



## Lesson 3

### THE BIBLE OUR GUIDE

Reading Psalm 119:1 - 40

#### The Bible's Claims

The Bible claims to be the Word of God. It says that *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God"* (2 Timothy 3:16). The word "inspiration" means 'God-breathed'. God guided men so that they wrote His message. Many times the Old Testament prophets say, *"Thus saith the Lord"*.

If the Bible is not the Word of God then it is not important; but if it really is God's message to man, then it is vital that we read it and try to do what it says. If we ignore the Bible message, we are ignoring the Creator of the Universe.

#### How Do We Know The Bible Is True?

##### The Bible foretells the future

We cannot be sure what will happen tomorrow. The Bible, in a number of places said what would happen in the future—even hundreds of years before the event happened. These prophecies have come true—even to the little details.

Here are some examples:

##### 1. The birth of Jesus

In Matthew 2 we read that the wise men came to Herod and asked, *"Where is he that is born King of the Jews?"* Now Herod asked the chief priests this question, and they answered, *"In Bethlehem of Judea"*. How did they know? Because, hundreds of years before, it had been prophesied in one of the books of the Old Testament - Micah 5:2.

##### 2. The death of Jesus

Turn to Psalm 22 and read it carefully. In this Psalm there is a description of the crucifixion of Jesus. Notice the end of verse 16 - *"they pierced my hands and my feet"*. Look again at verse 18 - *"they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."*

Now if you read John 19:23 - 24, you will see that is exactly what the soldiers did after they had crucified Jesus. How could the writer foretell the death of Jesus so long before it took place, unless he was inspired by God?

This is especially remarkable, because in the days of the Psalmist the Jews knew nothing of crucifixion - they put their criminals to death by stoning.

##### 3 Great events foretold

Read Isaiah 13:19 - 20. At the time when the prophet Isaiah wrote these words about Babylon, it was the greatest nation in the world; glorious and powerful. Now, where Babylon once stood, there are only ruins in a semi-desert area. Many hundreds of years after it was given, the prophecy of Isaiah came to pass just as he had foretold. Only God could have foreseen that such a tremendous change would take place. There are many examples like these. Only God Himself can see into the future, and the prophecies recorded in the Bible prove that God told men what to write.

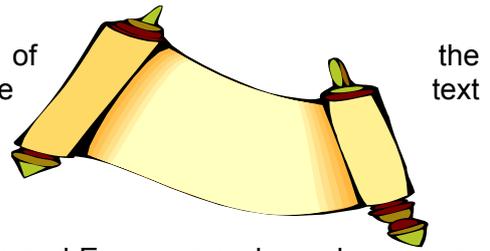
#### Archaeologists have found evidence of many things spoken of in the Bible

Archaeologists have found that Sodom and Gomorrah did exist (Genesis 19).

So did Ai, Ashkelon, Bethel, Beth-shemesh, Gibeah, Hazor, Jericho, Lachish, Megiddo, Samaria, Shechem, and many more that are mentioned in the Bible.

## The Bible has not changed over the centuries

Amongst the Dead Sea scrolls found in 1947 was one of book of Isaiah. It was written nearly 2,000 years ago. The is almost the same as the book of Isaiah that we have today. The Bible message has not changed with time!



## Jesus believed the Old Testament

There are people today who laugh at the idea that Adam and Eve were real people, or that Noah built an ark and took all those animals on board. They think they know better than to believe a story like Jonah being swallowed by a big fish. **But Jesus believed these things!**

Jesus believed Old Testament teaching about...

Adam and Eve	Matthew 19:4,5
Noah and the Flood	Luke 17:26,27
Lot and his wife	Luke 17:29-32
Abraham, Isaac and Jacob	Matthew 8:11
David and Solomon	Matthew 12:3,42
Jonah and the great fish	Matthew 12:40

We cannot ignore the views of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was brought back to life by God after he had been dead for three days. This is a fact of history, which most reasonable people accept. Such a miracle could only have been performed by the power of God.

## No-one has ever proved the Bible false

Many enemies of the Bible, including some very clever men, have tried to do this, but they have all failed. If we stop to think about this, we have to admit that it is remarkable.

## Did You Know?

- \* The Bible took over 2,000 years to write.
- \* It was written by shepherds, kings, fishermen, a doctor, a tent-maker and others.
- \* It has 66 books; 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.
- \* All the writers combine to give us one complete story-the story of God's purpose with men.
- \* Nearly all the writers were Jews.
- \* Much of the Bible is about the Jewish people.
- \* Here is a quick guide to show you what is in the various parts of the Bible:

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

Book	What is it about?
GENESIS	The beginning of the world and of God's dealings with the first man.
EXODUS LEVITICUS NUMBERS DEUTERONOMY	These books tell us how God chose the Jews to be His people and took them out of Egypt and gave them the land of Canaan (Israel).
JOSHUA to ESTHER	The history of the Jewish people is continued in these books.
PSALMS to SONG OF SOLOMON	These are books of poetry and wisdom.
ISAIAH to MALACHI	Books of the prophets. They told the Jews how they needed to obey God and they also spoke about many important events which were to happen in the history of the world. (Some of these are still coming true in our time and some are still future.)

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW MARK LUKE JOHN	These are 4 separate accounts of the life of Christ, his death, and resurrection from the dead.
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES	This is about the first churches (or ecclesias) that were formed and how these First Century Christians organised themselves. (They should be a guide for us today.)
ROMANS to JUDE	Various letters written by apostles to help the young churches.
REVELATION	A book of prophecy.

(If you want a complete list of the books of the Bible, you will find it in the front pages of your Bible.)

### **Are there other written revelations from God?**

The answer to this question is, "No". There are many religions in the world, and most have their 'holy book'. The Muslims, for example, have the Koran, which they regard as God's Word. The Mormons have the 'Book of Mormon', which they say was sent to them by God.

Some of these books take part of their teaching from the Bible; some give wise and sensible advice, but in many places these books do not agree with the Bible message.

Now it is quite clear that God would not say one thing in one book, and something different in another. Only one can be the inspired Word of God. The Bible claims to be this Word.

### **The Bible - Man's guide for living**

God saw the sorry state that sinful man was in and sent His Son, Jesus, to die so that people can have hope of eternal life. Jesus Christ also showed us how to live a life that is pleasing to God. The Bible has other examples of men of faith. It also shows us how some failed and the story of the Jewish people enables us to learn from their mistakes.

### **Finally**

It's a tremendous thought that God in heaven has given us a book so that we may come to know Him, and live as He wants us to. He has actually told men and women in this book why He made the world, and what its history will be, right up to the time when the Gospel will be fulfilled, and God will be all in all.

The Bible is the guide God has given us, showing us the way to everlasting life in His Kingdom. There is no other book like it. It is not a dead text book - it is a living Word. If we read it every day, carefully and prayerfully, it will transform our lives, and make them pleasing to God.

### **Summary**

1. The Bible is unique. It claims to be God's Word to men and women.
2. It offers to men and women a hope of life.
3. Jesus believed the Old Testament Scriptures.
4. There are many proofs that it is true: its history is proved by modern discoveries; it contains many prophecies that have been fulfilled.
5. It tells the story of God's dealings with men, from the creation of the first man to the time when the earth will be filled with the glory of God.
6. It is God's gift to us, showing us the way of life. We should read it every day.

### **Verses to read:**

Psalm 1; Psalm 22; 2 Timothy 3.

### **Learn by heart:**

2 Timothy 3:16 - 17.

"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, throughly furnished unto all good works."