
THE BIBLE

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I. Overview of the Bible

The Bible “book” is a library of 66 individual books written by 40 different men, inspired by the Holy Spirit, over a period of 1,500 years. According to Scripture, its author is God (Exod. 24:12, 25:1; Ezek. 5:5, 11; 2 Samuel 23:2; Jer. 1:9). This library is separated into two major divisions: The Old Testament and The New Testament. Each division contains four sections.

The Old Testament

... contains four sections: The Law, History, Poetry, and Prophets, for a total of 39 books.

The Law covers the history of the Jews from Creation until the death of Moses. 1450 BC. It was written by Moses.

Genesis		Exodus		Leviticus		Numbers		Deuteronomy
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History describes the history of Israel from Joshua through the Kings through Captivity to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. It covers the period of 1450 to 440 BC.

Joshua		Judges		Ruth		1Sam.		2Sam.		1Kings		2Kings		1Chron.		2Chron.		Ezra		Neh.		Esther
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Poetry includes the ancient writings of Job 1500 BC, David 1000 BC and Solomon 950 BC.

Job		Psalms		Proverbs		Ecclesiastes		Song of Solomon
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Prophecy: Major Prophets were written by four men from 750 to 550BC.

Isaiah		Jeremiah		Lamentations		Ezekiel		Daniel
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Minor Prophets were written by various prophets from 800 to 400 BC.

Hosea		Joel		Amos		Obad.		Jonah		Micah		Nahum		Hab.		Zeph.		Haggai		Zech.		Mal.
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The New Testament

... contains four sections: Gospels, History, Letters (Epistles), and Prophecy, for a total of 27 books.

The Gospels (“Good News”) are about the life of Jesus 4 BC to AD 30 and were written by four men to four audiences from AD 45 to 70.

Matthew/Jews		Mark/Romans		Luke/Gentiles		John/nonbelievers
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The History book is called “Acts,” describing the activities of the church. AD 30 to 63; written by Luke in AD 63 (to Theophilus).

Acts

The Epistles or **Letters** were written from leaders to churches or individuals from AD 55 to 65. The first thirteen were written by the apostle Paul.

Romans	1 Cor.	2 Cor.	Gal.	Eph.	Phil.	Col.
1 Thess.	2 Thess.	1 Tim.	2 Tim.	Titus	Philem.	
Hebrews	James	1 Peter	2 Peter	1 John	2 John	3 John Jude

The **Prophecy** book is a revelation of Jesus to the disciple John depicting primarily the future; written in AD 95.

Revelation

The Bible Is Also . . .

- the most sold book in the world (Two million copies each year for the past 100 years).
- the most read, studied, and memorized book in the world.
- the most published book in the world (2,000 languages and dialects).
- the most quoted book in the world.
- the most cussed and discussed book in the world.
- the most influential book in the world.
- the most inspiring book in the world.
- the most reliable ancient book in the world.
- the most accurate book in the world.
- the most honest book in the world.
- the most unstoppable, indestructible book in the world.
- the most unique book in the world.
- the most interesting book in the world.
- the most important book in the world.

How to Find Things in the Bible

1. To find the books of the Bible use the Table of Contents. "The table of contents is my friend."
2. To find a specific chapter and verses think of an address. Example: 2 Timothy 3:16; John 3:16; Psalm 23:1.

city	book	2 Timothy	John	Psalm
Street	Chapter	3	3	23
use number	Verse	16	16	1

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (NIV).

II. Names of the Bible

The Bible is used as the basis and authority of the Christian faith. The Bible uses other terms to identify itself.

A. **Word of God.** 1 Peter 1:23; 1 Thess. 2:12

B. **Living Oracles or Oracles of God.** An oracle is a message handed down from a divine being or source. Acts 7:38; Rom. 3:2; Deut. 32:47,cd. Heb. 4:12

C. **The Holy Scripture.** "Sacred writings" Matt. 21:42; Mark 14:49; Luke 24:32; John 5:39; Acts 18:24; Rom. 1:2; Rom. 15:4; 2Tim. 3:15

III. The Bible – Its Value

The Bible is of great importance to both the Christian and the lost.

A. Its value to the lost

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. We are begotten by the Word. | 1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18 |
| 2. We are saved by the Word. | James 1:21 |
| 3. Faith comes through the Word. | Rom. 10:17 |

B. Its value to the saved

The Word of God:

1. **is a means of Spiritual growth.** It is food to his soul. A neglect of the study of the Word makes spiritual weaklings. Job 23:12; Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32; 1 Peter 2:2
2. **is a light which directs the spiritual paths.** Ps.119:105, 130
3. **cleans believers from defilement of sin.** The Word keeps us clean, set apart or sanctified for God's use. Ps. 119:9; John 15:3; John 17:17; Heb. 9:14; 1 John 1:7
4. **prevents Christians from sinning.** Ps. 119:11
The Word will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from the Word.

5. **is powerful.** Rom. 1:16; Heb. 4:12
6. **is a weapon in spiritual warfare.** Eph. 6:11-17. When Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus used the Word of God (Matt. 4:1-11).
7. **A thorough knowledge of the Word gives confidence and courage to the soul winner.**

IV. How to Read and Understand the Bible

Christians are commanded to study the Word of God daily (Rom. 10:17; John 5:39; Acts 17:11).

Here are a few principles of correct study that will make the Bible more intelligible and meaningful.

Determine who is speaking. God, Satan, Balaam's mule or the fool.

To whom is the Word speaking. To Christians or alien sinners?

Of what does it speak? What is the content -- What goes before and what follows this particular passage?

When does it speak? Is the passage written for those living in the Patriarchal age, or the Mosaic age, or the Christian age? God dealt with His people in different ways during each period.

Most important, the Christian should follow God's instructions for him today.

V. The Word – Sacred and Eternal

God's Word is eternal (Ps. 119:89; Isa. 40:8; Matt. 24:35). The Bible should be handled with the utmost reverence, not altered. Deut. 4:2; Deut. 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18,19

Man to his own peril adds to God's Word or takes from it or neglects it. If we obey God's Word, it will save us. If we disobey, it will condemn us (Col. 3:16). May we heed the Word of Paul and let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly (Col. 3:16a).

QUESTIONS – THE BIBLE

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. The word Bible means _____
2. An oracle is _____

3. Who is the author of the Bible? _____
4. Who directed men as they wrote the Scriptures? (2 Peter 1:21)

5. The Bible was written over a period of _____ years
on _____ continents by some _____
human writers.
6. How long will God's Word endure? (Ps. 119:89; Isa. 40:8)

7. How powerful is God's Word? (Heb. 4:12) _____

8. What weapon is the Bible used as in spiritual warfare? (Eph. 6:17)

9. What effect will God's Word have upon one's life? _____
Ps. 119:9 _____
Ps. 119:11 _____
Ps. 119:105 _____
10. Why should we search the Scriptures?
Rom. 10:17 _____
John 5:9 _____

11. How often should we search the Scriptures? (Acts 17:11)