

# LIVING BY THE BIBLE

## PART 2: IS MY BIBLE THE ONLY BIBLE?

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All religions have sacred scriptures ("Bibles"), texts that members of those traditions have found to reveal the nature of God and/or ultimate reality. These texts are used as a basis for their beliefs.<sup>1</sup>

RELIGION	SACRED SCRIPTURES ("BIBLES") OF OTHER RELIGIONS
Islam	The Quran and The Hadiths
Hinduism	The Vedas, the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita
Mormonism	Book of Mormon and Doctrines & Covenants; Pearl of Great Price, and Statement of Faith

<sup>1</sup> The word Bible is derived from Koine Greek τὰ βιβλία, τὰ biblíá, meaning the books. The word βιβλίον, biblion, itself had the literal meaning of "paper" or "scroll" and also came to be used as the ordinary word for "book."

Christian Science	Key to Health and the Scriptures
Roman Catholicism	Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition, Jerusalem Bible, New American Bible, The Living Bible (Catholic Edition), and others.
Jainism <sup>2</sup>	The Agamas
Judaism	The Tanakh and The Talmud
Buddhism	The Tipitaka
Shintoism	The Kojiki
Sikhism	The Guru Granth Sahib
Taoism	The Dao De Jing
Wicca	The Book of Shadows

Table 1: Sacred scriptures of other religions

## WARM-UP QUESTIONS

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1. How would you respond to someone who said the Bible is obsolete?
2. How would you respond to someone who said the Bible is simply a bunch of do's and don't's?
3. In what ways has the Bible shaped your life?

## WHICH BIBLE IS TRULY GOD'S WORD?

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If God truly revealed himself to us in written form then it would have to be genuinely unique and able to give clear evidence of authenticity. These required pieces of evidence became the standard (canon) used to identify those writings that are genuinely God's Word.

**It must have clear evidence of \_\_\_\_\_.**

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>2</sup> A nontheistic religion founded in India in the 6th century BC by the Jina Vardhamana Mahavira as a reaction against the teachings of orthodox Brahmanism (an early stage of Hinduism), and still practiced there. The Jain religion teaches salvation by perfection through successive lives, and non-injury to living creatures, and is noted for its ascetics.

Does the book claim to be divinely inspired using phrases such as, "Thus says the Lord..." or "The Lord spoke to..."

**It must have clear evidence of \_\_\_\_\_.**

It must have been written, edited, or endorsed by an accredited agent of God such as a prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ, or one of his apostles or someone close to an Apostle (e.g. Luke, Mark).

**It must have clear evidence of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Was there soundness and consistency with other canonized writings? Did the book agree doctrinally with the teachings of known canonical books?

**It must have clear evidence of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Was the book universally recognized by the Jews and/or by the early Christian church as being God's Word? Does the Holy Spirit bear witness to the regenerated reader that the book is His Word?

**It must have clear evidence of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Is there evidence in history, or the known canonical books, of the fulfillment of this book's promises or predictions (prophecies)?

► The only Bible which meets these criteria (canon) contains the \_\_\_\_\_ books in the Old Testament<sup>3</sup> and the \_\_\_\_\_ books in the New Testament.<sup>4</sup>

## **ANCIENT BOOKS WITH NO EVIDENCE OF BEING GOD'S WORD**

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### **The Apocrypha**

These are ancient writings (30-150 BC), written by unknown authors, containing false teachings, such as the command to use magic (Tobit 6:5-7), the forgiveness of sins by almsgiving (Tobit 4:11; 12:9), offering money for sins of the dead (2 Maccabees 12:43-45).

### **Pseudepigrapha**

These are 52 false writings written by unknown authors (200 BC to AD 300) who attempted to gain a readership by tacking on the name of a famous biblical character such as 1, 2 Enoch, the Book of Abraham, the Book of Moses, the Testament of Solomon, and more.

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<sup>3</sup> These are the same as the books in the Jewish Tanakh which are grouped differently.

<sup>4</sup> These are the 66 books found in the Protestant Bible.

## Gnostic gospels

These are 16 spurious writings by early "Christian" Gnostics during the period of AD 100-300. The 16 Gnostic gospels are forgeries, fraudulently written in the names of the Apostles to give them legitimacy in the early church. These are also called "Secret Gospels and include the gospel of Thomas, the gospel of Philip, the gospel of Mary, etc. These were all rejected by the Jews, the early church, and Roman Catholics.

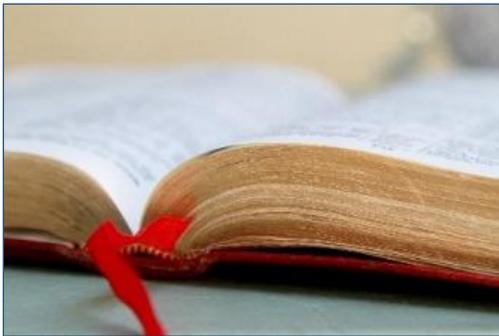
## YOU CAN CONFIDENTLY LIVE BY THE BIBLE BECAUSE:

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- It is \_\_\_\_\_ by God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet.1:20-21).
- \_\_\_\_\_ is inspired by God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21). This is called plenary inspiration.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is inspired by God (1 Cor. 2:13). This is called verbal inspiration.
- It contains \_\_\_\_\_ in the original languages. This is called inerrancy.<sup>5</sup>
- It will \_\_\_\_\_. It is infallible.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

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If God revealed himself through a written book it would have clear evidence of being miraculously different from all other books. Only the canonized Bible of 66 books which were written over about 1,500 years, by forty different authors, in three different languages, presents a single life-transforming message of God's redemption of fallen man. No other book that has ever existed, or any books that

exist today, can boast of these miraculous characteristics. *It is truly God's Word!*

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<sup>5</sup> For more on biblical inerrancy see "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," < <https://www.moodybible.org/beliefs/the-chicago-statement-on-biblical-inerrancy/articles-of-affirmation-and-denial/>>. Accessed October 2, 2020.

## WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

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Goodspeed, Edgar J. *The Apocrypha*. New York City: Vintage Books, 1938, 1959, 1989.

Lutzer, Erwin W. *Seven Reasons Why You Can Trust the Bible*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1998.

McDowell, Josh. *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999.

Wright, Fred Hartley. *Our Inspired Bible*. Butler, Indiana: The Higly Press, 1960.