

Googling God



What is the Bible?



The Bible is a collection of 66 smaller books that are about God and his relationship with people.

The Bible was written by people, but inspired by God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work. NET

2 Peter 1:20-21 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. ²¹For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. NIV

Acts 5:15 As a result of the apostles' work, sick people were brought out into the streets on beds and mats so that Peter's shadow might fall across some of them as he went by.

The New Testament was compiled by the early church.

There were many books about Jesus and religious matters. The church had to decide if each book was inspired by God, good but not inspired, or a false teaching (heretical).

There were three major tests of authenticity:

1. It must be written by a prophet, apostle, or close associate.
2. The writing could not disagree with other Scripture.
3. There needed to be consensus that it was an inspired book.

Undisputed books (homologoumena): 20/27 books. 87% of the verses in the NT.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 1 Peter, 1 John

Disputed books that made it (antilegomena): 7/27 books. 13% of the verses in the NT.

- Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2&3 John, Jude, Revelation
- Hebrews: Anonymous
- James: Potential conflict with Paul's writings on justification by faith
- 2 Peter: Most questioned book. Stylistic differences in writing compared to 1 Peter
- 2&3 John: Limited circulation and directed to a more private audience
- Jude: Refers to the Pseudepigraphal Book of Enoch
- Revelation: Readily accepted by the Apostolic Fathers. Controversy over Millennialism/chiliasm

Disputed books that were rejected by everyone (pseudepigrapha).

Includes nearly 300 books including: Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Peter, The Acts of Peter, etc.

Disputed books that were accepted by some (Apocrypha)

Epistle of Pseudo-Barnabas, Ancient Homily (Second Epistle of Clement), Shepherd of Hermas, Apocalypse of Peter, The Acts of Paul and Thecla, and the Epistle to the Laodiceans

Archaeology confirms the existence of many of the people, places, and events mentioned in the Bible.

- Other cultures describe events that have parallels to biblical accounts.
 - Creation (Babylonian accounts and Assyrian “Creation Epic”)
 - Flood accounts (Gilgamesh Epic and 30 other accounts)
 - Tower of Babel (Ziggurat of King Ur-Nammu)
- Numerous times the Bible has been the only record of a person or place that was later confirmed through archaeology.
 - King David, the Hittites (1000 clay tablets), Solomon, Pilate, etc.
- There are countless other archeological finds that corroborate the biblical account
 - Absalom’s pillar, Jacob’s well, Nineveh (Sennacherib’s prism), The Moabite Stone, Jericho, Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, Pool of Siloam, Herod’s tomb, Lystra, Mars Hill, Corinthian doorway lintel, Erastus paving stone, Temple of Artemis in Ephesus, Theater in Ephesus, Goliath shard, and a Philistine temple.
- Some of the language of the Bible indicates that it was written shortly after the events unfolded rather than decades or centuries later.
 - Census at the time of Jesus
 - Terms used for officials such as “Publius” and “proconsul”

Prophecies in the Bible are evidence of supernatural input into the Bible.

- Cyrus, Josiah, Tyre, Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel chapter 11 (the four kings), and the restoration of Israel (Isaiah 11:11-12; May 1948).
- Prophecies of Christ are numerous – Especially Psalm 22, Isa. 53, and Dan. 9 (identifying the time of Jesus’ birth)

The Bible is a trustworthy and accurate historical document.

- The New Testament has the shortest span between the original and the existing copies of any ancient manuscript.
- It has the largest number of ancient copies.
- The Dead Sea Scrolls help confirm the incredible accuracy of the Old Testament text (including Isaiah 53)
- Writings of the early church provide quotations of nearly all of the New Testament. This proves minimal corruption from the early copies.
- The historicity of Jesus is confirmed by non-Christian sources such as Pliny the Younger, Tacitus, Flavius Josephus, Thallus, Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Babylonian Talmud*, Lucian, Celcus, and *The Acts of Pilate*.

The followers of Jesus provide eyewitness accounts of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

- They wrote things that are completely out of line for someone who is trying to deceive or create a following.
- Peter (2 Peter 1:16-18, 1 Peter 5:1), John (John 21:24, 1 John 1:1-4, 1 John 4:14), and Paul (1 Corinthians 15:3-8) gave eyewitness testimony of their interactions with Jesus.
- Luke gives a “carefully investigated” and “orderly” account. (Luke 1:1-4)
- The disciples and Bible writers had nothing to gain.
- The disciples held to their account of Jesus even to the point of death.

The Bible is useful for...

- Applying to our daily lives
James 1:22 But be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves. NET
- Sustenance—food for spiritual life
Matthew 4:4 But [Jesus] answered, “It is written, ‘Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” NET
- Meaningfully touching our inner being
Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing even to the point of dividing soul from spirit, and joints from marrow; it is able to judge the desires and thoughts of the heart. NET
- Discovering how to get eternal life.
John 5:24 [Jesus said,] “I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life. NET