



# Discover Your Bible

ARTICLE REPRINT SERIES



# DISCOVER YOUR BIBLE

**T**HE book called "The Holy Bible" is the most maligned, criticized, and misused book ever compiled. "You can prove *anything* by the Bible," is a commonly held belief. No volume in history has ever been subjected to so much scrutiny as this Book of books. Is the Bible really of any relevance in the 20th century? Should you bother to read and study it? Can it be relied upon as an accurate guide for living? These questions cry out for answers in an age when seemingly nothing is sacred.

**What Is the Bible?** Is the Bible merely a collection of Hebrew and Greek religious literature? Is there more to the Bible than simple human wisdom and folklore? Is there anything truly supernatural about this ancient Book?

Speaking more specifically of the Old Testament, the apostle Paul explained to the young evangelist Timothy: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness . . ." (II Tim. 3:16).

The words of the Bible are inspired by God—they are "God-breathed." The Bible is the word of God in print. You might say it is the "Maker's Instruction Book." It is the manual by which the human creation is to be operated.

God's written Word explains why the Creator created human beings. It instructs us how to live. It gives instructions on how to handle emergencies and breakdowns—both physically and spiritually speaking. The Bible explains how any person may realize his *maximum potential* as a human being—how he may achieve "self-actualization."

Nor is the Bible an ordinary book. It is unique in that it contains *revealed* knowledge. It includes information man could not normally obtain by conventional investigation.

An inscription on one of the buildings of Ambassador College sums up the real purpose of the Bible: *The Word of God is the Foundation of Knowledge*. It is the basis by which

all other knowledge may be evaluated. It is the standard, the only really reliable point of reference. While the Bible does not contain all scientific and technical knowledge, it does contain the philosophical basis for correctly placing such information in its right perspective.

The Maker's Instruction Manual helps crack open the understanding of history. It sheds light on the real significance of the human chronicle. Neither history nor science can be correctly understood without the revealed basis of Biblical light. Yet the Bible is neither a science textbook or a comprehensive history text.

Human behavior cannot be correctly interpreted apart from the Bible. Why do we see evil? What is sin? What is good? What is normal and what is deviant? Only the Word of God can supply the true answers to these important questions.

And what lies ahead for mankind? Will we survive the present direction the human race is taking? Will there be a brighter day tomorrow—or oblivion? The Bible reveals the answers to these and other crucial questions with which humanity is faced.

**The Bible—a Deadly Weapon!** While the Word of God does use the term "two-edged sword" in self-description, some unscrupulous men have used it as a *club* over the heads of gullible "believers." Dishonest men, claiming to represent God, have twisted scriptures to their own ends and advantage. They have capitalized on the ignorance of the masses of Biblical illiterates. Peter spoke of such individuals:

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things [new heavens and a new earth] be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they *that are unlearned*

*and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction"* (II Peter 3:14-16).

Notice, it is those who are *unlearned* and *unstable* who twist scriptures! The word "unlearned" is translated from the Greek *amatheis* which refers to someone who is rude in knowledge and *uninstructed*. Such people are uneducated in what the Bible really says. They are unstable in the faith of Jesus Christ—lacking a solid relationship with God.

Many have been prevented from understanding the Bible because they have not been willing to be *corrected* by Scripture (II Tim. 3:16). "... A good understanding have all they that *do his commandments*" (Ps. 111:10).

Those who read and don't *do*, rarely understand!

**The Sadducees' Problem.** This appears to have been the problem with a group of religious leaders in Christ's day known as the Sadducees. The Sadducees were men very learned in the *forms* of contemporary religion. Yet they lacked understanding with regard to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. They were reasoning with Jesus about the mechanical difficulties of such an event. The account is quite revealing:

"Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection. . . ." They then asked Jesus whose wife a woman would be if she had been married to seven successive brothers, all of whom were deceased. Jesus was quick to isolate their problem: "Do ye not therefore err, *because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?*" (Mark 12:18-24.)

And as Matthew's account puts it: "Ye do err, *not knowing the scriptures*" (Matt. 22:29).

While the Sadducees were highly educated by contemporary standards, they were actually unlearned in the Scriptures.

The real problem is the fact that men pay lip service to God's way, but are not really willing to simply obey Him! Isaiah 29:13 points this out:

“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and *their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.*”

Jesus Christ later quoted this very scripture to show the Scribes and the Pharisees their real problem: All the human rhetoric, tradition and ceremony in the world is no substitute for the pure truth of God’s Word! Only a knowledge of, and obedience to, the Bible will provide the real base needed for true conversion and spirituality.

The world of theology is in a sad state. There are as many theories as there are people to propound them! Few things are considered axiomatic. Priests, ministers, rabbis and theologians of all stripes have sometimes served up a tableful of theological inconsistencies.

And when some few theologians can seriously consider and propound the idea that God is *dead*, you know that all is not completely well in the world of theological scholarship!

**Who May Understand?** To whom will God reveal the simple truth of His Word? Can the “unlearned” average person come to understand the deep spiritual truths of the Bible?

Paul said to the Church of God in Corinth: “I fear, lest by any means . . . your minds should be corrupted from the *simplicity* that is in Christ” (II Cor. 11:3).

Granted, there are some things that are more difficult to understand in the Bible. Not everything is childishly simple. But the basics are. Those fundamental principles in which every Christian should be well-grounded are not really that difficult to grasp—with the help of God’s Spirit.

It is necessary to first come to understand the simpler principles of the Bible. The more advanced “meat” of the Word *follows* later.

But God reveals basic truth to those who are humble as a child—to those who *tremble* at His Word. This is explained in Isaiah 66:2: “. . . But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and *trembleth at my word.*”

Jesus said only those who had the

humility of a small child would ever enter into the Kingdom of God! And this is the attitude one must have toward God and His Word before one can progress spiritually.

Once an attitude of respect for the Bible is developed, then one must learn step by step—from simple to complex—the fundamentals of the Maker’s Instruction Book. All the scriptures on a subject must be compared and considered together. No scripture is of any private interpretation (II Pet. 1:20).

## The Book Nobody Knows!

**More than seven million Bibles were sold last year. Scores of different publishing companies print this Book and the total number of hundreds of millions of copies printed and distributed is impossible to estimate. It has now been translated into 1400 different languages.**

**The Bible consistently is every year’s best seller by a very wide margin, yet it is little read. It is the most-printed, most-purchased, most freely distributed and certainly least-understood book known to man! You need to know this Book; to know it you have to read and study it.**

**But how? What are the best methods? To answer these questions, we have published a booklet explaining what you need to know. Request *How to Study the Bible.***

**How God Revealed Truth.** The Bible has come into being through a *developmental* process over the centuries. God did not give the whole story in a single package at the outset. He has revealed truth on a number of subjects more or less piecemeal over the millennia. Human experience has provided a rich chronicle of case histories. The *basic law* of God has been in force since creation week, but God has progressively explained its *application* as new situations have arisen.

Much of the Bible is a record of

what has happened when God’s great law of love has been violated—both individually and nationally. The entire Bible really rotates around the two great principles of the Decalogue—love toward God and love toward neighbor. God intends that we should learn from the record contained in the Bible.

**The Lessons of Biblical History.** If there’s one thing we may learn from history, it’s the fact that we haven’t learned from history! Humanity today seems to continue in the same path it has for millennia. We make the same mistakes with the same results. Yet, if man would only learn from history, we would not have to repeat it!

Speaking of the recorded biblical events, the apostle Paul stated: “It all happened to them *by way of warning* for others, and *it was written down for the purpose of instructing us* whose lot has been cast in the closing hours of the world” (I Cor. 10:11, Moffatt translation).

Again, speaking of the Old Testament record, Paul said: “*All such words were written of old for our instruction*, that by remaining steadfast and drawing encouragement from the scriptures we may cherish hope” (Rom. 15:4, Moffatt).

God has laid bare the lives of those with whom He has worked over the centuries so that those who read and study their Bibles might learn and avoid the mistakes made in the past. The Bible contains an imposing assemblage of case histories of human behavior! No wonder the Apostle Paul called the Scriptures “living oracles”!

**Your Best Insurance Against Error.** A thorough knowledge of your Bible is the best insurance you have against being led astray into doctrinal error. The strident voices of those who claim to represent God are being raised everywhere. How can you know who does and who does not really represent Him? Simply by getting your nose into the Maker’s Instruction Book! Read it. Study it. Drink deeply of its teaching and examples. Become familiar with it. Pray and ask God to help you understand His Word.

If you do so, you will be able to say along with David: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105). □



# THE WORLD'S MOST CONTROVERSIAL BOOK

*The Bible is frequently misunderstood, often maligned, misused, ridiculed, twisted and even, to some, a source of embarrassment. Yet the Western world owes more to this misunderstood book than most realize or would care to admit.*

What would the world be like today without the Bible? What if there were no collection of books called the Holy Scriptures? What if there were no written revelations to set moral and spiritual standards for man's various activities?

Few ever think of the Bible as a practical book. Few ever pause to consider the profound and very positive impact of the complete Bible on both the early and contemporary history of our Western world. Some claim, and rightly so, that Biblical passages have been continuously misused and misappropriated to justify almost every evil known to man—including the use of scripture as a shield for murder: e.g., the "Christian" Crusades and the Spanish Inquisition.

But the fault has been with men who misunderstood or misused scripture—not with the God who wrote it.

Without the Bible we would possess virtually no written record of Jesus Christ. Scanty secular accounts are only significant because of the availability of the four gospels which amplify Christ's biography. He is the Son of God, and the ultimate Christian example we should follow.

Notice what nineteenth century historian, W. E. H. Lecky, wrote about Jesus Christ. "The character of Jesus has not only been the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice, and has exerted so deep an influence, that it may be truly said, that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind, than all the disquisitions of philosophers and than all the exhortations of moralists" (*History of European Morals*, vol. II, p. 88).

It is basically only through the "minibiographies" of Matthew,

Mark, Luke and John that the outstanding character of Jesus Christ is made evident to anybody who would be willing to pick up a New Testament, open its pages and begin to read about the kind of man Christ really was.

**The Two Testaments.** Many who read popular parts of the Bible content themselves with purchasing and possessing the New Testament alone, but without the Old Testament, the New Testament is robbed of its real roots.

Much of the New Testament is composed of both direct and paraphrased citations from the Old. On the other hand, the Old Testament, by itself, stops considerably short of the full and complete revelation of God's plan for all mankind, and of the individual central to it—Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

The Jewish documents forming the Old Testament, though composed and edited over a period of nearly 1,500 years, are found to be remarkably related to one another. Vital portions of the Law, residing in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), are found time and again in the prophets and writings which follow.

Jesus Himself put His stamp of approval on the Old Testament.

Notice Luke's record of what Christ said: "Beginning with Moses [the Pentateuch] and all the prophets, he interpreted to them *in all the scriptures* the things concerning himself . . . Then he said to them, 'These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand *the scriptures* [meaning the Old

Testament. Not a single New Testament book was written at the time Jesus spoke these words] . . ." (Luke 24:27, 44-45; Revised Standard Version used throughout this article).

**Christ Foreseen by Moses.** Jesus Christ is the tie that binds the Old and New Testaments together. Says British scholar F. F. Bruce: "... There is a unity that binds the whole [of the Bible] together . . . The unifying principle which makes the Bible a living book has already been pointed out: it is Christ Himself, the bringer of salvation" (*The Books and the Parchments*, p. 88).

A true understanding of the role of Jesus begins with the writings of Moses. Luke recorded it in Acts 7:37: "This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, God will raise up for you a prophet [Jesus Christ] from your brethren as he raised me up" (cf. Deut. 18:15).

Moses set a pattern of predictive prophecy about Christ that runs continuously through the threads of the Old Testament. Without Moses, and especially without David (in the Psalms) and all the prophets, the coming of the Messiah would have been totally unexpected and completely unheralded. The Magi of Matthew and the shepherds of Luke (see Matt. 2 and Luke 2) would hardly have believed the angels and come to worship the young Jesus had they not *first understood* the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament.

**The Wisdom Books.** Even down-to-earth, no-nonsense businessmen who freely admit that the spiritual theme of the Biblical records escapes them have benefited immensely from the practical, day-to-day wisdom of the Book of Proverbs. Who in busi-

ness could deny the principle that "a slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich" (Prov. 10:4)? What thinking banker or lender would honestly quarrel with: "The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave to the lender" (Prov. 22:7)?

Or in today's sea of books emanating from the publishing explosion, what student would be able to gain-say the statement that: "Of making many books, there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh" (Eccl. 12:12)!

**Bible Prophecy.** Without the prophetic books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Revelation and the twelve "minor" prophets, we would know comparatively nothing of the sequence of events preceding Christ's second coming and the utopian conditions of the world tomorrow. But through these prophetic books we are given a skeletal framework of future events. There are certain *keys* to understanding Biblical prophecy, and they are not at all mysterious or hard

to understand. It just takes a little bit of effort and of your time.

**Man's Instruction Book.** The Bible, in its true perspective, is an instruction manual *from* the Creator *to* His Creation. God, through His Word, tells us what we are, how to live, and how and when we may achieve our ultimate human potential. The Bible spells out vital knowledge which is missing from our schools, and even our churches—revealed knowledge for which there is no substitute.

True, no man understands the Bible perfectly and completely. There are textual difficulties and so-called "contradictions" with which scholars are still wrestling. But God exhorts us to "grow in grace and in knowledge"—and through this process, by the study of His Word, our understanding of His Word also grows.

The Bible remains the Bible—the most unique book in all of history! Many books written *about* the Bible are now forever out-of-print. But the Bible continues to be the best seller in

the Western world. It remains in more different languages than any other single book. It remains the guiding document of those who follow the true Christian faith. □

## Buying The Right Bible (For You)

*The Revised Standard Version:* Perhaps the best modern version of the Bible and maybe even the best of all translations overall. Under continuing revision.

*The King James Version:* An excellent historical Bible. Because of its outdated 1611 English, it is helpful to compare it to a more modern version when using it as a study Bible.

*The Holy Scriptures (the Jewish translation of the Old Testament):* Much like the KJV in the Old Testament. An entire modern version is scheduled for completion in the 80s.

*The Amplified Bible:* It possesses some of the features of a paraphrased version and some of the features of a commentary. Its main purpose is to reveal other clarifying shades of meaning that may be concealed by the traditional word-for-word method of translation.

*The New English Bible:* A praiseworthy, though free-rendering modern British version.

Other useful versions with varying strengths and weaknesses are *The Moffat Translation*, *The Jerusalem Bible*, *The Good News Bible*, *The New International Version*, *The New American Standard Bible* and *The New American Bible*.

Many other versions are perhaps of less value because they either are basically the work of one scholar or specifically produced for a single denomination.

*The Living Bible:* The most popular of the modern non-translations. A free-flowing paraphrase that's easy to read, but should be viewed with very great caution when studying Biblical doctrines. Basically the ideas of one man.

More complete coverage of the whole subject is available in our free article, "Which Translations Should We Use?"



**WILLIAM TYNDALE'S** translation of the Scriptures are shown being burned. Vigorous measures were taken to find thousands of copies, which were burned in solemn ceremony. This was called "A burnt offering most pleasing to Almighty God."



## How The Bible Was Preserved

The Bible was preserved by the blood of courageous men through the centuries. It was a slow, agonizing, painful task over the years to put together and preserve until today, the Old and New Testaments we call "the Bible."

The Old Testament portion of scripture is a record of the lives of men and women of faith. Of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Deborah, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and many others.

Without their lives, there would be no Old Testament—there would be no scripture "written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4).

What sort of lives did they live so that we today could have available

this God-inspired volume? Some of them suffered excruciating tortures; others had to bear mockings, chainings, scourgings, and imprisonment; still others were stoned and even sawn asunder. You can read about them in Hebrews 11.

Jewish scribes carefully and faithfully preserved every "jot and tittle" of the Hebrew record, as did Greek scribes for the New Testament. Never was the task easy.

Periodic Roman persecutions against Christians were also directed against this Book. Diocletian, in perhaps the most severe attempt to destroy Christianity, ordered the burning of all its sacred books in the year 303—yet the scriptures survived.

After Constantine, Imperial attacks against the Bible came to an end, and Jerome's Vulgate translation into Latin at the end of the fourth century became the accepted standard of the Western world.

But the day of persecution was not over.

**The Bible in English.** In the 1500s, Tyndale was forced to go to Germany to do his translation of the New Testament from the original Greek. Church authorities in England had prohibited a new English translation.

In 1536, only eleven years after he finished the first printed English New Testament, Tyndale was imprisoned for a year and then strangled and burned at the stake for his efforts.

Others also found it dangerous to be too closely identified with the translation or circulation of the English Bible. Coverdale narrowly escaped with his life; Cranmer and Rogers were brought to the stake; many others sought safety in flight. Even men who bought or sold these early English Bibles were threatened, sometimes tried for heresy, sometimes put to death. □



*DESTRUCTION of the works of Wyclif at Prague.*

# DID JESUS BELIEVE THE OLD TESTAMENT?

*Many modern theologians believe that the Hebraic Scriptures are merely a collection of mythical stories. And even many Christians suppose they have little relevance to Christianity today. But what did Jesus believe?*

**W**AS JESUS a creationist, or believer in evolution? Did he think that God created Adam and Eve? Did He believe in the historicity of our first parents?

What about Abel? Did Christ acknowledge that he actually walked this earth? What of the Noachian Deluge? The existence of Abraham and Lot? Sodom and Gomorrah? Moses? David? Solomon? The prophets?

Did Jesus believe that all these ancient peoples and events were actually historical?

There's only one reliable source from which to seek the answers. And that is the New Testament Scriptures where we find Jesus' own words!

**Jesus a Creationist?** Did Jesus agree with the very first sentence in the Old Testament—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1)?

Yes, He did.

Here are personal accounts penned by John Mark and the Apostle John:

"For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the *beginning of the creation which God created* unto this time, neither shall be" (Mark 13:19). And "... These things saith the Amen [Jesus Christ], the faithful and true witness, *the beginning* [or prime source] of the *creation of God*" (Rev. 3:14).

Mark's Gospel and the book of Revelation make Jesus' belief in creation plain with no less than a first-person affirmation in both scriptures.

But, what about man in particular? Did Christ believe in the actual creation of our first parents?

**Adam and Abel.** For the answer, let's begin where mankind began—with Adam and Eve. Matthew's biography records Jesus' testimony.

Certain "men of the cloth" asked Christ: "Is it lawful for a man to put away [divorce] his wife for every cause? And he answered . . . Have ye not read, that *he which made them at the beginning made them male and female?*" (Matt. 19:3, 4).

Jesus referred these religious leaders to the Hebrew Scriptures. He spoke of God creating people—man and woman. Which people? Who were the first man and woman?

Compare with the Genesis story. Notice chapter five: "This is the book of the generations of *Adam*. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; *male and female* created he them; and blessed them, and called their name *Adam*], in the day when they were created" (verse 1).

An honest comparison of Matthew's account and the Genesis record clearly shows that Jesus was talking about Adam and Eve.

But, even if those two Biblical scriptures don't convince you, the next surely will. Again we pick up an account where Jesus is indicting certain religionists of His day. He told them: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of *righteous Abel* unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias [Greek spelling], whom ye slew between the temple and the altar" (Matt. 23:35).

Here Jesus not only said Abel existed, but also referred to his righteousness. Incidentally, the murder of Zachariah is mentioned in the same verse. And it is certain that this Zacharias is one and the same as the

Prophet Zachariah—an Old Testament prophet.

The proof? His father's name is the same. Notice it: "In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah" (Zech. 1:1). The slight differences in spelling exist because the names in the New Testament are transliterated from Greek, those in the Old Testament from Hebrew.

**The Noachian Deluge.** Is Jesus part and parcel with some of today's pragmatic theologians? Was He ignorant of the Flood of Noah's time?

Here is His personal testimony. "And as it was in the days of Noe [Noah], so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man [the coming world crisis at the close of man's age]. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe [Noah] entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all" (Luke 17:26-27).

Jesus corroborated the historicity of the Genesis Flood, alluded to its causes, and reiterated the universal death of that unregenerate world.

**Sodom and Gomorrah.** Luke continues with Jesus' account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all" (verses 28 and 29). Compare with Genesis 19:24-25. Note Jesus' historical accuracy.

Now, read down to Luke 17:32. Jesus said, "Remember Lot's wife"—asking His listeners to recall what happened to her when she



looked back at and longed to return to Sodom (see Genesis 19:26). Here Jesus used an historical happening as an analogy to illustrate a vital spiritual principle.

These scriptures also nail down Jesus' belief in the historicity of Lot.

**Abraham and Moses.** But, what about Lot's famous uncle—Abraham? Did Jesus know of him? Notice just one of several of Jesus' references to Abraham.

Again Jesus was grappling with certain of the clergy. He stated, "I know that ye are *Abraham's* seed [children]; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you" (John 8:37).

Jesus acknowledged that these people were the *physical* descendants of Abraham—a national hero to the Jewish nation. Jesus also recognized the existence of Abraham's son and grandson—Isaac and Jacob (Matt. 8:11).

Moses descended from Abraham through Jacob's son (Ex. 2:1-2, 10). Did Jesus make any references to this great leader?

Several. Read just one. Once again, a famous national hero is the center of a heated discussion. Jesus indicts: "For had ye believed *Moses*, ye would have believed me: for he wrote [prophesied] of me. But if ye believe not *his writings*, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:46, 47.)

**David and Solomon.** Continue chronologically with two more Jewish national heroes. A few generations after Moses, David ruled Israel as her second king.

In yet another verbal confrontation with the religious set, Christ reminded them: "... Have ye not read what *David* did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him ... ?" (Matt. 12:3.)

Later in the same chapter, Jesus spoke of Solomon: "The queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of *Solomon*; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (verse 42).

**Isaiah and the Prophets.** Skipping over a couple of chapters to Matthew 15, we find the following conversation between Christ and some of the scribes and Pharisees. Focus on verse 7. Jesus said, "Ye hypocrites, well did *Esaias* [Greek for *Isaiah*] *prophesy* of you. . . ."

Notice carefully. Here is Jesus' own testimony not only of *Isaiah's* existence, but also of his office—that of a prophet.

Jesus Himself was the subject of many Hebraic prophecies. He once admonished His disciples, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe *all that the prophets have spoken*. . . . And beginning at *Moses* and *all the prophets*, he expounded unto them in

all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25, 27).

Later, Luke records Jesus' acknowledgement that the Jewish people had the proper canon of the Old Testament Scriptures.

"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things [the Old Testament prophecies] must be fulfilled, which were written in *the law of Moses*, and in *the prophets*, and in the psalms [a representative book of *the writings*] concerning me" (verse 44).

Now notice an interesting quotation from the book *The King James Version Defended!* by Edward F. Hills, Th.D.: "... But the doctrine of the providential preservation of [Old Testament] Scripture is not merely a seventeenth century doctrine. It is the doctrine of the Scriptures [both Old and New Testament]. . . . Our Lord evidently believed that the Old Testament had thus been preserved. There are two passages especially which clearly indicate this. The first is Matthew 5:18, *Till heaven and earth pass away one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, until all be fulfilled*. And the second is Luke 16:17, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than one tittle of the law to fail*. Here Jesus attributes greater stability to the text of the Old Testament than to the heavens and the earth. . . ." (Des

## **Jesus Christ—Prophecy and Fulfillment**

THE PROPHECY PARAPHRASED	OLD TESTAMENT PREDICTION	NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT
(1) To be born of a virgin	Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:27, 31, 34-35; 2:7
(2) To be born a Jew	Gen. 49:9, 10; I Chron. 5:2; Micah 5:2	John 1:11; 4:9; Heb. 7:14
(3) To be born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matt. 2:1
(4) Triumphant entry into Jerusalem	Zech. 9:9	Matt. 21:1-11
(5) Betrayed by a friend for 30 pieces of silver	Psalm 41:9; Zech. 11:12-13	Matt. 26:14-15; Mark 14:18, 43-44
(6) Suffering and death	Psalm 22:1-21; Isa. 50:6; 53:1-12; Zech. 13:7	Matt. 26:67; 27:26, 28, 35; Mark 15:19, 25, 37; Luke 24:20; John 18:22; 19:1
(7) Hands and feet pierced	Psalm 22:16	John 20:25, 27
(8) Bones not to be broken	Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20	John 19:36
(9) Lots cast for his vesture (robe)	Psalm 22:18	Matt. 27:35
(10) Embalming and entombment	Psalm 16:9-10; Isa. 53:9	John 19:38-42



Moines: The Christian Research Press, 1956, p. 24).

So, Jesus accepted the testimony of the Old Testament record as absolutely authoritative. And He had good reason. For Biblical revelation represents Christ Himself as living in ancient times as an eyewitness. The One who became Christ was the One who created Adam and Eve (Eph. 3:9), walked and talked with Enoch and Abraham, wrestled with Jacob, was a personal friend of Moses, inspired Ezekiel, answered Elijah's prayers.

**God of the Old Testament.** Jesus was the God of the Old Testament. Numerous New Testament scriptures prove this Biblical fact. I will quote one: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (I Cor. 10:1-4).

See also John 1:1-4, 14 and Colossians 1:16. And write for "Who Was Jesus?"—a free theological article giving many more scriptural proofs.

**Why Study the Old Testament?** We have proved from the Bible that Jesus acknowledged the authenticity of the Old Testament. But what of it? What, if anything, does this have

## MOSES AND JESUS-- What Did They Have in Common?

Were they contradictory or complimentary? To find out, write for the fascinating booklet *A Tale of Two Prophets*. Send your request to our office nearest you, or phone us direct or collect. The number is (800) 423-4444. Residents of California, Alaska and Hawaii may dial (213) 577-5225 collect.

A  
TALE  
OF  
TWO  
PROPHETS

to do with you and your life here and now? Would Jesus actually want you to read and study these ancient writings—knowing you had to cope with the unprecedented complexities of a space-age society?

Believe it or not, He would! Its wisdom is timeless.

Jesus Himself was an Old Testament scholar. His knowledge of its wisdom-filled pages stood Him in good stead in an excruciating mental battle with Satan the devil. He quoted the Old Testament three times in resisting three strong temptations from the Tempter (see Matt. 4:1-10).

You can't afford to be without its unique wisdom. Paul wrote: "Now all these things [events in ancient Biblical times] happened unto them for ensamples [examples]; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Cor. 10:11). And again: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the [Hebraic] scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

And Jesus Himself said: "*Search the scriptures*; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). The only Scriptures extant when Jesus spoke these words were the Hebrew Scriptures.

**A Free Publication.** You need to read and study the Old Testament. And why not begin with the beginning? With the book of Genesis. Genesis is a book of origins. It shows the beginnings of mankind and how the earth was overspread. Genesis also contains the commencement of spiritual promises—promises of eternal life to Abraham and his descendants.

If you need help and encouragement to really get started, write for our free publication titled *How to Study the Bible*. This attractively printed booklet tells:

- Why you should read the Bible
- How to read it
- How men died to bring you the Bible
- Surprising things the Bible really says
- Surprising things the Bible is commonly believed to say—but *nowhere* does.

# REAL CONVERSION (You can't win the prize unless you start the race)

The apostle Paul likened the Christian life to a race which must be run for the "prize" of eternal life. A person does not even begin his "Race," however, until he has undergone a *genuine* conversion. The New Testament concept of conversion involves much more than a mere intellectual or ritualistic acceptance of a set of beliefs. True conversion can be defined in two parts. The first involves a definite event which occurs when God fulfills His promise to place the Holy Spirit within a person after certain conditions are met. The second part is a process which continues throughout the Christian's life. If you'd like to know more about the Bible's teaching on conversion, request the free booklet *Just What Do You Mean—CONVERSION?* Write to the address of our office nearest you.



# THE MIRACLES OF JESUS: FACT OR FICTION?

*Here is a challenge to the rationalist and the skeptic. It is time this doubting world realized that true Christianity is based on fact.*

The concept of a personal God who intervenes in human affairs seems like something off in never-never land to most people. Though millions pay lip service to Christianity, they can't quite bring themselves to believe and act as if God were *real*—that He is something far more than just “the essence of goodness,” the “First Cause” or some blind, invisible, far-off force that has very little to do with our daily lives.

Why is this?

It is because most people have been taught—or have *assumed*—that the miracles in the Bible are merely “Jewish mythology”: that the prophecies of the Bible are vague and that the creation story of Genesis is not true.

**Miracles Proved?** Most modern, liberal Christians readily admit that they lack faith in the divine inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. They attend church because it is “the thing to do.” But their belief in what is supposed to be the *basis* of true Christianity is hedged about with doubts and fears. Jesus said: “It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word of God*” (Luke 4:4). Many professing Christians, however, are not really sure about large sections of the “word of God” to which Jesus referred.

“We have no prophets: we have no sacred books to guide us toward the future,” stated John Platt, associate director of the Mental Health Institute of the University of Michigan.

Man has lost faith in God. Now he is beginning to lose faith in *himself*. His cynical, doubting intellectualism has left him helpless and hopeless in the face of mounting world cataclysm. He *needs* a rock-solid spiritual anchor.

“Mankind must put an end to war,

or war will put an end to mankind,” said President John F. Kennedy in 1961. Eight years later, the late U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, said: “I do not wish to be overly dramatic, but I can only conclude from information that is available to me as Secretary-General that the members of the United Nations have perhaps *ten years left* in which to subordinate their ancient quarrels and launch a global partnership to curb the arms race. If such a global partnership is not formed within the next decade, then I very much fear that the problems I have mentioned will have reached such staggering proportions that they will be beyond our capacity to control.”

At such a time in human history, you would think that mankind would turn more fervently to God than ever before. But the real and ever-present *doubts* about God and the Bible make it impossible for man to turn to his Creator in confidence. This attitude of doubt in the living God is the very thing that is robbing many people of the happiness, joy and peace of mind that could be theirs. This God of power is the same loving, active *Creator* to whom Jesus prayed. The God that healed the sick, raised the dead and performed great *miracles*—that God seems mythological to most people today. They would *like* to believe that God could supernaturally intervene and help them, as He did in Jesus' time. But how can they be sure of His reality and power?

**Entire Bible Inspired.** God Himself says that we should require *proof* for our beliefs. “Prove all things: hold fast that which is good” (I Thess. 5:21). If a person *already* has a certain degree of faith, he can “put to the test” God's way of life in his mar-

riage, with his children, or on his job. He will invariably find that it works to the degree that he follows it. And real Bible students have long been amazed and inspired by the exact fulfillment of Bible prophecies that have occurred or are now beginning to occur. The major prophecies about Egypt, Babylon and the Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great all stand as testimony of a living God who has chosen to intervene in human affairs in many ways.

Year by year, history continues to confirm the *inspired* prophecies written by some of the same men who tell us of the *miracles* God performed through His servants. And archaeology is becoming a major field where much information is being unearthed that verifies the Biblical record in a most remarkable manner.

However, there is one miracle to which countless prophecies point, about which scores of books have been written, and which proves difficult for even atheists to deny. It has stood through many generations as a proof of God's power to supernaturally intervene in human affairs and save man even from the grave. Once you accept this miracle, you will see that by its very nature it demonstrates the validity of countless others, and of God's promise to miraculously intervene in our lives now.

**A Basic Miracle.** The very heart of Bible prophecy concerns a subject which too many people take for granted, without realizing it should be *proved*. This is the subject of Jesus Christ, His reality, His life, His teachings, His miracles, and His own *resurrection*. More than three hundred prophecies and references to Christ in the Old Testament are expressly cited in the New Testament



as predictions fulfilled in Him. These prophecies were all written hundreds of years before Christ was born. Taken all together, they form a bond of truth which cannot be broken or disproved.

In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, a series of remarkable and seemingly paradoxical statements is made about the coming Messiah. It is stated that He would be cut off from the land of the living, a young man without offspring, yet He shall prolong His days. He was to be put to death as a criminal, to make His grave with the wicked, and yet the sepulcher of the rich was to be His tomb. He was to pour out His soul unto death, and yet He would live to make intercession for transgressors.

Before Jesus appeared, it seemed impossible that one man could fulfill all these incongruous requirements. Yet He fulfilled them so naturally that we have ceased to observe how paradoxical these prophecies must have appeared beforehand.

Almost from the beginning of His ministry, Jesus taught His own disciples of this coming great event of the ages—His literal death, and His literal resurrection from the dead. Notice Mark 8:31: "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

When the doubting Pharisees asked Jesus for a supernatural sign—a miracle—as proof of His Messiahship, Jesus pointed to the same event. He answered: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:39-40).

Jesus staked His very Messiahship on a miracle—His *resurrection* from the dead after a definite period of time. You either believe in this miracle—or you are without a Savior!

**Historical Proof.** Here are the facts: As we have just seen, Jesus repeatedly told His disciples that He would be killed, and would rise again after three days. Yet, when it actually

happened, they were slow to believe and seemed to have given up hope (Luke 24:11; Mark 16:13). Doubting Thomas was sure there was a mistake somewhere, and did not believe until he touched Jesus with his own hands (John 20:27).

These men had to be shown!

Thus, the men who later risked their very lives to preach the story of Jesus' resurrection were at first unable to believe it, determined not to believe it without proof, and finally came to believe it in spite of themselves. This belief so filled their lives that they henceforth went out and dedicated themselves to preaching Jesus' message, acting as "witnesses" of His resurrection.

The story of Jesus' life is basically

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the same in both sacred and secular history. It is acknowledged that Jesus was a real person who came to have a large following in Judea. That He was put to death in Jerusalem by authority of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. No contemporary or successor contradicts the story. Not even Jewish writers try to deny it.

Neither the Roman historian Pliny in the first century, Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth questioned the authenticity of the New Testament, or insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribed the New Testament. But all agree that in the reign of Tiberius Caesar a growing band of people risked their lives to propagate a new religion, sustaining unheard-of persecutions and sufferings with amazing faith and courage—and that one of the central tenets of their message was their belief in the literal resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

**More Evidence.** And there is much more evidence!

If Jesus did not really rise from the dead, what became of His body? If enemies stole it, they would have shown it at every opportunity. For they did everything in their power to discredit the story, and killed many of those who told it. If Jesus' disciples stole it, they were then preaching a lie. But *multitudes* of men do not become martyrs for what they know is untrue.

Was Jesus really dead? His disciples certainly believed that He was. Their trouble was in believing His resurrection at first. And the Roman soldiers and Jews certainly believed He was dead. They were only concerned about the disciples stealing away His body (Matt. 27:64).

Was the resurrection, as some skeptics claim, a later addition to the story of Christ, invented years later to glorify a dead hero? As we have shown, sacred and secular history alike clearly state that the great religious movement known by Christ's name was begun by people who preached of His resurrection from the dead. This joyous belief was not an addition to the Christian faith, but one of the primary causes of it. The apostles did not rest their faith on records, but on what they had seen with their own eyes.

When questioned about this belief, the apostles chorused: "We are his *witnesses* of these things" (Acts 5:32).

**Basis of Faith.** Once you really grasp the fact that the resurrection of Christ was quite literal and miraculous, you will in all honesty be forced to acknowledge that Jesus really was what He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of God—and that His many other predictions and promises and teachings must be just as true and literal as that of His death and resurrection. Would God raise from the dead and show as His Son one who had told the truth part of the time, and lied part of the time?

Let's be honest and reasonable about these things!

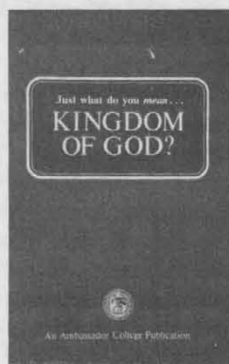
Were the apostles telling the truth about Jesus' resurrection—as we have proved they must have been—and lying when they told of His other miracles? And of His promises? And of His teachings?

# THE KINGDOM OF GOD-

## What does it mean to you?

**King·dom** *n.* A politically organized community or major territorial unit having a monarchical form of government headed by a king or queen.

The phrase "kingdom of God," which appears frequently in the Bible, is often heard in religious circles. It is generally assumed to be a reference to heaven or to a condition of mind held by believers. Almost no one would apply the standard dictionary definition of "kingdom"—a type of government over a specific territory. Yet that is precisely how the term is most often used in the Bible. The real meaning of the term "kingdom of God" is far more interesting and exciting than the traditional vague concepts. The booklet *Just What Do You Mean . . . Kingdom of God?* clearly explains what the Kingdom of God is and why it's important to you. For a free copy write to *The Plain Truth* at the address nearest you. (See our addresses worldwide at the end of this publication.)



Clearly, the factual, historical proof of the divine inspiration and present fulfillment of the prophecies in God's Word, and of the miraculous resurrection of Jesus Christ, demonstrate that God's Word means exactly what it says—that God is the living, active Creator-Ruler of heaven and earth *now*, and that His instructions, His prophecies, and His promises are in effect right now—today! God help you to grasp what this means!

First of all, it means that the instructions and spiritual laws contained in the Bible are—in *fact*—God speaking to you! You need to study and obey His Word—to "live by every word of God" (Luke 4:4).

Concerning God's promises, this complete faith in His Word and in His present power will enable you to trust God as you never did before to supernaturally intervene in your life when you need Him. And don't be deceived by the modernist teaching that miracles were only for the days of Christ and the apostles. If that were true, why did God perform such great miracles through the hands of Stephen and Philip, who were never called apostles? (Acts 6:8; 8:6.) What about the "signs" that Jesus said "shall follow them that believe"? (Mark 16:17-18.) Have those that believe ceased to exist?

**Rely on God's Word.** The sad truth is that most so-called "Christians" deny by their words and their deeds the promises and teachings of God's Word. They have lost sight of God's present power to miraculously intervene and back up His Word—whether it be a prophecy or a promise.

In the Gospel of Luke, for instance, Jesus described startling events that are now *beginning* to occur (Luke 21:8-11). He said: "And when these things *begin* to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. . . . Verily I say unto you, *This generation shall not pass away, till ALL be fulfilled*" (verses 28, 32).

Do you as an individual recognize that these words of Jesus are *already* beginning to affect your life? That the recent demise of the British Empire and the steadily increasing erosion of American pride and power are in *direct fulfillment* of specific Bible prophecies?

Write today for our inspiring free booklets *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* and *The Ten Commandments*. Get acquainted with the *real* God of which Bible prophecies, promises and miracles speak. Take time to *prove* to yourself in a sound-minded, factual manner that God is alive and that He rules over the affairs of men and nations—intervening when He chooses. And that He *binds Himself* by His Word, the Bible.

You need to fully grasp this truth and begin to act on it. Understand that God's promises as well as prophecies are a commitment by your Creator which *must* be fulfilled—IF you do your part. Learn as have thousands of others that *miracles do happen today*.

Then you will learn to trust and obey the living God as never before. And you will better prepare yourself by true spiritual growth for eternal life in His world government, which will be set up on this earth a lot sooner than most people even begin to imagine! □

## Recommended Reading

We publish and make available, without charge, informative booklets and articles on a wide range of Biblical topics. Four are listed below: (1) *How to Study the Bible*.

This booklet shows you several important keys to Biblical understanding. It explains the background behind Bible italics and the division into chapters and verses; also how to use a concordance.

(2) *Do We Have the Complete Bible?*

Some Bibles contain fourteen additional books called the *Apocrypha*. There are a number of valid reasons why these books were not included in the official Old Testament canon.

(3) *Which Translations Should We Use?*

Many translations now flood the market. Which ones have real merit; which are of less value?

(4) *How We Got the Bible*.

How did we come to possess both the Old and New Testament documents? This article surveys the history of canonicity.



# Questions & Answers

**Q**uestion: "Do you have a booklet on how to read and understand the Bible? Could you advise me what Bible to buy? I have a New Testament called 'Good News for Modern Man.' Is that okay? What about 'The Living Bible'?"

Mrs. Lorne F.,  
St. Albans, Vermont

**A**nswer: We have a free booklet entitled *How to Study the Bible*. It explains how to approach and accomplish the task of reading your Bible completely through from Genesis to Revelation. This booklet concerns itself with important keys that are vital to Biblical understanding.

As far as translations are concerned, see page 5.

**Q:** "I would like a list of authors who wrote the 66 books of the Bible under the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit. Who wrote the first Bible?"

Herman S.,  
Euclid, Ohio

**A:** The Bible is a collection of inspired books written by various men at different stages in history. The last book apparently was written in the 90s A.D. But though written by men, it is important to realize that the original finished work is *God's Word* to man. Even though God used human beings as His instruments to transmit His Holy Word, the preparation and approval of every book was directly inspired and supervised by the Creator (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:21).

Since God in many cases has not revealed it, it is obviously impossible for contemporary scholars peering through 2,000 years and more of history to be completely dogmatic about the human authorship of every book in the Bible. The following is, there-

fore, only a summary of the likely or possible authors of many Biblical books.

Moses is traditionally regarded to be the author of the Torah or Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible).

Joshua could have been the author of most of the book that bears his name, although some scholars feel that the prophet Samuel could have written or added to it (cf. Joshua 24:29-33). Samuel is generally credited with the authorship of Judges, but he probably used written records and oral traditions from earlier judges, priests and scribes.

Samuel also appears to be the author of the first 24 chapters of I Samuel, which comprise his lifetime. There are, of course, other possibilities. The books of Samuel and Kings, originally one book (or scroll), were placed (in the Jewish version) just prior to the book of Isaiah. Some feel that Isaiah compiled and/or wrote the entire Samuel-Kings scroll as an historical introduction to his major prophetic work—the book of Isaiah. He was contemporaneous with some of the historical events narrated in II Kings. A later prophet would have added the ending of II Kings.

All the major and minor prophets (and Daniel) apparently wrote the books bearing their names. The 150 Psalms had various authors. David apparently wrote the largest share, but Solomon, Moses (Psalm 90), Asaph and others wrote one or more. Proverbs is basically the work of Solomon (I Kings 4:32; Eccl. 12:9), although he undoubtedly included many proverbs written or spoken earlier by ancient wise men. Also, certain portions of the book of Proverbs were probably added by other au-

thors and official editors (cf. Prov. 25:1; 30:1; 31:1).

Ezra and Nehemiah wrote their own books. Ezra is also thought by some scholars to have written (or at least edited) I and II Chronicles.

The books of the New Testament generally bear the author's name, either in the title or the opening sentence. Acts was written by Luke, and John wrote the book of Revelation.

**Q:** "Should we use the Apocrypha? If not, why was reference made to II Esdras in one of your books?"

John N.,  
Orlando, Florida

**A:** We occasionally may refer to the Apocrypha for useful historical information, especially in the period from Malachi to Matthew—between the Testaments. Remember that Paul quoted either from a writing (book) or a speech of a Cretian poet in his letter to Titus (1:12).

Reliable secular and ecclesiastical sources (even apart from the Bible) can afford us valuable historical insight. However, the Apocrypha itself should not be relied on for divine guidance. For further information about this particular collection of books, write for our free articles "Do We Have the Complete Bible?" and "How We Got the Bible."

**Q:** "You are still quoting out of the Old Testament, which we are not to do! Paul said so! If we do, we will be confused! According to the apostles, we are only to teach of Jesus Christ and Him crucified and raised from the dead!"

M. R.,  
Detroit, Michigan

**A:** The apostle Paul never said we should not use the Old Testament. He not only quoted the Old Testament himself quite often, but he stated in his letter to Timothy that "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching [doctrine, KJV], for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness . . ." (II Tim. 3:16).

In this passage he was referring to the *Old* Testament, because the New Testament hadn't been fully written or canonized at that time. In verse 14, Paul instructed Timothy: "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it

THE WORD OF  
GOD IS THE  
FOUNDATION  
OF KNOWLEDGE

GET  
WISDOM  
GET  
UNDERSTANDING

Prov. 4:5



These are all the tools you need to improve your Biblical understanding

Contrary to popular opinion, the Bible is a NOW book. It is God's revelation to mankind — of the way to happiness, peace and prosperity. For more than two decades the Ambassador College Correspondence Course has been helping thousands to understand the Bible. This course explains the Bible by letting the Bible interpret itself. There are twelve monthly lessons of thorough, yet easily understood instruction — all absolutely free. Why not enroll today? Just send your request to the address nearest you. (See last page for address.)

and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings [the Old Testament] which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:14, 15). In Timothy's childhood there was no New Testament written—so Paul must have been speaking of the Old Testament.

Paul also commended the Jews of Berea, who "received the word with all eagerness, examining *the scriptures* [again the Old Testament] daily to see if these things were so. Many of them therefore believed . . ." (Acts 17:11-12).

Matthew 4:4 and Luke 4:4 both quote Jesus Himself as saying: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Jesus is here quoting from the Old Testament—Deuteronomy 8:3. This is not the only time Christ quoted the Old Testament. He gave His stamp of approval to historical accounts which are sometimes questioned today: Adam and Eve (Matt. 19:3-4), Abel (Matt. 23:35), Noah's Flood (Luke 17:26-27), Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:28-29), and Jonah (Matt. 12:40). Jesus also referred to Moses as an author, saying in John 5:46-47 (KJV): "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not *his writings*, how shall ye believe my words?"

The Old Testament and the Old Covenant (which was pre-Christian) are two entirely different things. The Old Covenant was the agreement between God and ancient Israel, while the Old Testament is composed of the inspired writings of people who lived during the time the Old Covenant was in effect. While Paul said that we no longer need to observe certain of the Old Covenant Levitical rituals such as physical circumcision, he did not mean that we should not use the Old Testament.

The New Testament contains hundreds of direct and indirect quotations from the Old (about 630 quotations and references, see *The Bible Handbook* by Joseph Angus, p. 249). And the Old Testament contains prophecies of Christ, plus predictions that are yet to be fulfilled in our day. We cannot ignore the Old Testament if we are to follow the examples of both Christ and Paul.