

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE BIBLE

THE BIBLE is the inspired and unerring record of what God has revealed to men concerning Himself and the Way of Salvation.¹ Hence, if we ask, “What must I do to be saved?” the answer to our question must be sought in the Bible. It tells us what to believe and what to do in order that we may belong to God's kingdom on earth and in heaven.² It is the only rule and standard of Christian faith and life.

WHY NEEDED. Even without the Bible, men know that there is a Higher Being. Their own conscience tells them that there is a God who will punish them if they do wrong;³ and the works of nature proclaim that there is an Almighty Being who created them.⁴ But the knowledge of God which men gain from their own conscience and from nature is insufficient. Neither nature nor conscience can tell us anything about the Way of Salvation which God has prepared for us in Jesus Christ. It is only from the Bible that we can learn how we shall be saved.

ITS INSPIRATION. The Bible is the Word of God. It was written by holy men whom God inspired.⁵ It contains knowledge which no man could have discovered by his own power. It foretells events which no uninspired man could have foreseen. It contains teachings so exalted and holy that they could not have originated in the heart of man. It possesses a power such as no merely human book ever did or could possess.⁶

ITS OBJECT is to make us wise unto salvation.⁷ It is to be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path⁸ to guide us safely through this world to our heavenly home. It contains all that we need to know and all that we ever shall know in this world concerning God and His will.⁹ It is the final and absolute authority in all matters of religion. We should, therefore, pay most earnest heed to its teachings, believe them with all our heart, and apply them in our lives.

ITS CONTENTS. It consists of sixty-six “books,” written between the years 1500 B.C. and 100 A.D., and contains the History and the Doctrines of the Kingdom of God.

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT. The Bible consists of two parts: The Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament reaches from Creation to about 400 B. C., and shows how God prepared the world for Christ's kingdom. The New

1 II Tim. 3:16.† Gal. 1:8.

2 Matt. 6:33.† Acts 16:30.† John 5:39.†

3 Rom. 2:14, 15.

4 Ps. 19:1.†

5 II Pet. 1:21.†

6 Heb. 4:12.

7 II Tim. 3:15.† Prov. 9:10.†

8 Ps. 119:105.†

9 Luke 16:31

Testament reaches from the birth of Christ to the end of the world, and shows how Christ came and established His kingdom.

LAW AND GOSPEL. The Bible contains Law,¹⁰ telling us what we must do, and Gospel,¹¹ telling us how we are to be saved. The Old Testament contains principally Gospel. But there are Law and Gospel in both. The Gospel in the Old Testament is prophetic. The Old Testament prepared the way for the New; the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old. With the New Testament, God's revelation to men was completed;¹² no further revelation will be given.

THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

<i>Historical</i>		
Genesis,	Judges,	I Chronicles,
Exodus,	Ruth,	II Chronicles,
Leviticus,	I Samuel,	Ezra,
Numbers,	II Samuel,	Nehemiah,
Deuteronomy,	I Kings,	Esther
Joshua,	II Kings,	
<i>Poetical</i>		
Job,	Proverbs,	Song of Solomon
Psalms,	Ecclesiastes,	
<i>Prophetical</i>		
Isaiah,	Joel,	Habakkuk,
Jeremiah,	Amos,	Zephaniah,
Lamentations,	Obadiah,	Haggai,
Ezekiel,	Jonah,	Zechariah,
Daniel,	Micah,	Malachi.
Hosea,	Nahum,	

The *historical* books of the Old Testament give an account of the creation of the world and of man, of the entrance of sin and death, of God's covenant with Israel to save them, and of the history of Israel as God's chosen people. The *poetical* books give the teachings of the Old Testament covenant in prayers, proverbs and hymns. The *prophetical* books contain many instructions, admonitions and prophecies (especially

¹⁰ Micah 6:8.†

¹¹ John 3:16.†

¹² Heb. 1:1,2.†

concerning Christ who should come to save men) which God sent to the Israelites through the prophets. The first four prophets are called the Major Prophets; and the last twelve, the Minor Prophets.

THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

<i>Historical</i>		
Matthew,	Luke,	Acts
Mark,	John,	

<i>Didactical</i>		
Romans,	I Thessalonians,	James,
I Corinthians,	II Thessalonians,	I Peter,
II Corinthians,	I Timothy,	II Peter,
Galatians,	II Timothy,	I John,
Ephesians,	Titus,	II John,
Philippians,	Philemon,	III John,
Colossians,	Hebrews,	Jude

<i>Prophetical</i>		
	Revelation	

The *historical* books of the New Testament give an account of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ and of some of His apostles. The *didactical* books (the epistles or letters) explain the Gospel of Christ more fully, and show how we are to believe in Him aright and live aright. The *prophetical* book tells in figurative language what shall take place in the Church of Christ up to the time when there shall be new heavens and a new earth.

CANONICAL BOOKS. The sixty-six books enumerated above are inspired, and are called the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments. The so-called Apocryphal Books, printed in some editions of the Bible, are not a part of the Bible; they are not inspired.

OUR ENGLISH BIBLE. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek. Our English Bible is a translation from the Hebrew and the Greek. The English Bible which is in ordinary use is called the Authorized Version, or King James' Version. It is a translation made by a body of learned men and published in

England in 1611, during the reign of James I. The Revised Version is an improved translation made by a body of learned men in England and America and published in 1881-1885. The Bible in whole or in part has been translated into a thousand or more languages and dialects.

QUESTION.--1. What is the Bible? 2. What does it tell us? 3. Why do we need it? 4. Why do we say that the Bible is the Word of God? 5. What is its object? 7. What does it contain? 7. Of what two parts does the Bible consist, and how far do they reach? 8. What do we mean by Law and Gospel, and where are they found? 9. What is the relation between the Old and New Testaments? 10. Name the books of the Old Testament. 11. What do the historical, poetical and prophetic books of the Old Testament contain? 12. Name the books of the New Testament. 13. What do the historical, didactical and prophetic books of the New Testament contain? 14. How many canonical books of the Bible are there? 15. In what languages was the Bible originally written? 16. Tell what you know about the English Bible? 17. Into how many languages has the Bible in whole or in part been translated?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--II Tim. 3:16,17. 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.

Matt. 6:33. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Acts 16:30,31. What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

John 5:39. Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Ps. 19:1. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

II Pet. 1:21. 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.

II Tim. 3:15. From a child thou hast known the

holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Prov. 9:10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Ps. 119:105. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Micah 6:8. He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.

John 3:16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Heb. 1:1,2. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.

READING.--The Child Jesus in the Temple, Luke 2:41-52; or Mary sitting at Jesus' Feet, Luke 10:38-42.

ILLUSTRATIONS.--*Study of the Scriptures:* Jesus and the Apostles at home in them, Matt. 4:4-10, Acts 2:14 *seq.* Timothy, II Tim. 3:15. The Bereans, Acts 17:10-12. *Variouly received:* The Parable of the Sower, Luke 8:5-15.