concordances can be used to study the Bible, understand the meaning of words, and locate passages. Many Bibles have a concordance in the back of the Bible and more extensive ones are available online or in separate books.
- Bible Dictionary - Reference books that contain definitions and other information on key words in Scripture like people’s names, biblical and cultural concepts, doctrine, animals, people, places—even plants. Bible dictionaries are similar to an encyclopedia. Words are arranged alphabetically, and dictionaries are typically based on a specific Bible

translation.

- Word Study - Allows you to study the meaning of biblical words in the original languages.
- Charts and Maps - Resource to understand the geography of an area, charts and overviews of topics, timelines and much more helpful information.
- Commentaries - A study companion for the Bible. They provide passage by passage interpretation and explanation of books of the Bible. They can come in the form of a commentary for the entire Bible or just a book of the Bible.
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Exercise 8 - Reflection on Bible Study

Has this study changed anything about your Bible study or time with the Lord? Take a few minutes and write down any gems you gathered along the way and any changes you will make.

All of these methods of Bible study that we have discussed and many others are great ways to gain better understanding of the Bible and get to know the Lord better. The methods or portions of the methods can be used for different types of studies that you may want to do and can even be used together. Some people even use a mixture of these methods personalizing with practices that are helpful to them. One of the most important things to remember when studying the Bible is to open in prayer to ask God to spend time with you, praise Him for all He has done in your life, and ask Him to fill you with meaning of His Word. May your time with the Lord be blessed!

Answers to the Exercises

Exercise 1: What is Your Favorite Bible Translation & Why

Answers vary

Exercise 2: Match the ancient Greek Manuscript with the Year it was Written

Sinaitic Manuscript - AD 340

Vatican Manuscript - AD 350

Alexandrian Manuscript - AD 450

Ephraim Manuscript - AD 450

Exercise 3: A Walk Through How We Got The Bible

Answers are in reverse order

Exercise 4: How many Modern Translations of the Bible?

How many modern day versions of the Bible do you think there are? 450+

How many languages has the Bible been printed in? 2,000+

Exercise 5: Purpose for Some Common Bible Translations

NLT, NASB, KJV, NIV, MSG, NKJ

Exercise 6: What are some of the most common Bible Translations today?

See chart with Exercise 6

Exercise 7: Do You Have A Favorite Way To Study The Bible?

Answers will vary

Exercise 8 - Reflection on Bible Study

Answers will vary

References

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