

Search for Truth
Lesson One

Introduction to the Bible:

It is important to understand that the Word of God, the Bible, is: **inerrant, infallible, and never changing!** There is **complete harmony** in both the Old Testament and the New Testament scriptures. This is because “**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 Tim 3:16-17)

The scriptures have been proven to be authentic and completely accurate in the fields of: Science, History, Archeology, Medicine, as well as the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. We have also been given prophecy in the scriptures that have come to pass as well as many other prophetic utterances that are in the process of being fulfilled before our eyes.

Isaiah 46:9-10

9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and **there is none else**; I am God, and there is none like me,

10 Declaring the **end from the beginning**, and from ancient times the things that **are not yet done**, saying, My counsel shall stand, and **I will do all my pleasure**:

Amos 3:7

7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

John 13:19

19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, **ye may believe that I am he.**

This is the whole reason that prophecy was given to us. So that we could understand and know that our God knew the end from the beginning and spoke it in our ears that when it come to pass that we may believe that God is and there is none other but He.

I challenge you to stand upon the Word of God for yourself **and watch** the promises of God come true in your own life!! But for this to take place, one must have **scriptural knowledge** and **understanding** of how to **apply this knowledge** in your own life, so that you **may be able to stand** against the Tricks of the Enemy.

Chart Cover

John 5:39

39 Search the scriptures; for in them **ye think** ye have eternal life: and they are they **which testify of me.**

Jesus spoke these words to the Jews. He was trying to tell them that they think they have eternal life as they continuously searched through the scriptures, but without understanding of what the scriptures meant. For eternal life was found in Jesus Christ of which the scriptures testified of. Yet the Jews did not believe nor understand and thus fulfilled this scripture, “But the word of the LORD was **unto them** precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.” (Isa 28:13) All of this happened because of their unbelief.

Precept - a general rule regulating behavior or thought.

So this is saying that the word of the Lord was unto them one rule or commandment upon another until it had ensnared them. This being because they never understood the scriptures and in their ignorance they went about to establish their own righteousness by the works of the Mosaic Law rather than to follow after the righteousness that is after the faith of Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:3-4

3 For they being **ignorant of God's righteousness**, and going about **to establish their own righteousness**, have not submitted themselves unto **the righteousness of God**.

4 For Christ is the **end of the law for righteousness** to every one that believeth.

Let us take heed and not follow after their same example of unbelief!!

Romans 3:3-4

3 For what if some did not believe? **shall their unbelief** make the faith of God without effect?

4 **God forbid:** yea, let God be true, **but every man a liar**; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

Chart One - The Old Testament: What is it?

It is important to understand that the Bible is a collection of books and letters that were written for our learning. The Old Testament is a collection of **39 books**. We learn about the Creation of the world, mankind's failure in the Garden of God, the birth of the Hebrews, which were the people of God that was chosen out by God for His own great pleasure, the History of the nation of Israel, as well as the nature of a Holy God who established the Mosaic Law for His people to keep to the saving of their souls.

The Old Testament is divided into **5 sections:** Law, History, Poetry, Major Prophets, and Minor Prophets. Understanding how the Old Testament is divided up **will help you** when you want to **find a particular book** in the Old Testament that you would like to study. **If you know** what grouping the book you desire to study is located, then you can **easily find it**. For example, if you wanted to study the book of Jeremiah, if you were to learn that this book is located in the section of Major Prophets, then you could quickly bypass the categorical listing of Law, History, and Poetry.

So what does each Category of the Old Testament contain?

Law - Which is the first 5 books of the Old Testament. They were written by Moses. Some people believe that the book of Genesis was written by as many as 10 authors and that there accounts were placed together to form the book of Genesis.

The first book of the Bible Genesis, which means **origin**, was taken from the first Hebrew word of the Bible which was, “**In the beginning**”. The book of Genesis contains **the beginnings** of many topics including the nation of Israel.

The other four books of the Law focus on the giving of **the Mosaic Law** of God at Mount Horeb, which is also known as Mount Sinai, after the Exodus of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, wherein they were in bondage to the Egyptians. Also included is the journey to the promised land of Canaan, which God had promised to give to Abraham and to his seed, in their generations for an **everlasting covenant**. However, due to their rebelliousness, disobedience, and lack of faith **they were not able** to enter into the promised land and therefore **sentenced to walk about in the wilderness** of Sinai for 40 years **until everyone of them who rebelled against God died** there in the wilderness.

Genesis 17:5-8

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee **exceeding fruitful**, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish **my covenant** between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an **everlasting covenant**, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for **an everlasting possession**; and I will be their God.

Hebrews 3:16-19

16 For some, when they had heard, **did provoke**: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them **that had sinned, whose carcasses** fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, **but to them that believed not?**

19 So we see that they could not enter in **because of unbelief**.

History - The next section located after the Law is a collection of 12 books. These books give the details of the nation of Israel, their trials, their whoredoms they committed by the worship of false gods, their continuous provoking of our LORD, their going into captivity for their disobedience and wickedness that they committed before our God in the breaking of His Laws, their deliverance from these captivities **when they turned again** to keep the Laws of God, the division of the 12 tribes of Israel and their scattering among the heathen nations for their continual rebelliousness against our LORD, and finally their restoration to their homes in the promised land.

These 12 History books cover a date range of about 800 years from the 13th to the 5th Century B.C.

Poetry - Located about center of the Old Testament is the section known as Poetry which contains 5 books. Three of these books contain the parables and instructions of King Solomon of whom God gave a wise and an understanding heart to. Also the book of Job is contained within this section which tells us the story of the life of a man named Job who suffered the loss of all his riches, his family, and servants in one day. He then suffered greatly in his flesh. **But God restored** unto job **more than** he had lost and his **latter end** was more than his beginning. The book of Psalms is also located within the Poetry section. This book is full of praises, promises, prayers, prophecies, and commandments.

Major Prophets - Located after the Poetry section is the Major Prophets which contain 5 books. The only difference between the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets is the length of their writings.

Minor Prophets - Located after the Major Prophets and just before the New Testament. There are 12 books located in the Minor Prophets.

Both the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets prophesied of many events. Some of these events included the coming of the Messiah, the end time, the kingdom age, as well as warnings and instructions from God concerning what Israel ought to do.

The Old Testament was written over a period of 1,400 years by 32 different writers covering approximately 3,600 years. Although these writers came from many different backgrounds, their writings **perfectly harmonize** one with another. This is because there is really only one author, that is **the Holy Ghost** which moved upon each of these writers to write the Word of God.

2 Peter 1:20-21

20 Knowing this first, that **no prophecy** of the scripture **is of any private interpretation.**

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: **but holy men of God spake** as they were **moved by the Holy Ghost.**

Most of the Bible was written under difficult conditions and situations. It was produced in pastures, prisons, and other unlikely writing situations. The writers had no typewriters, pens, or smooth white paper. They used quills or bone pens on parchment or skins while writing by candle or an oil lamp.

Chart Two - From God's Hand to Ours!

This chart is to prove that the Bible came directly from God's hand to ours!! This collective group of writings that we recognize today as the Old Testament was carefully preserved and therefore is completely accurate and authentic.

How did we get this Book? How did a collection of 66 short books emerge as one complete

work?

For the first 2,500 years of man's history the written Word, the Bible, did not exist. However, God manifested himself to man in other ways.

Romans 1:20

20 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**; so that they are **without excuse**:

John 1:3

3 All things were made **by him**; and without him was **not any thing made** that was made.

Colossians 1:16-17

16 For **by him** were **all things** created, that are **in heaven**, and that are **in earth**, visible and invisible, **whether they be** thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by him, and for him**:

17 And he is before all things, and by him **all things consist**.

Psalms 19:1-3

1 **The heavens declare** the glory of God; and **the firmament** showeth his handiwork.

2 **Day unto day** uttereth speech, and **night unto night** showeth knowledge.

3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

Creation declares that there is a God!

Job 27:10-11

11 I will **teach you** by the hand of God: that which is **with the Almighty** will I not conceal.

12 Behold, all ye yourselves **have seen it**; why then are ye thus altogether vain?

Look around at Creation and you will see the Wisdom of God.

Proverbs 8:12, 22-31

12 **I wisdom** dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

22 The **LORD possessed me** in the **beginning** of his way, **before his works** of old.

23 I was set up **from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever** the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, **I was brought forth**; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills **was I brought forth**:

26 **While as yet he had not made the earth**, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, **I was there**: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when

he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 **Then I was by him**, as one brought up with him: and **I was daily his delight**, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and **my delights were with the sons of men.**

Jeremiah 10:12

12 He hath made the earth **by his power**, he hath established the world **by his wisdom**, and hath stretched out the heavens **by his discretion.**

The Lord also communicated His will verbally with a few select men. That being Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. So even though there was no written Word of God, God still communicated to man His Will.

God also gave man a conscience to know right from wrong. So God manifested himself to man by His creation, by verbal communications with a few select men, and by giving us a conscience.

Moses was the first man to receive the written Word of God. He received this written covenant Law of God, that was written **with the finger of God** on two tablets of stone, atop Mount Sinai which is also known as Mount Horeb. This covenant is known as **the Mosaic Law** because it was given by Moses.

John 1:17

17 For the law was given by Moses, but **grace and truth** came by Jesus Christ.

This Law of God that was given unto Moses was meticulously preserved throughout all generations and throughout all ages. Moses was instructed by God to place the tablets of stone, which contained the Law of God, into the ark of the covenant of God which was also known as the ark of testimony.

Within the Law was instruction for how to preserve the Word of God that was given unto Moses.

Deuteronomy 17:18-20

18 And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall **write him a copy of this law in a book** out of that which is before the priests the Levites:

19 And it shall be with him, and **he shall read therein all the days of his life:** that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, **to keep all the words of this law and these statutes**, to do them:

20 That his heart **be not lifted up** above his brethren, and **that he turn not aside** from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he **may prolong his days** in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.

With extreme care the scribe must ensure the king's copy to be precisely like the original. Also Moses commanded the priests, the sons of Levi, that the Law should be read in the hearing of Israel every 7 years.

Deuteronomy 31:9-11

9 And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

10 And Moses commanded them, saying, **At the end of every seven years**, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

11 **When all Israel is come** to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, **thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.**

Also it was commanded that all Israel **diligently** teach the Law to their children and to **continuously** speak of the Law of the Lord which He commanded for them to keep.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which **I command thee** this day, shall be in thine heart:

7 And thou shalt **teach them diligently** unto thy children, and **shalt talk of them** when thou **sittest in thine house**, and when thou **walkest by the way**, and when thou **liest down**, and when thou **risest up**.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign **upon thine hand**, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt write them **upon the posts of thy house**, and on **thy gates**.

We should learn from this example spoken by God. We too should **continuously** study the New Testament Covenant, **diligently** teach our children the Word of God, and **speak** of the Word of God **everywhere** we go, when we **lie down**, and when we **raise up**. Let us be wise.

The Lord also commanded Moses to have the children of Israel to make them **fringes in the borders** of their garment throughout their generations that they put upon the fringe of the borders **a ribband of blue**: that when their **eyes beheld the fringe** they would remember to **keep the Law of the Lord** that was given to them by the hand of Moses in the Mount Horeb.

Numbers 15:37-41

37 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them **fringes in the borders** of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a **ribband of blue**:

39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may **look upon it**, and **remember all the commandments** of the LORD, and **do them**; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

40 That ye may remember, and **do all my commandments**, and be holy unto your God.

41 I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

If there had been any error that occurred in the reading of the Law **someone would have notified the priest**.

Even when the children of Israel went into Babylonian captivity under the rule of king Nebuchadnezzar, **God's word was preserved** by the prophets Daniel and Ezekiel. After 70 years of Babylonian captivity the children of Israel would **once again** return into their own land and would **revere** and **obey** God's word.

Ezra, a scribe in Israel, read and emphasized the Word of God by reading to his people from the books of Law, History, and the Prophets. Through the efforts of Ezra, the Old Testament books were restored to full prominence.

From Ezra's time forward, all the Old Testament writings were gathered **into one collection**. These writings **were preserved** until the time of Christ. By this time the Word of God was **firmly established**, not even the rejection of Christ could disturb it.

Psalms 100:5

5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and **his truth endureth to all generations**.

Psalms 119:89

89 For ever, O LORD, **thy word is settled in heaven**.

God made sure that His Word would be **preserved** unto future generations. Jesus also let us know that the Old Testament writings **were the Word of God**.

Luke 24:44

44 And he said unto them, **These are the words which I spake 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.**

Notice that Jesus specifically mentioned the three major sections of Old Testament Scripture: the **Law**, the **Prophets**, and the **Psalms**.

The Law includes the first five books of Scripture. The Prophets include Major and Minor Prophets, as well as Joshua, Judges, Samuel and the Kings. The Psalms were also a general division including: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles.

This type of division was used long before the time of Christ and was firmly established when Christ made this reference (Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament*, page 259).

With the invention of the printing press the cost in book printing was greatly reduced. The first book printed off the printing press was the Bible. For the first time the general public had access to the Bible.

Modern scholars have proven that today's Old Testament **is exactly the same** as in ancient biblical times. Nothing has changed! **It is accurate!**

The original Hebrew Scriptures were copied and translated for generations. In Alexandria, Egypt, during the 2nd and 3rd centuries B.C., one of the earliest and most important translations into the Greek language was called the “Septuagint” (meaning “seventy”) because of the seventy Jewish scholars who prepared it. Since that time, the Bible has been translated and paraphrased into more languages than any other book in existence (Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, page19).

The first complete English translation was made in 1382 by John Wycliffe. His work was soon followed by other English translators, producing the Tyndale Bible, Coverdale Bible, and the Geneva Bible.

The King James Version was published in 1611. This became known as the Authorized Version because the work of translation was encouraged and sponsored by King James I of England (Maxwell, *Your Bible and You*, page 39).

The Bible was not divided into chapters and verses when first copied from the manuscripts. The Latin Vulgate translation **was the first** to incorporate **verse and chapter divisions** in both Old and New Testaments.

From God’s hand to ours!!

Chart Three - The Bible: Unique and Wonderful!

Our Bible is indeed uniquely different from all other books. It has been read by more people and published in more languages than any other book. More copies of it have been produced than of any other book in history. No book could remotely compare with the circulation of the Scriptures. **Nor has an other attained** its constant circulation.

The Bible’s translation is also **unmatched**. It has been rendered and paraphrased into **more languages than any other book**. By 1966, the entire bible appeared in **240 languages** and dialects. One or more books of the Bible was translated in an additional **739 languages** for a total publication of **1,280 languages** (Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 3, page 588)!

The Bible is un-equalled in its survival of time. Having first been written on perishable materials, then copied and recopied for hundreds of years before the invention of the printing press, **still its style and accuracy have never diminished**.

Compared with other ancient writings, the Bible has **more manuscript evidence** than other classical literature. The Bible is remarkable in its **survival of criticism**. It has withstood vicious attack from enemies **as has no other book**. Voltaire, the French infidel who died in 1778, said that in one hundred years, Christianity would be erased from history. But what has happened? Only fifty years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society **used Voltaire’s own printing press** and house **to produce hundreds of Bibles** (Norman Geisler and William Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, pages 123-124)! The Bible is the first religious book **to be taken into outer space**. From Genesis 1:1, the astronauts read, “In the beginning God.” And Voltaire said it

would be forgotten by 1850?

Matthew 24:35

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

1 Peter 1:24-25a

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

While these qualities do not alone prove the Bible is the Word of God, they do signify that it has no equal. **Every intelligent person** should want to read the one Book that has drawn **more attention** than any other. And **every person** who is searching **for truth** will surely want to carefully examine its unique qualities.

There is another amazing difference between the Bible and all other books. Authors may pray for God's help and guidance, which God provides. Certainly many good books have been written with God's help. Still, even the most saintly writer would hardly claim for his book: "God wrote it!"

But that is claimed for the Bible. Both Old and New Testament writers claim to write the very words of God. The Bible is filled with expressions such as, "God said," "the Lord commanded," "the Word of the Lord came unto me." Such phrases appear **more than 3,800 times**.

Paul, writer of more than half of the New Testament, attributed that his writings were from God, "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (**1 Cor 14:37b**)

Satan has bitterly and subtly fought God's Word, Why? **Because God works through the power of His spoken Word!**

How were the worlds created? **By the Word of God (Heb 11:3)**

How is every child of God begotten, or born again: **By the Word (James 1:18)**

After spiritual birth, how does God's child derive the sustenance and maintenance of their existence? **Through the Word of God (Mt 4:4)**

Chart 4 - How Can We Know the Bible is True?

A. Science

Many proofs within the Bible indicate that it is indeed a divine Book. But **can it's truth** be verified to those who do not believe in the bible itself?

Proofs must be found outside the Bible, evidence that can be substantiated and accepted. And

there are many!

Exciting discoveries from various fields of science, medicine, history, archeology, and prophecy ascribe **biblical authenticity**. Let's examine what they tell us. The Bible is **the only Book that is accurate** in all scientific details. Science textbooks are almost immediately obsolete because of continuing scientific discoveries. However, **the Bible has never been proven incorrect** in one scientific aspect.

In the days of Columbus, navigators believed the world to be flat. It was considered unsafe for a ship to venture far beyond the coast. Men believed that ships would fall over the side of the world to be destroyed by huge sea monsters and dragons.

Not until brave explorers began seeking new trade routes to the Far East was man really sure that the world was round. **Yet this profound truth was written in the bible all the while!**

“It is he that sitteth upon **the circle** of the earth”. (Isa 40:22a)

The Hebrew word for circle: refers **not to** a flat circle on a surface, **but to** a spherical shape such as our globe!

Ancient men believed that the world was flat and that underneath were giant supporting pillars. Only since Copernicus has science confirmed that no such literal pillars exist. The earth moves through space unsupported by solid objects. Nonmaterial forces hold both the earth's axis and other heavenly bodies in their appointed places.

How clever of man to discover this amazing scientific fact! **Yet the Bible precisely concluded the same analysis thousands of years earlier!**

“He stretcheth out the north over the **empty place**, and hangeth the earth **upon nothing**.” (Job 26:7)

How many stars are in our universe? Science has always claimed an answer. Hipparchus, the father of Greek astronomy, counted 1,080 stars. This account was still believed accurate three hundred years later. Not until Galileo's invention of the telescope in the 1600s did anyone know how minimal this figure was. Countless millions were scattered throughout space!

Current textbooks cautiously state the number of stars. How many are there? Astronomers estimate that there are over 100 billion in our galaxy alone!

Man could never accurately determine such incomprehensible numbers. Sir James Jeans acclaims there to be about as many stars as grains of sand on all the beaches of the entire world!

Only in this century has man reached this conclusion. **But the Bible revealed long ago, that the host of heaven could not be numbered.** Jeremiah was unaware of future scientific calculations. However under Holy inspiration, he proclaimed. “As the host of heaven **cannot be**

numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured”. (Jer 33:22)

Not until the early decades of the twentieth century did scientists unlock the mystery to the nature of matter and energy. Today we know that all matter, whether solid, liquid, or gas, is composed of atoms – submicroscopic particles so tiny they cannot be seen by the naked eye. Atoms combine to form molecules which combine to form the everyday matter with which we are familiar.

Yet the writer to the Hebrews was aware of this scientific data centuries ago. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit he explained:

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were **not made of things which do appear.**” (Heb 11:3)

B. Medicine

Medical science has recently made tremendous advances. But great progress may have been made sooner **had physicians sought their treatments from the Bible.**

For many centuries, physicians practiced the treatment of “bleeding” a suffering patient. Puncturing a vein and allowing blood to drain began among primitive people.

As recently as the eighteenth century, physicians believed that bleeding “relieved” the patient of “bad blood” or impurities responsible for the disease. George Washington died from a “bleeding” administered by physicians as treatment for a cold.

Further studies in anatomy and medicine proved this practice erroneous. In fact, just the opposite was affirmed. Rather than extracting blood, patients lives are saved **by giving them blood** transfusions.

How many lives could have ben spared had ancient physicians carefully read Moses’ words?

“For the life of the flesh **is in the blood**”. (Lev 17:11)

C. History

History recorded before the time of Christ also proves biblical truths. Scores of cities mentioned in the Bible have been located and passively identified by geographers, historians, and archaeologists.

The Bible is the most reliable history of all ages. **Every detail and account** is historically accurate.

Until recent years, one of the most notable arguments used by critics stated that the account of

Creation and the Flood are only myths or legends. However, they must now consider evidence found elsewhere of these events. The Flood account in Genesis is not the only written record of this catastrophe.

Historians have found similar Flood traditions in the history of **every known civilization** of the world! Each tradition describes a **universal destruction of the human race by water, a boat** provided as a means of escape and in almost every account man's evil is given as the cause of the Flood punishment.

All accounts must stem from a common source – the actual Genesis Flood itself!

D. Archeology

The more experts search and dig, the more they affirm **the truth of the Bible**. Archeology, a science developed in the last two hundred years, deals with the excavation and evaluation of items found from the ancient past.

This is a most fascinating science. **Tangible evidence proves that the Bible is indeed accurate and reliable**. Bulletins from every part of the globe verify the Scriptures.

Archeology is largely responsible for confirming the historicity of the Old Testament. By discovering and establishing innumerable details, the Bible ranks as a **highly valued source** of history.

Archeology has refuted many modern critics. Entire Old Testament nations have been rediscovered. Important people have astonishingly been resurrected to fill in historical gaps.

How do we know a major Old Testament figure named Abraham actually lived: How can we prove he was not just a fictional character from a book of fables and myths: His identity has been uncovered through archeology. The name "Abraham" even appears in Babylonian excavations from the very age in which he lived.

Abraham's hometown, **Ur of the Chaldees, has also been located**. The city was discovered in southern Mesopotamia, about 140 miles southeast of the site of ancient Babylon.

Civilization was highly developed in Ur. Commerce, business, and industry thrived. Ships from the Persian Gulf brought alabaster to make statues and idols often mentioned in the biblical account.

Clay tablets indicate that schools taught writing and dictation lessons in vocabulary. In arithmetic, they had multiplication and divisions tables. Many findings at Ur substantiate that Abraham came from a highly civilized city.

Archaeologists have also found data to prove New Testament writings. Luke's detailed accounts are ridiculed by critics. They claim he was totally mistaken about the familiar Christmas

story found in Luke, chapter 2. Critics argued that there was no census, that Quirinius was not governor of Syria at that time, and that everyone was not forced to return to his ancestral home.

However, **archeologist have discovered records** in ancient Rome about a regular enrollment of taxpayers and a census that was conducted every fourteen years. This procedure began the exact time mentioned by Luke! Excavations in Antioch also ascribe the governorship to Quirinius (John Elder, *Prophets, Idols and Diggers*, pages 159-160)!

Further archeological evidence from a manuscript found in Egypt reads: “Because of the approaching census, it is necessary that all those residing for any cause away from their homes should at once prepare to return to their own governments in order that they may complete the family registration of the enrollment.” (Joseph Free, *Archaeology and Bible History*, page 285)

Archeologists have discovered most ancient cities mentioned in the Book of Acts. Paul’s journeys can now be accurately traced

Even Christ’s passion becomes more vivid under the spade of the archeologist. For centuries there was no evidence or record of the “Pavement,” the court where Christ was tried by Pilate (John 19:13). Critics accused that such details must be erroneous.

However, archeologist Albright identified this court in the Tower of Antonia, the Roman military headquarters in Jerusalem. Left buried when the city was rebuilt in the time of Hadrian, it was discovered in recent times. (William Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine*, page 141)

To charge that the Bible is unreliable demands that one discard almost all literature of antiquity. Reviewing the thousands of archeological finds that support the biblical account, we can clutch the Bible firmly and stand upon its truth and reliability.

An intelligent person will aspire to read the one Book that has drawn the most attention and has been the most documented through archeological finds.

E. Dead Sea Scrolls

Because no original manuscript still exists today, critics have accused the Bible of being untrue and undependable. Writing materials in those days were very crude and perishable. Consequently, there are no known original Scriptures.

In centuries just prior to Christ, the books of the Bible were inscribed on parchment and leather scrolls. Just like an old pair of shoes in the attic, this leather crumbled with age.

But many old copies of the Bible do exist! Scholars today confirm as genuine and authentic any writing of the same period if ten or more copies can be found. Thousands of copies from ancient times have indeed been found. These writings are in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Syriac, Egyptian, Gothic, Persian, and other languages.

Just which are the oldest Bible manuscripts today? Until the twentieth century, the oldest Hebrew Old Testament copy was dated from A.D. 1008

Understandably, people have eagerly sought more ancient biblical texts. In 1947 two shepherds discovered one of the greatest treasures in archeological history.

Two bedouin shepherd boys were crossing a barren pass south of Jericho near the Dead Sea. While driving goats to market in Bethlehem, they lost one among the rocky cliffs in an area pocketed with numerous openings and caves.

During his search for the goat, one of the boys casually tossed a stone into a cave opening he heard the crash of breaking pottery. Curious, he ventured inside. In a pile of shattered clay was a large scroll wrapped in linen. Eight more jars containing scrolls stood in the dark, sandy cave.

When biblical scholars deciphered these scrolls, they were stunned! **The scrolls dated more than 1,900 years old!** Most notable among them was **a complete copy** of the Book of Isaiah. This twenty-four-foot-long leather scroll had been transcribed in the century before Christ!

Eventually, similar scrolls in jars were found in eleven other caves. **The total find** has been named “Dead Sea Scrolls.”

Who copied and cared for these scrolls? Most historians credit the Essenes – a Jewish sect living in this area before and during the time of Christ. Around A.D. 70, facing Roman invaders, these monks and scribes escaped with their lives, but left hidden in the caves their precious manuscripts. The scrolls remained there for nearly 1,900 years (Ralph Earle, *How We Got Our Bible*, pages 48-49)!

Because of this incredible treasure we now have fragments and some complete texts of every Old Testament book, except Esther, all dating from the time of Christ. Along with the scrolls were various other writings. Altogether, **these manuscripts provide remarkable proofs** that late copies and translations were identical to the Scriptures Christ read while on earth.

Upon comparing the facts, we observe an abundance of reason for believing that the Scriptures are trustworthy. We can say without hesitation that the Bible contains the true Word of God **without loss** from generation to generation throughout the centuries.

The two copies of Isaiah discovered among the scrolls were a **thousand years older than any manuscript previously known**. Yet they paralleled word-for-word with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text. The other 5 percent consisted of variations in spelling (Archer Gleason, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, page 25.)

Before this startling discovery, critics questioned, “How accurate are the copies today compared to the text of the first century? Since it has been copied numerous times, can we trust it”?

The Oldest complete Hebrew manuscript was from about A.D. 1000. What assurance can there

be of an accurate transmission since the time of Christ in A. D 32? **Now we have the answer!**

And so, scholarship goes on. New discoveries are made from time to time, giving us more evidence, verifying the details of God's story. Evidence comes bit by bit . . . a fragment of parchment here, and ancient tablet there . . . scrolls left untouched for nearly two thousand years.

But what do all these clues from history mean? Overwhelmingly, they confirm that God's Word has been passed untouched through the ages!

Ink fades. Leather crumbles. Paper perishes. But the Bible, indestructible, radiant, and divine, is imperishable. It will never die!