

**WHY  
BELIEVE  
THE  
BIBLE?**

**by Russell Collins**

## WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?

The only proper answer to that question is “Because it is true”. However, so many and great are the claims made by the Bible, that it has to be decided whether or not to accept those claims. Much of what the Bible teaches has been discarded by contemporary society, but there can be no justification for accepting some of those claims and rejecting others. The Bible has to be accepted for what it claims to be, or rejected as a fraud. There can be no position of neutrality concerning this issue; there should be no grounds for indecision.

The most significant claim made by the Bible is that it is the Word of God, written by men who were divinely inspired to record what was put into their minds by a supreme being. The claim that it is divinely inspired is made repeatedly throughout most of the Old Testament in phrases such as, *“The Lord said ...”*, or *“Thus saith the Lord ...”* or *“The word of the Lord came unto ...”*

Also, the New Testament writers constantly claim divine inspiration, both for themselves and for the Old Testament writings. Mark writes, *“David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared ....”* (Mark 12:36) Paul asserts in 2 Timothy 3:16, *“All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”* (Revised Standard Version; RSV).

Peter explains in 2 Peter 1: 20 and 21 that no Scriptural prophecy is to be interpreted in and of itself: *“First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”* (RSV). He also points out in 1 Peter 1: 10 to 12, when writing of salvation, the ultimate goal of faith, *“The prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired about this salvation; they inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things which have now been announced to you by those who preached the good news to you through the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, ...”* (RSV)

John states in 1 John 1:5, *"This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all."* (RSV) And in Revelation 1: 1 and 2, *"The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him ... and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, ..."*

The foregoing references provide sufficient evidence on which to base the claim that the Bible is the Word of God. It should be expected that its contents are in harmony with that claim. The issue of the divine inspiration of the Bible has to be decided upon the evidence, and if that evidence is sufficient to establish the claim of divine inspiration, then it follows that the Bible is true. The established truth of the Bible then sets at nought the objections of unbelievers, and at the same time strengthens the faith of those who accept the Bible as the Word of God. The evidence must show that there are certain features and qualities of the Bible which set it above all other books, and which make it impossible for it to have been written without superhuman motivation and direction.

The features and qualities of the Bible which must be considered with respect to the claim of divine inspiration include:

- \* its antiquity;
- \* its story; that is, the history of mankind as related to Christ and Christianity;
- \* its harmony; firstly its internal harmony between the theme of its subject matter and the unity of its authors; and secondly its external harmony with science;
- \* its history, both internal and external; that is, how it relates to external historical records;
- \* its influence for moral good;
- \* its preservation, its translations and global spread; and
- \* its prophecy.

## **The Antiquity of the Bible**

The oldest narrative manuscript known to man is the Epic of Gilgamesh, the author of which is unknown. In the narrative is a description of a world-wide flood. The first book of the Bible also has the account of a flood, but the Bible record goes back to a time long before that event. It is widely accepted that the historical record of that very early period has been retained by word of mouth, passed from generation to generation as the oral histories.

It has been established that the first five books of the Bible were written by Moses during the years around 1500 BC, and for him to have described the events which took place so long before his time, in such chronological detail, and with such authority, he would have needed more than the oral histories remembered by the story-telling elders of the tribes. The explanation is given in the books themselves; that the words he was to write came from a being he called God.

The last book of the Bible, the Revelation, was written in about 100 AD, so from the time of the writing by the first author to that of the last there is a period of some sixteen hundred years. The Bible was originally written in Hebrew and Chaldee (Daniel 2:4 to 7:28), Aramaic and Greek, but the various translations come from four manuscripts that were written about 400 AD. Those manuscripts were copied from earlier works, the process of copying, by hand, going back to the original writings which have been lost. However, those four manuscripts from the late fourth and early fifth centuries, which have given us the present Bible, have been verified to a significant extent by the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were found at Qumran near Jerusalem soon after the second world war. The Dead Sea Scrolls include all but one of the books of the Old Testament, and were written between 300 BC and 100 AD, making them the oldest Bible writings known.

## **The Bible Narrative**

The Old Testament, from the point of view of being a narrative, begins with the description of the creation of the heavens and earth, the earth at first being in darkness and without form or organisation. Then follows the creation of natural light; night and day; the forming of the seas and dry land; the creation of grass, trees and vegetation; the bringing into existence of seasons and years.

Next follows the creation of fish and water-dwelling creatures of all kinds; of flying birds; of earth-dwelling animals and insects of all kinds; and finally the creation of the first humans, Adam and Eve, in the image of God.

There was then a period of human history during which men were long-lived, and which was ended by the flood. Only the family of Noah was saved from the flood to re-establish the human race. After some time there followed the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The latter's family settled in Egypt, where it became the beginning of the nation of Israel. These events are recorded in Genesis.

From Exodus to Deuteronomy the account continues with the development of that nation, their enslavement to the Egyptians, and their deliverance under the leadership of Moses and Aaron.

The journey of the Israelites to Palestine and the vicissitudes of their history during the period of the judges is given in the books from Joshua to Ruth. Then in Samuel, Kings and Chronicles the events include the establishment of a royalty under Saul, David and Solomon, the division of the nation into the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and their subjugation, firstly by Assyria in 722 BC, and then by Babylon in 585 BC.

After the Babylonian captivity some of the Israelites returned to Palestine with the permission of Cyrus, the king of the Persian empire, and were advised from then on by holy prophets during the period recorded in Ezra, Nehemiah and the books of the prophets, until Christ was born in Bethlehem.

The account continues in the New Testament with the ministry of Jesus, His selection of the disciples and the message He brought to all people, culminating with His death and resurrection. These events are recorded in four separate accounts, the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The next book, the Acts of the Apostles, describes the event at Pentecost and the beginning of the spread of the gospel message. The missionary work of the apostles in establishing the Christian church is explained in the New Testament epistles, most of

which were written by Paul to the groups of Christians scattered throughout the region, which was then still under the control of the Roman Empire.

The Biblical record concludes with the prophetic book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, in which the Bible narrative is projected into the future by symbolic descriptions of events to come, right up to the time when Christ, as He promised to do, will return to earth to complete the work He began two thousand years ago.

The Bible account deals only with the origin and history of the Israeli race and the milieu in which that history took place. It does not deal with other races in other lands which had no interaction with the nation of Israel, except in so far as those other nations became included as the Gentiles of the New Testament.

The historic sweep and coherence of the Bible account of the progress and civilising of the human race and the rise and development of the Christian religion are unique. Other histories from other epochs and other nations, while also being unique, deal only with the times and events of the empires of those epochs.

### **The Harmony of the Bible**

If we were given a purely human collection of books, written by more than forty authors over a period of 1600 years, we would have as diverse a collection as could be imagined; yet throughout the sixty-six books of the Bible there is an intricate harmony, an underlying unity, which can be seen even by the superficial reader. Yet the Bible was written in such widely separated places as Babylon, Rome, Egypt and Palestine; the authors themselves representing every class of society from kings to fishermen, from priests to tax collectors; some being educated in Pharaoh's palace, others in such places as sheep pastures, the courts of Nebuchadnezzar, the desert, the schools of the prophets and at the feet of Gamaliel.

The Old Testament was available to New Testament writers, but most of the authors could not possibly have seen each other to collaborate on their writings, and some of the New Testament writers had in all probability not seen the works of many of the Old Testament authors.

In spite of the very wide spread of the authors in time and place, they are in agreement on all the major themes dealt with in the Scriptures. For example, consider the Bible's central theme, the redemption of the human race, and trace it through.

Firstly there is the promised seed, referred to in Genesis 3:15. Soon after that is recorded Abel's sacrificing of a lamb (Genesis 4:4; Hebrews 11:4) — a type of the Lord Jesus. Then follow Noah and Abraham, and after them the Israelites, all of whom offered sacrifices as types of the Sacrifice made *"Once for all"* by the Lord Jesus. (Genesis 8:20; 22:13; Exodus 12: 3 to 6; Leviticus 16: 3 to 15; Hebrews 9: 25 to 28; and 10:10)

Next in order there is Isaiah's prophecy in Chapter 53 verses 4 and 5, *"Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."*

The fulfilment of these and other sacrifices and prophecies occurred in the death of Jesus. He gave His perfect life as the corresponding price for the perfect life which Adam lost when he disobeyed God's command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. By paying that price, Christ redeemed, that is, bought back, the lives of all the human race. And with Jesus' resurrection God sealed His promise to re-establish mankind unblemished by sin.

Jesus as the Lamb of God is the antitype of all the Old Testament types of sacrifice. The theme is carried through to the Revelation where those who have been redeemed exclaim: *"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"* (Revelation 5:12). The whole theme is progressively developed, nothing is untimely or out of place, and yet the period of time from the first writer to the last is some sixteen hundred years.

If we take any other subject in the Bible, such as sin, or death, or the nature and character of God Himself, we find the same unity and harmony. However, if we were to ask a group of theologians questions on Christ's second advent, or on baptism, or on the

Kingdom Age, or the membership of the true church, the variety of the answers would be, to say the least, very great. But consideration of the information given by the writers of the books of the Bible on any of these topics shows that they are all in agreement.

For example, consider how the world came into being. Moses tells us, *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* (Genesis 1:1) David writes: *"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made."* (Psalm 33:6) Paul says, *"By him (Jesus) were all things created"* (Colossians 1:16), and John declares, *"All things were made by him (Jesus); and without him was not anything made that was made."* (John 1:3) All of them are in agreement, the New Testament writers giving us the additional information that Jesus was God's agent in creation.

Another aspect of the unity and harmony of the Scriptures is that they do not clash with empirical scientific knowledge. The Bible is a book about the Christ in prophecy and in fulfilment; it is not a book of science in the contemporary sense of the word.

If the writing of the Bible was divinely inspired, then its author was also the creator of the world and of the laws of nature. Therefore there should be no disagreement between the Bible and empirical science. The Bible states that God created all things: it does not say how they were created. Living things were created to perpetuate themselves, *"each after his own kind"* (Genesis 1:11 et seq) that phrase now being embodied in the meaning of our understanding of genetics. Job said that God hangs the earth on nothing, (Job 26:7) a concept now established in the laws of gravitation.

On the other hand, attempts have been made to explain the miracles of Jesus as ordinary events, but while the records do not provide analytical detail, no writer of the time when the miracles were performed denies that they took place as described in the Bible. Those writers treat them as facts, and as such they were events of supernatural power. The miracles formed part of Jesus' credentials as the representative of the being who gave Him the supernatural power to feed the multitudes and heal the sick; practical, helpful acts of love, which is the whole motivation for all of God's dealings with mankind.



Objections to certain passages of the Bible are raised on scientific grounds, but the objections are not able to withstand proper investigation. One example is when the sun was supposed to have stood still as recorded in Joshua 10:13. A better translation for “stood still” is “remained dim, stayed as it was”, which means that the sun did not shine as usual on that day, making it a much dimmer day than normal. Evidence for this translation may be seen in Strong’s Hebrew Concordance, reference number 1826.

### **The History of the Bible**

The internal history of the Old Testament of the Bible is summarised in **The Bible Narrative** discussed previously in this booklet. It is a chronological and coherent account of the dealings of God with certain members of the nations of earth.

This account is the major reference work for the history of the region around the Mediterranean Sea before and at the beginning of the Christian era. Palestine, the home of the Israelites, was in touch with Egypt to the south-west, with Syria to the north and north-east, and with the empires of Assyria and Babylonia further to the east. It also had a frontier on the Mediterranean Sea, which brought it into contact with other nations of Africa and Europe to the west.

Until about a century and a half ago, the historical records of the Old Testament were the only account of the Middle East for that period. They were unconfirmed and unchallenged with respect to their accuracy. However, archaeological research and the growing understanding of the hieroglyphics of Egypt and the cuneiform script of Mesopotamia have made available many records of the people surrounding Palestine on every side, from Egypt, from Babylonia, from Assyria, from the Hittites, Canaanites, Hurrians, and other nations inhabiting the country to the north, in the centuries of the early days of the Middle East civilisations.

The Old Testament account has given a framework for recent archaeological findings, such as the period of great construction in ancient Egypt attributed to Ramses, who was the Pharaoh who enslaved the Israelites. From another aspect, many of those findings have confirmed the truth of the Biblical records, such as the discovery of sedimentary evidence of an ancient flood in Iran and Turkey.

Even so, there is still nothing that can match the historical worth of the Old Testament. The Hebrew writers wrote continuous narrative accounts with great skill; they were objective and critical, and wrote entirely from the point of view of religion; they were not concerned with the greatness of their nation but only with their relationship to the will of their God, Yahweh. The Hebrew historians show a marked superiority over their contemporaries, not only in their own sphere of activity, but to historians in other nations all over the earth, indicating the tutelage of a higher power which had the knowledge of everything that had happened in that realm.

In harmony with the truth and accuracy of the internal history of the Bible is a further, very significant reason for regarding the Scriptures as the Word of God, and that reason is the respect in which it was held by Jesus Christ. He accepted as authentic the history of the Old Testament.

During Jesus' ministry He referred to the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah (Matthew 10:15; 11: 23 and 24; Luke 17:29), to the shewbread (Luke 6: 3 and 4), to the deluge (Matthew 24: 37 to 39), to the account of Jonah in the belly of the sea creature (Matthew 12: 39 and 40), to the miraculous feeding of the widow of Zarephath (Luke 4:26), to the cleansing of Naaman (Luke 4:27), to the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14), and to the daily provision of manna (John 6: 31 and 32). In every case Jesus spoke of those events in the manner of one who accepts them as true.

The historical characteristic of the New Testament is very different from that of the Old Testament. It is not a history of a people, but of a movement, and it covers a period of less than a hundred years. It consists of a biography (in four different accounts) followed by an historical narrative covering some thirty years, which in turn is illustrated by a number of treatises in the form of letters, and concludes with the Apocalypse. The only New Testament book that can properly be termed "historical" is the book of the Acts; it is a history of a community, coupled with a biography of one of its principal members, but it is not the history of a nation. In details it occasionally touches on the history of the Roman Empire, and here it meets all the requirements of accuracy.

With the extent of evidence from many sources now available, the New Testament has been shown to have been written by either eye-witnesses or contemporaries of eye-witnesses, and to be accurate in its historical details. Further studies in archaeology and literature can add support to these facts about the Bible, but cannot detract from them.

### **The Power of the Bible for Moral Good**

Of what other book can it be said that its entry into the home has in thousands of cases the world over effected a moral and spiritual revolution for the better? Drunkards have been made sober, broken homes have been restored, fiery tempers tamed and stolen goods returned. The Bible has motivated thousands of men and women to minister to the needs of impoverished people in their own countries, and to primitive peoples in other lands. The Bible's influence has established hospitals, universities, orphanages and benevolence agencies by the hundreds.

The effect of Bible reading is shown more strongly when the societies in different nations are compared over many generations. In those societies which have made extensive use of the Bible over a long period of time, there is a marked moral and social betterment over those societies where the Bible was not used. It has also been remarked that it was in the nations of western Europe, where there was a strong Christian influence, that the great ideas of contemporary science developed, and where the freedom of thought associated with religious freedom, allowed those ideas to be applied to social changes which have resulted in what is now broadly defined as western civilisation.

It is true that since the World Wars, particularly the second global conflict, these moral and social contrasts are disappearing, and for a very significant reason. The communities which used to honour the Bible are ceasing to read it, and the moral standards of their peoples are declining. With the abundance of reading material, and the pervasive influence of television, men and women today are turning away from the Word of God, which commands the highest standards of moral behaviour, to the seductive and debasing words of writers who have abandoned such moral standards.

## **The Preservation, Translation and Spread of the Bible**

There is now an immense amount of material available for Scriptural research and revision. There is more material available for the comparative studies of the Bible than for all the other works of comparable antiquity grouped together. During the centuries known as the Dark Ages, when reading and writing were not taught and written works were extremely rare, the churches retained the manuscripts that existed, and maintained the skills used by the few amanuenses by supporting them in the monasteries associated with those religious organisations, usually in conditions of great poverty.

Interest by the church hierarchy in the Bible as a source of authority over the communities they served encouraged a gradual growth in copying and translating the Scriptures, and soon commentaries by the scribes began to be added to the libraries of those times. Some of the rich men, kings and court officials patronised the expansion of literary endeavour, and some of them added to the number of written works with their own commentaries and ordinances.

When Gutenberg invented the movable type printing machine, the Bible was the book that was most in demand for printing, and it spread rapidly via the activities of the church, particularly through the growing Protestant movement. The Bible is the book that has been printed in the greatest number, translated into the most languages, and seen by far the greatest number of men and women. The history of its preservation and translation, despite being continually under attack from those who were opposed to its spread, is a testimony to God's care for his Word.

The preservation and spread of the Bible, when considered in conjunction with its influence for moral good, are unique in the annals of literature, suggesting strongly that behind them is a power beyond human capability or influence.

## **The Prophecies of the Bible**

The Bible is the only book known to humanity which has foretold events which subsequently have come to pass. Since it does so, then it should command people's respect and belief everywhere. This feature of foretelling the future, which is the usual meaning of the word "prophecy", is easily verified by study of the Bible and other histories.

Wise men do not try to predict the future, and generally leave attempts at prophecy alone. Few, if any, would care to stake their reputations on a confident opinion of what the world will be like at any time to come. But the reputation of the Bible as being divinely inspired, and its authority as the Word of God, may be considered to depend upon the fulfilment of its prophecies.

In Isaiah 13: 19 to 22, at a time about 700 BC, it was prophesied that Babylon would be overthrown and never rebuilt. The city had been established in about 2000 BC, and was destroyed by Assyria 11 years after the prophecy. It was rebuilt in about 678 BC, partly destroyed in 535 BC and from then on fell into ruins.

Zephaniah, in about 640 BC, predicted the same for Nineveh (Zephaniah 2: 13 to 15), when that city had been in existence from the time of Nimrod. (Genesis 10:11; Micah 5:6). When the prophecies were made, both of these cities were very large in size and population, and possessed great power and wealth. Today they are mounds for archaeologists to excavate.

Other cities, such as Damascus and Jerusalem, which were also great and influential at that time, are still standing today and are still inhabited. It took more than human knowledge to foretell which cities would be destroyed and which would survive.

Daniel, in chapter 2 verses 31 to 44, foretold the succession of world empires starting with Babylon, followed by Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, which arose centuries after his day, and his prophecy contains references to some events that are still future from our day. He also foretold the exact date of the commencement of Jesus' ministry (Daniel 9:25). His, and other prophecies about Jesus, are too numerous to permit discussion in a booklet such as this, but all were fulfilled in detail exactly as they were foretold.

Jesus also believed in and testified to the fulfilment of prophecy, in such words as "...but, that the scripture may be fulfilled..." (John 13:18), "...that the scripture might be fulfilled..." (John 17:12, and 19:28) and "*But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled?*" (Matthew 26:54). His endorsement of the Old Testament may be summed up in His words, "*The scripture cannot be broken*" (John 10:35).

The prophecy of the coming of a Messiah was known by the Israelites for a long time before Jesus was born, and was proclaimed by John the Baptist before Jesus began His ministry. Historical records establish that Jesus came, and the New Testament record proves that He was the Messiah. Surely only a supreme being could have had this knowledge and made it known centuries before the event took place.

Jesus' attitude to the Old Testament after His resurrection remained just the same. This is clearly seen from His discourse with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24: 27 to 32).

The New Testament writers, especially Paul in the second epistle to the Thessalonians (chapter 2: 3 to 8) and John in the Revelation, foretold the rise and history of the Papacy and many of the major events of this age, such as the Reformation (Revelation 10: 2 to 11; 13: 11 to 17) and the rise of Mohammedanism (Revelation 9: 1 to 11).

There are more prophecies than these in the Bible, and it is not possible to find one of them to be erroneous, that is, a prophecy that was made and did not come to pass. Some prophecies are still future to our time, but they cannot be said to be erroneous simply because the time for their fulfilment has not arrived. One prophecy, delivered and fulfilled, would establish the divine inspiration of the prophetic record; and the Bible has many prophecies of the greatest significance to mankind. The prophecies which have been fulfilled verify, as postulated earlier, that the Bible is the Word of God, written by men who were divinely inspired.

It has to be acknowledged that there are some passages in the Bible which are difficult to understand, and that some parts of the Bible are not easy to reconcile with other parts, though reconciliation can usually be made with careful thought and study. Difficulties of this kind are inevitable when dealing with the writings from a very remote period of history, translated by human agency from language to language and copied by scribe after scribe. Such difficulties will fade into insignificance with sincere study, and should not be allowed to detract from the compelling reasons for believing the Bible to be the Word of God. We are assured that it comes to us with the full authority of a message from God Himself.

## **Conclusion**

The manuscripts of the Bible are the oldest such writings known to exist, and carry with them the implication that they have been preserved by a special power or providence.

The Bible gives an account of the human race from its beginning and on into the future. It deals specifically with the origin and development of the Christian religion and the way in which all the nations of earth will come to benefit from the ministry of Jesus Christ, a man who lived two thousand years ago. It is a narrative which appears to be beyond human invention, and certainly beyond human achievement, indicating divine authorship.

The Bible record was written by more than forty authors over a period of sixteen hundred years, and has an inner harmony that demonstrates the influence of a divine power which directed the writing of its sixty-six books. The writers are all in agreement on their various topics, and the Bible has an external harmony with contemporary science.

The Bible is the best historical record of its times and peoples. Archaeological findings have confirmed many of the Biblical incidents, and the Bible provides the most significant framework for historical events of that region where the account is couched. To record that history in such detail so coherently and with such authority requires a superhuman control.

The Bible is also unique in its influence for the moral and social good of those people who try to exercise its precepts. Some other religions also encourage, to a certain extent, some of those moral and social influences, but the Bible has more than the sum of all other philosophies. The inception and scope of the principles of the Christian religion are above human thought, indicating again a divine source for the Scriptures.

The books of the Bible have been collected and preserved for thousands of years, and for much of that time, preserved against loss and destruction. In spite of antagonism to it, the Bible has flourished to the extent that it has become the most numerous, the most translated and the most widely read and studied book ever written.

These facts demonstrate that the power that has preserved the Bible has a purpose of which the Bible is a very important part: a divine power with a divine purpose.

The antiquity of the Bible, its narrative, its diverse authorship, its harmonies, its history and its preservation, and its influence for moral good; even singly, and certainly collectively; all indicating that it was written under divine inspiration, are concepts that are frequently debated. However, its prophecies, in the purest sense of that term, and their fulfilment, prove that the Bible is the Word of God. There is no way in the reasoning of men that this conclusion can be set aside.

The Bible has come from a supreme being who is named Yahweh, the Creator, and who Christians call their Heavenly Father.

### **Rewards for Belief**

It is sincerely hoped that the foregoing reasons for belief in the Bible will cause the reader to investigate this, the greatest of all books, for himself or herself. The rewards for a sincere attempt to understand the Word of God are greater than a feeling of accomplishment or a broadening of one's education.

The rewards include an understanding of God's plan for the human race and of His timetable for the whole world; an understanding of the fundamental problems of life and death, why evil is allowed, and a knowledge of the means by which everlasting life can be obtained.

The casual reader, however, cannot expect to reach an understanding of such deep and fundamental issues. The reader who would understand them must approach God's Word with sincerity, respect, and a strong desire to know and understand. The writer of the Proverbs gave this advice almost three thousand years ago in the second chapter of the book:

*“My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” (Proverbs 2: 1 to 5)*



The writer of the advice points out the need to seek for the knowledge of God as one would seek for silver, and to search for it as one would search for hidden treasures. Silver and hidden treasures are not found by superficial seekers, nor are the great truths of God found by casual readers. Some truths are found by all readers who take the trouble to read the Bible sincerely and respectfully, while further and deeper truths are found by those readers who study the Bible more closely and consult other reference works and aids to study, just as more silver and treasures are found by those who delve for them than by those who are content with a superficial investigation.

The understanding of the deeper truths of God as written for us in the Bible leads, however, to discoveries with which no material treasures may be compared. Included among these discoveries is the fact that God is greatly interested in all who turn to Him and desire to know Him, and that He is prepared to accept all who really believe in Him, and to grant them the opportunity of living with Him forever.

Another fact is that God has included in His plan a new world order in which the whole of humanity will be raised from death and be permitted to live on the earth in happiness forever.

God has made such blessings possible through His Son, Jesus Christ, around Whom the whole Bible, and indeed the history of the human race, is centered. Careful study of the Bible will enable the reader to find out who Jesus Christ was, and the purpose of His life among men, and the purpose of His death on the cross.

All who read the Bible carefully will find that God is not removed from us or unreachable; nor is He oblivious to the evil and injustice throughout the world. They will find that He is fully aware of all the needs of the world, and indeed of every one of us, and will, at His chosen time in the future, establish His righteousness on the earth for ever.

We should all heed the Apostle Paul's words to Timothy:

*“Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind.”* (2 Timothy 3:16; New English Bible)

Produced and Distributed by  
**NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP**  
ABN 21 004 108 589

ISBN 0 9578294 2 6

2002

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[info@newcovenantfellowship.org.au](mailto:info@newcovenantfellowship.org.au)