

GOD ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

1. THE SCRIPTURES

How We Got Our Bible

1. How close was man's earliest fellowship with God?

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.... And the Lord God called unto Adam." Genesis 3:8, 9.

2. By what tragedy was this intimate communion broken?

"Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you." Isaiah 59:2.

3. After the entrance of sin what modified method of communication did God adopt?

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets." Hebrews 1:1.

4. In process of time what nation did God single out to be the special medium of His revelations?

"What advantage then has the Jew? ... Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Romans 3:1,2. (See also Romans 9: 4.)

5. What further provision did God make in order to keep a knowledge of His will before His chosen people?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book." Exodus 17:14. (See also Exodus 24: 4.)

In His providence God gathered up the record of the past and communicated it to Moses, instructing him to write it in a book to form the nucleus of a written revelation which could be handed down from generation to generation without fear of corruption. By inspiration Moses wrote the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, which became known as "the book of Moses" (2 Chronicles 25: 4), "the book of the law of Moses" (Joshua 23:6), and in later times the Pentateuch. Moses undoubtedly also wrote the Book of Job.

6. Who was commissioned to continue the sacred record after the death of Moses?

"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God." Joshua 24: 26.

7. When Israel settled in Canaan through whom did God give further guidance and reproof to His people?

"The Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers." 2 Kings 17: 13.

During the period of the monarchy there were added to the books of Moses and Joshua, the books of Samuel, the earlier parts of Kings and Chronicles, the psalms of David, Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and the writings of the earlier 'prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, and Amos.

8. During the captivity of Israel and Judah or immediately after the return what new books were incorporated into the Scriptures?

Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and perhaps the latter parts of the books of Kings and Chronicles.

9. How did the returned captives indicate their desire to understand the words of the Lord?

"And all the people gathered themselves together; ... and they spoke unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel." Nehemiah 8:1. (Read verses 1-8.)

10. What remaining books were added in post-captivity days to complete the Old Testament as we now have it?

Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

With the Book of Malachi, written about 400BC, the canon of the Old Testament was completed, having been in process of formation for over 1,000 years.

11. How did Jesus refer to the Scriptures in His day?

"These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me." Luke 24:44.

This threefold division was the customary classification of the Old Testament books in the days of Jesus, the "Law of Moses" -including the five books of the Pentateuch; "the prophets" comprising Joshua, judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets. While the

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third division was called “the psalms” because these were first in order, but it included also Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra (including Nehemiah), and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

12. What form did the earliest writings of the New Testament take?

“I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.” 1 Thessalonians 5:27; (See also Colossians 4: 16.)

As time passed it became more and more difficult for the apostles personally to visit all the groups of Christian believers which were springing up. So in order to meet the need of further instruction in the faith, to combat prevailing error, and to warn against strange and heretical teachers, they were led to send forth messages of warning and exhortation. (See 1 Corinthians 1:1,2; Galatians 1:1,2; Ephesians 1:1; James 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1, etc.)

13. What portions of the New Testament were next written?

“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us . . . it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou might know the certainty of those things, wherein thou has been instructed.” Luke 1: 1-4.

Some thirty-five years had passed since Jesus was taken away, and persecution was decimating the ranks of the disciples. Soon there would be no one who had been with Jesus to tell the story of His life and teachings. So several were led to prepare authoritative accounts, and the Gospels came into being. The earliest was written by Mark; Matthew wrote his Gospel soon after, followed by Luke. John’s Gospel came much later, and was perhaps the last of the New Testament books to be written.

14. In addition to his Gospel what further record was Luke inspired to set down in writing?

The “Acts of the Apostles” as they went forth to fulfil the great commission given them by Jesus. (See Acts 1: 1.)

15. With what wonderful prophetic communication was the New Testament completed?

“The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John.” Revelation 1:1.

By AD 100 all the books of our present New Testament had been written. That this was in the providence of God is clearly evident, for not one of the apostles, save perhaps John only lived to see the beginning of the second century. The believers now began systematically to copy out and circulate the apostolic writings with the Old Testament Scriptures. From the middle of the second century, testimony is forthcoming from every part of the Roman Empire to the general acceptance of the whole Bible, as we know it, as the inspired Word of God.

16. How did God intend that the Bible should be used?

a. It was to be read publicly in the assemblies of God’s people. “Go thou, and read in the roll, which thou has written from My mouth, the words of the Lord in the ears of the people in the Lord’s house.” Jeremiah 36: 6. (See also Nehemiah 8:8.)

b. It was to be earnestly studied by the individual believer. “Stidty to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.” 2 Timothy 2:15.

17. What blessed result would follow the wholehearted acceptance of the Word?

“These are written, that yemight believe that.jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name.” John 20:31.

Is Our Bible Complete?

1. Do all Bibles contain exactly the same books as our Authorized and Revised Versions?

No, the Douay Bible’ of the Roman Catholic Church contains what is known as the Apocrypha. This comprises seven extra books in the Old Testament, namely: Tobit, Baruch, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and 1 and 2 Maccabees, together with seven additional chapters to the Book of Esther and sixty-six extra verses in the third chapter of Daniel called, “The Story of the Three Children.”

2. What does the Roman Catholic Church say with reference to the contents of her Bible?

“If anyone does not receive the entire books with all their parts as they are accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church, and in the Old Latin Vulgate Edition, as sacred and canonical . . . let them be anathema.”Decree of the Council of Trent, 1546.

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3. Can we ascertain what books there were in the Old Testament as used in the days of Christ?

“The books which are definitely enumerated [by the Jews] as part of the collection of Holy Scripture are exactly the same as those books of the Old Testament which are now received. And there is no trace of any explicit difference of opinion on the subject, or of any attempt to extend the collection by the addition of later writings.” -Bishop Westcott in “The Bible in the Church,” page 49.

4. From what Old Testament books did Christ and the apostles quote?

While Christ and the apostles quoted from practically every book in the Protestant canon they never quoted any of the apocryphal books as Scripture, nor even recognized their existence. This indicates conclusively that they did not regard any-of these latter as of divine origin.

5. Did the early church accept the apocryphal writings?

“The apocryphal books were not admitted into the canon of Scripture during the first centuries of the Christian church. As Bishop Barnes well observes, We have the concurring sense of the whole church of God in this matter.” - Thomas Hartwell Horne, B.D., in “An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures,” pages 458, 459.

6. Have any Roman Catholics ever questioned the inclusion of the Apocrypha in their Bible?

Yes. The great Roman Catholic scholar Jerome, when instructed by Pope Damasus about AD 400 to prepare the standard Latin Vulgate version, wanted to exclude the Apocrypha as having no place in Scripture. He was prevented from doing so however, and under pressure allowed them to remain to be “read for purposes of edification.” Thus the Roman Catholics cannot even claim the support of their chief translator for the Apocrypha.

7. What other Catholic authorities have pronounced against the authority of the apocryphal writings?

Augustine followed Jerome in recognizing a difference between the canonical and apocryphal books. The Spanish and Trans-alpine churches rejected the Apocrypha. The British Catholic scholars Bede, John of Salisbury (1180), and William Ockharn (1347) all separated the apocryphal books. Cardinal Ximenes, in his magnificent Polyglot Bible, separated the Apocrypha from the rest of Scripture in the sixteenth century.

Even after the Council of Florence in 1442 and the Council of Trent in 1546 had pronounced the apocryphal books equally as inspired as the other books, Sixtus of Siena (1566) insisted on separating the Apocrypha from the rest of the canon, and Bernard Lamy declared, “Nevertheless they are not of the same authority.”

8. Why then does Rome insist on retaining the Apocrypha?

Because the apocryphal books can be quoted in support of some of the false doctrines of the church.

(a) Prayers for the dead are advocated. “If he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead.” 2 Maccabees 12:44.

(b). The dead are represented as praying for themselves. “O Lord Almighty, Thou God of Israel, hear now the prayers of the dead Israelites, and of their children, which have sinned before Thee.” Baruch 3: 4.

©. The meritorious value of almsgiving is emphasized. “For alms does deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin. Those that exercise alms and righteousness shall be filled with life.” Tobit 12:9.

(d). The doctrine of purgatory is suggested. “The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.” - Wisdom 3: 1.

“The apocryphal books prove by contrast that the books of the Hebrew canon, as a whole, are generically distinct from the ordinary religious literature of the Jews; and establish more clearly than anything else the absolute originality of the gospel.” - Bishop Westcott in – “The Bible in the Church,” Page 291.

9. To what conclusion must we therefore come with respect to the Apocrypha?

That it has no place in the canon of divine revelation.

10. What solemn warnings should be heeded by those who seek to add to or detract from Holy Writ?

“You shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.” Deuteronomy 4:2.

Can We Believe the Bible?

1. WHAT, claim does the psalmist make for the Scriptures?

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“Thy Word is true from the beginning.” Psalm 1-19: 160.

The “higher critics” dispute this statement, declaring that they have discovered many historical, geographical, chronological, scientific, and other “mistakes” in the Scriptures. They therefore contend that if the Bible is not accurate in details which can be tested by outside evidence, it certainly cannot be “infallible” in its spiritual teaching.

2. How important is it that we be certain as to the basis of our faith?

“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” Psalm 11:3.

3. How should Christians prepare themselves to meet these attacks upon the Bible?

“Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” 1 Peter 3: 15.

1 4. To what do the Scriptures direct us to turn for evidence in support of their trustworthiness?

“Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.” Job 12:7, 8.

5. How do the heavens witness to the truth of the Bible?

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.” Psalm 19: 1.

“Everything points with overwhelming force to a definite event, or series of events, of creation at some time or other. The universe cannot have originated by chance out of its present ingredients, and neither can it always have been the same as now.” - Sir James Jeans in “Eos,” pages 52-55.

6. What witness do all created things give to their Maker and to the truth of the Bible record?

“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.” Romans 1:20.

“Today scientists of the first rank have almost unanimously declared that science demands the intervention of a Creator.” Reverend E. J. Gill before the British Association.

“The exquisite structure of the sun, the planets, and the comets could not have had their origin but by the plan and absolute dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.” - Isaac Newton.

7. Mention some striking facts of the natural world which were actually anticipated in the Bible long before they were discovered by the scientists.

a. “He . . . hangs the earth upon nothing.” Job 26: 7.

The suspension of the earth in space was discovered by Copernicus in 1475.

b. “He looks to the ends of the earth, to make the weight for the winds.” Job 28:24, 25.

Galileo (1630) was the first to affirm that air had weight.

c. “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?” Isaiah 40:12.

Only in recent years has it been realized how important are the proportions and balance of the land masses and oceans on the earth’s surface.

d. “They [the heavens and the earth] shall perish; but Thou remains; and they all shall wax old as does a garment.” Hebrews 1: 11.

Not, until the twentieth century was the progressive aging and disintegration of matter by radioactivity discovered. Nature is going down the steps; any upward step is impossible.” - Sir James Jeans in “The Universe Around Us,” Page 306.

e. “For the life of all flesh is the blood thereof.” Leviticus 17:14.

The circulation and function of the blood was discovered by William Harvey in 1615.

“Tested by cosmogony, astronomy, geology, and zoology, physiology and comparative anatomy, natural philosophy and sanitary science, etc., this Book evinces superhuman knowledge and wisdom. Hence the Bible is a scientific marvel. It belongs to the oldest class of literature, yet it is the youngest and newest in adaptation to scientific discovery, and perpetually keeps abreast of human progress.” - Dr. Arthur T. Pierson in “Many Infallible Proofs.”

8. How have men spoken “to the earth” and what has it taught?

Buried civilizations of earlier days have yielded their treasures to the spade of the archeologist.

9. What are some striking examples of Bible facts once denied by the critics, but which have been completely confirmed by modern archeological discoveries?

a. They declared that Abraham was a half -savage nomad quite incapable of the activities credited to him in the Biblical record. But in recent years it has been proved by Professor Leonard Woolley that a high state of civilization existed in the Near East long before the days of Abraham. (Read Woolley’s “Ur of the Chaldees.”)

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b. They ridiculed the account of the capture of Jericho by Joshua until Professor Garstang of Liverpool University excavated the site and declared: "Set side by side with the Biblical narrative the material evidence is seen to bear out, in every essential detail, the record of the capture and destruction of Jericho by the Israelites under Joshua." - Joshua, Judges.

c. They once denied the existence of the Hittites. But Professor Wm. Sayce of Cambridge proved the existence and extent of the Hittite Empire by excavating thousands of remains from all over Asia Minor and Northern Syria. (Read Sayce's "Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fallacies.")

d. They denied that there ever was a king of Babylon called Belshazzar. Today more than 500 tablets mentioning his name are known. (Read Dougherty's "Nabonidus and Belshazzar.")

e. They, asserted that the Book of Acts was entirely untrustworthy in its history and geography. Sir William M. Ramsay, however, after years of travel in Asia Minor, conclusively declared, "Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness." (Read "Luke the Historian," by A. T. Robertson.)

10. What testimonies have noted excavators borne respecting the results of archeological research?

"The Higher Criticism is bankrupt whenever tested by the facts of modern discovery and scientific archeology. The rout is complete." - Professor. Sayce in a letter to the Reverend A. H. T. Clarke of Devides, quoted in the Church of England Newspaper.

"A little dose of archeology is a wonderful corrective to the fertile imagination, and furnishes a wholesome check to speculative criticism." - Canon Girdlestone in a Foreword to "Biblical Discoveries in Egypt, Palestine, and Mesopotamia."

"Modern criticism, neither on internal nor on external grounds has been able to throw any doubt on the authenticity of a single book of our New Testament. Their authenticity, accuracy, and honesty are super-vindicated by every new investigation." -Professor B. B. Warfield, in "New Testament Criticism."

11. In what striking prophecy did a noted scientist foreshadow the vindication of the Bible by scientific research?

"When science makes its next attack upon theology, if indeed that shall ever be again, it will find an armament, largely furnished by itself, which has made the Bible as impregnable as nature." - Professor Henry Drummond in he "Expositor," Third Series, Volume I.

12. In what Biblical terms may we therefore express our confidence in 1 the trustworthiness and accuracy of the Scriptures?

"Thy Word-is very pure: therefore Thy servant loves it." Psalm 119: 140.

A Book from Heaven

1. WHAT terms applied to the Biblical record affirm its divine origin?

"The Book of the Lord." Isaiah 34: 16. "The Gospel of God." Romans 1:1. "The Oracles of God." Romans 3:2. "The Word of God."- Hebrews 6:5. "The Word of Christ." Colossians 3:16.

2. From whom do the Bible writers claim to have received their messages?

"And God spoke all these words." Exodus 20:1. "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue." 2 Samuel 23:2. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John." Revelation 1:1.

3. How explicitly do they disclaim credit for their compositions?

a. They specifically disavow responsibility for their revelations. "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Galatians 1:11, 12.

b. They often did not understand their writings. "I heard, but I understood not." Daniel 12: 8.

4. Do the Bible writers claim inspiration only for the general thought or teaching of Scripture or for the actual Words?

"He said unto me, Son of man, all My words that I shall speak unto thee receive in your heart, and hear with your ears." Ezekiel 3:10. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches." 1 Corinthians 2:13.

5. How do they acknowledge each other's inspiration?

"I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the, Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem." Daniel 9:2. "Our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him has written unto you." 2 Peter 3:15.

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6. What seal does Jesus set on the inspiration of the Scriptures?

“All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me.” Luke 24: 44. “The Scripture cannot be broken.” John 10:35.

7. Are there any evidences apart from the claims of Scripture that the Bible is an inspired Book?

Yes, there are many, of which may be specially mentioned: (a) its marvelous unity, (b) its superhuman range of teaching, (c) its perpetual freshness and universal appeal, (d) its transforming power upon the individual, (e) the fulfillment of its prophecies, and (f) its indestructibility.

8. Why is the Bible’s unity of doctrine so remarkable? The Scriptures comprise sixty-six books written by some forty or more authors over a period of one and a half millenniums. Yet there is one system of doctrine, one rule of faith, and running from Genesis to Revelation there is one dominant theme, redemption through the cross of Christ. The unity and plan exhibited on every page of the Scriptures testify to an activity more than human guiding the pens of the writers and guiding the church in gathering the books which had been so written.

9. How completely is human wisdom eclipsed by the teachings of the Bible?

“Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” 1 Corinthians 1: 20.

The Scriptures offer a clear solution to all the problems of life. They treat upon God and man, the meaning of sin and suffering and death, of origin and destiny, in a manner understandable to the simplest and yet inexhaustible in their profundity. They exhibit a coherence and a sense of proportion not found elsewhere. How did the Hebrews, surrounded by nations steeped in polytheism and nature worship, come to possess so unique a body of doctrine if not by divine revelation?

10. What is notable about the perpetual freshness and universal appeal of the Scriptures?

“The Word of God lives.” 1 Peter 1: 23.

Though this Book has neither been added to nor detracted from for nearly two thousand years it meets the needs of men today as fully as it met the needs of those who were contemporary with the original writers. It appeals not to one class of society, but to every sort and condition of men from highly civilized peoples to savages in the darkest corners of the earth. Nor is even this all. Its message never palls. The oftener it is read, the more it is enjoyed. The deeper the mine is dug the broader grows the vein and the richer the ore. These are not the marks of merely human genius.

11. What remarkable power upon the individual does the Bible possess?

“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when you received the Word of God which you heard of us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe.” 1 Thessalonians 2:13. (See also 1 Peter 1:23.)

The Bible is something more even than a unique system of religion and ethics. It is possessed of a power which is not paralleled by any human composition. The Bible comes to men sunk in degradation and sin, arrests them in their downward course, and builds up characters of righteousness. Those who have experienced its transforming power have no need to be convinced by argument. They know that the Bible is not a human book.

The original “Bounty” Bible and Prayer Book used by John Adams on Pitcairn Island. As sole survivor of the “Bounty” mutineers, he used this treasured Book to educate the children and to administer the island. It is now back on Pitcairn after having been carefully repaired.

“I cannot argue with you,” said an old Highlander to Claudius Buchanan; “I cannot present theological facts or reasons; I cannot explain the philosophy of revelation. But I know this, that when I was a man of evil character the Bible got hold of me and quelled the tiger in me.”

12. Who only could have inspired the marvelously accurate prophecies of Scripture?

“I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.” Isaiah 46:9, 10.

“The revelations of prophecy are facts which exhibit the divine Omniscience. So long as Babylon is in heaps; so long as Nineveh is empty, void, and waste; so long as Egypt is the basest of kingdoms; so long as Tyre is a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea. So long as the great empires of the world march on in their predicted course—so long have we proof that one omniscient Mind dictated the predictions of that Book.” H. L. Hastings in “Will the Old Book Stand?” Page 19.

13. How has the Bible been able to survive the constant persecution to which it has been subjected through the ages?

“Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away.” Luke 21:33. “The Word of God lives and abides for ever.” 1 Peter 1:23.

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No book has lived through such fierce and relentless persecution. Antiochus Epiphanes vented his wrath against the Old Testament Scriptures, and the Roman emperors, especially Diocletian, against the New. In the subsequent centuries there has hardly been an hour's cessation of attack upon it. Yet in spite of all the assaults of infidelity, pseudo-science, and higher criticism, this wonderful Book is still the "best seller" of all. The reason can only be that the Mind which inspired its contents has also preserved it from every attack, that the world might never lack a sure Guide to this life and the life to come.

14. Surveying all these evidences what must be our verdict concerning the Bible?

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Timothy 3:16. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21.

"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6: 63.

Why We Need the Bible

1. WHAT knowledge is unattainable by human wisdom?

"Can thou by searching find out God?" Job 11: 7. "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Romans 11:33.

2. How only can we attain unto this knowledge?

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever." Deuteronomy 29:29.

"The Scriptures are the only records in which God has been pleased to consign His truth to perpetual remembrance." - Calvin.

3. What confidence may we have in the knowledge which comes to us through the Word of God?

"Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the, certainty of the words of truth; that thou might answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" Proverbs 22:20, 21.

"There is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the Word of God. This Word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of all doctrine and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us." - Protest of the Princes, cited in DAubigne's "History of the Reformation," Volume 1V, page 75.

4. To a world alienated from God through sin what assurance does the Bible bring?

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believes." Romans 1:16.

"The Christian religion has news about God and man; and its first news-yes, let us admit the fact-is bad news, the news of man's sin and God's wrath against sin, but the Christian religion has not only bad news: it has-and this is the important thing about it-good news." - Revelation A. H. Rees, MA, in the Church Times.

5. What spiritual transformation is made possible through the Word?

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever." 1 Peter 1:23.

6. How does the Word continue to bless the transformed life?

a. It gives understanding. "The entrance of Thy words gives light; it gives understanding unto the simple." Psalm 119: 130.

b. It keeps from sin. "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Psalm 119: 11.

c. It guides in the way of life. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119: 105.

d. It builds up. "And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts 20:32.

e. It gives hope. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Romans 15:4.

7. How completely does the Bible meet human needs?

"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, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." - 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

"The object is not merely to convince and to convert him; it is to furnish all the instruction needful

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for his entire perfection. There is no deficiency in the Bible for man in any of the situations in which he may be placed in life; and the whole tendency of the Book is to make him who will put himself fairly under its instructions absolutely perfect." - Albert Barnes.

8. What value therefore does Job place upon the Word?

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of His lips; I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my, necessary food." Job 23:12.

9. What supreme gifts come to us through the Word of God?

"These things have I written unto you that you may know that you have eternal life." 1 John 5:13.
"He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thessalonians 2:14.

10. Where will the Bible lead those who take it as their guide?

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles." Psalm 43:3.

"I want to know one thing-the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way. He has written it down in a book. Oh, give me that Book! At any price, give me that Book of God!" - John Wesley.

The sterling qualities in Timothy's character were developed because of his interest and diligence in studying God's Word.

11. On the other hand, what dire results will follow its neglect?

"Who so despises the Word shall be destroyed." Proverbs 13: 13.

"There is Jehovah's revelation of Himself to men. Receive it or be lost. Reject it and perish!" - C. H. Spurgeon.

12. What then should-be our attitude to the Word?

- a. Seek after it. "Seek you out of the Book of the Lord, and read." Isaiah 34: 16.
- b. Give earnest heed to it. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Hebrews 2:1.
- c. Obey it. "Be you doers of the Word, and not hearers only." James 1: 22.

A message of life and comfort from the Book that never grows old.

How to Understand Your Bible

1. WHAT is the Apostle Paul's desire for all believers?

"I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." Ephesians 1:15-17.

2. How early in life may the study of the Bible be profitably begun?

"From a child thou has known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." 2 Timothy 3: 15.

Catherine Booth had read the Bible through eight times before she was twelve years of age.

3. How constant thereafter should be, our study?

"These [in Berea] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17: 11.

"Do not believe me simply unless you receive proof of what I say from Holy Scripture." - Cyril of Jerusalem, in "Catechumen," 4, 17, 33 (AD 348).

4. In what spirit should we approach the Word?

a. As God's Word to us. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when you received the Word of God which you heard of us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectively works also in you that believe." 1 Thessalonians 2: 13.

b. Ready to obey its precepts. "If any man will to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 7: 17.

5. What attitude is fatal to profitable Bible study?

"You reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition." Mark 7: 9.

T. H. Huxley's fine statement on studying the book of nature is equally applicable to the study of the written Word. "Sit down before fact [and the Bible] as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever nature [and the Bible] leads, or you shall learn nothing."

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6. Is lack of education a bar to the understanding of the Word of God?

“I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou has, hid these things from the Wise and prudent, and. has revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight.” Matthew 11:25, 26.

7. Why is human wisdom no help in comprehending the Word?

“The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. (See also 1 Corinthians 2:11)

8. Whence may we obtain the necessary spiritual discernment?

“We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” 1 Corinthians 2: 12. (See also verse 10.)

9. Is all Scripture equally understandable?

“Our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him has written unto you; in which are some things hard to be understood.” 2 Peter 3:15, 16.

10. How then should we begin our Bible study?

“Desire the sincere milk of the Word.” 1 Peter 2: 2.

11. Having mastered the fundamental principles of the gospel, to what should we proceed?

“Strong meat belonged to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” Hebrews 5:14.

12. How did the Apostle Paul reprove certain believers for lack of progress in study?

“For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.” Hebrews 5:12.

How many are there today in the same spiritual condition, old in association with the faith and yet babes in understanding! Such is not the Father’s plan for His children. The Christian life should be an Advance, a growing day by day in grace and in the knowledge of God.

13. What admonition does he give to those who have failed to dig deep into the mine of truth?

“Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto Perfection.” Hebrews 6:1.

Not forsaking or abandoning them, but leaving them as a child leaves the letters of the alphabet, or as a plant lifts its head above the ground and presses upward toward the sun, yet ever drawing sustenance from its root.

14. What principles should govern our study of the Word?

a. Associate relevant Scriptures. “Comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” 1 Corinthians 2:13.

b. Synthesize and build up. “Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.” Isaiah 28:10.

“The infallible rule of ‘interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and, therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.” - Westminster Confession of Faith (1647).

15. How much of the Bible may we profitably study?

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16. “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:27.

“Guard against favorites in the Word of God. Take the Bible as a whole; reverence every part of it. Study every portion of it. You will find none unprofitable. The more your mind is enlarged to grasp and come in contact with revelation as a whole, the more will your tone of piety be healthy, and the more will your principles be fixed, broad, and firm.” - Revelation H. Stowell.

16. To what portions of Scripture should we give special attention?

“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and be established in the Present truth.” 2 Peter 1:12.

The message of Noah was urgent “present truth” to the generation before the Flood. The books of Daniel and the Revelation together with other prophecies of the latter days” and the last time” are equally urgent and important to Christians today. (See Daniel 12:4; Revelation 1:1-3.)

17. What beneficent results come from a diligent study of the Word?

a. It points the way to personal salvation. “The Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:15.

b. It equips for the service of God. “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that

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needs not to be ashamed.” 2 Timothy 2:15.

c. It gives sure hope of future glory. “The hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.” Colossians 1:5.

2. God

A Personal Creator

1. WITH what affirmation does the Bible open?

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Genesis 1:1.

“How tremendous are the implications of this simple statement! It denies atheism by declaring that there is a God. It denies agnosticism by implying that God may be known. It denies pantheism by distinguishing between the Creator and the creation. It denies polytheism by revealing that God is One. Indeed, there is no false ‘ism’ which is not condemned by this statement.” - Dr. W. Graham Scroggie, in “The Christian.”

2. In what other ways does the Bible teach that God is a personal Being?

a. He is described as “living.” “He is the living God.” Jeremiah 10:10.

b. Personal faculties and actions are attributed to Him. “The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” 1 Peter 3: 12.

c. Jesus is declared to be the “Son” of God and Jesus claims God as His “Father.” “God sent forth His Son . . . to redeem them that were under the law.” Galatians 4: 4, 5. “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice⁹ He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” Luke 23:46.

d. He is called the “Father” of man and the righteous are described as His “sons.” “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things.” 1 Corinthians 8:6. “You are the children of the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 14:1.

3. What testimony does nature bear to the existence and personality of God?

“The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made even His eternal power and Godhead.” Romans 1:20.

“There is nothing between absolute scientific belief in a creative Being and the acceptance of the theories of the fortuitous concurrence of atoms. If you think strongly enough you will be forced by science to the belief in God, which is the foundation of all religion.” -Lord Kelvin.

“What a thunderstorm of facts! But what do they all signify? Is it all a meaningless maze of materialistic facts, or is it one syllable in God’s explanation of Himself to men, so that the ‘meanest flower that blows’ and the merest hint of design, show the working of the mind and power of One whom a son may call Father?”-Revelation Leslie D. W. Weatherhead in “The Eternal Voice.”

4. How do the Scriptures therefore regard those who deny His existence?

“The fool has said in his heart, There is no God.” Psalm 53:1.

“Posterity will one day laugh at the foolishness of the modern materialistic philosopher. The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the works of the Creator. I pray while I am engaged in my work at the laboratory,” - Louis Pasteur.

“Atheism, unlike agnosticism, with which it should not be confused-Atheism, the denial of God, is not a system of philosophy fit for intelligent people; seeing that it totally fails to account for the universe, life, and human experience. And also is generally rejected by scientific opinion, at least in this country.”-Dr. Heywood, Bishop of Ely, in the Church Times.

5. How do the Scriptures emphasize the unity of the Godhead?

“God is one.” Galatians 3: 20.

6. What does the Bible say of God in contrast with other alleged gods?

“Though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him.” 1 Corinthians 8:5, 6.

7. What title does the Lord take to distinguish Himself from all other claimants?

“The Lord is the true God.” Jeremiah 10:10.