

NOTES

~ *The Bible* ~

Introduction: God has entrusted us to write down His history, His ways, and His prophecies and their fulfillments over hundreds of years. And while translations and differences in the writers have introduced minor discrepancies, the basic message of reconciliation between God and man has never changed. This message is contained in what we call the *Bible*.

What is the Bible? It's the Old Testament Scripture and letters and Gospels of the New Testament. This collection contains historical books, reflections of wisdom (both man's and God's), blessings, and warnings.

- The **Old Testament** of today's Bible is the '*Scripture*'- the Torah - Jesus read from in the synagogue [**Luke 4:16-21**] and what He used to counter Satan's temptations [**Matthew 4:1-11**], and what Paul refers to for training [**2Timothy 3:16-17**] and as an offensive weapon [**Ephesians 6:17**], again used by Jesus to counter Satan's temptations.
- The **New Testament** contains historical recordings of Jesus' life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension. It also contains letters written Paul, Peter, John, and James to help teach the new Church how to behave in a way that's pleasing to God and our Christ. It also contains warnings and apocalyptic descriptions of future events.

Why do we care? The Bible tells us how to be obedient out of faith. It helps us understand God so we can know what He likes and dislikes; wants for us or doesn't; created us for. It's the 'sword' we use as an offensive weapon to fend off evil. It's also the compass by which we direct our thoughts and actions and is a *lamp unto our path* [**Psalms 119:105**].

Where did it come from? I did say it's a collection of writings including the Torah (became the Old Testament) and the letters and Gospels (now contained in the New Testament). Major milestones in the creation of the Bible:

- 380 A.D. The Latin Vulgate
- 1380 A.D. The first English translation of the Bible by John Wycliffe
- 1560 A.D. Geneva Bible (used by the Pilgrims)
- 1611 A.D. King James Bible
- 1971 & 1983 A.D. The New American Standard Version (NASV) & The New International Version (NIV)

NOTES

How do we study it?

- Seek to understand the *writer's* message – not “what it means to me”!
[2Peter 1:19-21]
- **R-C-A** (read, consider, and assimilate (do)).
- **READ (R):** Start simple and short, but make time daily. Can look for themes in the Bible dictionary or concordance, study specific books, or just go from beginning to end (not recommended for the inexperienced!). Categories of Scripture for topical study:

Wisdom/worship: Psalms – Song of Solomon

Gospels/the early Church: Matthew - Acts

Letters/application: Romans - Revelation

History: Genesis - Job

Prophets: Isaiah - Malachi

- Consider historical, geographical, and cultural **contexts**. What time period did the authors live in? What was happening around them at that time? Where did they live? Who were they speaking to?
- **Meditate – CONSIDER (C)** - [Joshua 1:8] & [Psalm 1:2-3]
- **Apply** what we learn in renewing our minds – **ASSIMILATE (A)** - [Romans 12:2] and become *doers* of God's words [James 1:21-22]; Great for being obedient and dealing with life issues.
- **Tools**
 - Bible versions (for comparing to get a clearer picture)
 - Dictionaries (for understanding proper meaning)
 - Concordance (for doing studies by theme)
 - Electronic media like E-Sword

Summary: The core message contained in the Bible is God's desire to be reconciled with His creation. The Bible is a collection of writings that teach us God's ways and provide guidance to help us build faith and become obedient out of that faith, which will allow the reconciliation God desires.

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ASK: What do *YOU* think the Bible is?

God's 'word' –
message

Often **inspired** by the Spirit of God; **written** by men; **compiled** by men

The Torah – Scriptures

- History
- Wisdom
- Prophecies (near & far)

- Jesus (**W**ord) fulfilled the **w**ord
- Jesus – Law expert – countered Satan
- Scripture for training & offense

NT:

- Gospel
- Fulfillment
- Discipleship
- Apocalypse

Why care?

- Learn to **love** God & man
- **Illumination**

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Source:

- Scripture - Torah (OT)
- Gospel accounts and letters (NT)
- Compiled by Rome and in Latin (380)
- In an understandable language (1380)

How to study:

- **Whole and in context!!**
- No private interpretation (**one meaning, many applications**)

RCA

Categories

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Prophets: Isaiah – Malachi

Context: historical, geographical, cultural, and textual

Meditate: Think about what was read and build a picture

Apply: Be a doer based on what you know

Tools

Summary

- Consider historical, geographical, and cultural **contexts**.
 - What **time** period did the authors live in?
 - What was happening around them at that time?
 - **Where** did they live?
 - Who were they speaking to – who was the **audience**? For instance, Jesus spoke in farming terms to farmers, fishing terms and concepts to fishermen, etc.

- **Meditate – CONSIDER (C)** - [**Joshua 1:8**] & [**Psalms 1:2-3**]

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And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.” And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” —Luke 4:16-21.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’” Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU’; and ‘ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’” Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’” Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’” Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him. —Matthew 4:1-11.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. —2Timothy 3:16-17.

And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. —Ephesians 6:17.

Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path —Psalm 119:105.

So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. —2Peter 1:19-21.

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. —Joshua 1:8.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers. —Psalm 1:2-3.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. —Romans 12:2.

Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. —James 1:21-22.