

# The Integrity of the Bible

**This lesson will provide an overview of why the Bible is special, reliable, and supernatural.**

Complete the following discipleship lesson using a pen and a Bible. Look up the verses below in Scripture and fill in the blanks when necessary.

There are many different books that claim to have truth. There are also many different religions that claim to know about God. How does one know that the Holy Bible is God's Word? What does the Bible say about itself?

## 2 Timothy 3:16

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

Our Bible today is actually many Scriptures that have been organized into one great book. Over 40 people wrote these 66 books over a span of at least 4,000 years. They wrote the Bible not of their own accord, but under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

## 2 Peter 1:21

*For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

## Prophecy Confirms the Bible's Message

The following verses from the Old Testament and their New Testament fulfillment (1,000's of years later) show us the prophetic and supernatural nature of the Bible. These verses are prophecies concerning the life, ministry, and death of Jesus.

| Event  | Prediction (made by 700 BC) | Fulfillment (by 33AD) |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Jesus would be _____ of a virgin.                    | Isaiah 7:14                 | Matthew 1:18          |
| Jesus would perform many _____.                      | Isaiah 35:4-6               | Matthew 9:35          |
| Jesus's followers would go to the ends of the _____. | Isaiah 49:6                 | Matthew 28:19-20      |
| Jesus would be spat upon and _____.                  | Isaiah 50:6                 | Matthew 26:67         |
| Jesus would be buried in a _____ man's tomb.         | Isaiah 53:9                 | Matthew 27:57-60      |
| Jesus would die amongst _____.                       | Isaiah 53:12                | Luke 22:47            |
| Jesus would be born in _____.                        | Micah 5:2                   | Matthew 2:18          |
| Jesus would be sold for _____ pieces of silver.      | Zechariah 11:13             | Matthew 26:14-16      |
| Jesus's hands and feet would be _____.               | Zechariah 13:6              | John 20:27            |

These prophecies are but a small selection of the many that were fulfilled by the life and ministry of Jesus. Their fulfillment show us that the Bible is a book like no other. It is a book that is inspired, infallible, and incredible in nature.

## History Confirms the Bible's Integrity

Was the Bible changed over time? If the Bible is from God, how do we know that we have that same Bible today?

### ***The Bible Has an Extraordinary Number of Close Ancient Copies***

How does the Bible compare with other ancient texts considered 'accurate copies'? Has it been passed down well over time? Consider the following list of ancient texts and their corresponding amounts of copies intact today.

| Author/Work              | Year Written     | Earliest Copy | Time Gap Between Copies | # of Copies         |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Caesar                   | 100-44 BC        | AD 900        | 1,000 Years             | 10                  |
| Plato                    | 59 BC - AD 17    | AD 900        | 1,200 Years             | 7                   |
| Homer                    | 900 BC           | 400 BC        | 500 Years               | 643                 |
| Shakespeare's King John  | AD 1590          | AD 1623       | 33 Years                | 228                 |
| <b>The New Testament</b> | <b>AD 40-100</b> | <b>AD 125</b> | <b>25 Years</b>         | <b>over 24,000.</b> |

The New Testament contains the closest historical copies, and the highest number of copies of many ancient texts considered accurate. **We can trust that the New Testament has not been altered via comparison with other ancient texts.** The next closest document, as far as historical accuracy is concerned, is Shakespeare's 37 plays.

### ***The Bible's Testimony Lines Up with Secular History***

Included below is a historical passage that describes the life of Jesus.

*"At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good, and (he) was known to be virtuous and many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not desert his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly, he was perhaps the Messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders."*

*Josephus, 93 AD [a non-Christian scholar] also quoted by Agapius [an Arab historian], "Testimonium Flavianum."*

This is just one of the many passages from secular world history that confirm Jesus's life, His \_\_\_\_\_ on the cross, and the report that He rose from the \_\_\_\_\_.

### ***The Bible was not Modified by any Church Council or Political Group***

Some purport the myth that the books of the Bible were hand chosen by the Emperor Constantine for the Catholic Church's political or monetary gain. Why were certain books and letters chosen as God's Holy Word? Who decided what would be determined as Holy Scripture?

**The books of the Old Testament** were decided upon prior to the life of Jesus by Jewish scholars and prophets. Jesus taught that the Old Testament was inspired by God and that it testified about Him (Luke 24:44).

#### **The books of the New Testament were:**

- Acknowledged by the Apostles as Scripture at the time of writing (1 Timothy 5:17-18, 2 Peter 3:14-16)
- All written by eyewitnesses to the life of Jesus (1 Peter 5:1, 2 Peter 1:16-17, 1 John 1:1-3)
- Agreed upon by a multitude of Early Church Fathers like Polycarp, Irenaus, and Clement
- Are first listed as the complete canon by Athanasius in AD 367

#### **Why were certain books and letters determined not to be Holy Scripture?**

- They were never quoted by Jesus or the Apostles (not recognized by the founders of the faith)
- They do not claim divine inspiration (don't even claim to be from God)
- They are not found in any description of the 'canon', or Holy Bible from 0 AD- 400 AD
- They contain blatant contradictions to the primary teachings of the accepted Scriptures

## The Bible is God's Word

The Bible is God's Word and is unique amongst all other books. If you need inspiration to read the Bible we suggest starting with the Book of John, a dynamic account of the life of Jesus.