

2 Peter 3:1-2 The Word of God

2 Peter 3:1–2 This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior *spoken* by your apostles.

1. The Bible is the _____, _____ Word of God and is our sole _____ on theology, what is true in life, and how to live our life for God.

- The Bible was written by over 40 authors who were inspired by God, over a span of 1,500 years from different ethnic backgrounds, living on three continents and from various walks of life. The Old Testament contains 39 books and the New Testament 27 books, totaling 66 books.
- The Old Testament began with the writings of Moses about 1446 BC and ended with that of Ezra in 450 BC, a time period of over 1,000 years.
- 30 different men wrote portions of the Old Testament in Hebrew with a few chapters in Aramaic.
- Ezra is the person who gathered all 39 books together as a collection of books that is now called the Old Testament.
- All Hebrew scribes and scholars have agreed that since 450 BC that the books collected by Ezra is the completed Word of God.
- The historian Josephus said that the Old Testament was completed and closed by 424 BC. Josephus declared that since the death of Artaxerxes in 424 BC “no one had dared to add anything to the Jewish Scriptures, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them.”
- The New Testament began with Paul writing the book of 1 Thessalonians in 51 AD and ended with John writing the book of Revelation in 96 AD.
- There were 8 or 9 different men involved in the writing the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, James, Jude, and the writer of Hebrews.
- The New Testament was written in Koine Greek, the language of all the known world because of the conquests of Alexander the Great in the 4th Century.
- The New Testament Gospels and the Epistles were copied and circulated among the churches for years before the Council of Hippo in 393 AD and the Council of Carthage in 397 AD, met to establish the Canon of Scripture, from the Greek word “kanon,” which means “ruler,” or “standard,” which were a list of the books recognized as the Word of God, the Bible.
- The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John had been previously collected into one book by 100 AD. Justin Martyr, writing about 150 AD said that most of the churches were in the habit of reading from the four gospels in their weekly gatherings.

- The reason for the councils of Hippo and Carthage was to establish what was the inspired Word of God because of the proliferation of false writings and teachings infecting the churches. **2 Peter 2:1–2, 1 John 4:1–3, Jude 3–4**

Three tests were used to identify which books met the criteria of being divinely inspired.

1. The writer had to be an apostle, or someone closely associated with an apostle. Matthew, John, and Paul had all seen the resurrected Christ. The only non-apostles were Luke (who traveled with Paul), Mark (who accompanied Peter), and Jude who was Jesus’ half-brother.

- The apostles wrote their letters, gospels, and revelations to the churches. The churches, recognizing the authority of these writings, made copies and passed them to other churches, which was how the New Testament was spread throughout the Mediterranean world. **Colossians 4:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:27**

2. The writings had to line up doctrinally with the teachings of Christ, the apostles, and the Old Testament.

3. The writings had to be ones that the early churches read in their weekly services, the early church fathers accepted, and that the early church councils affirmed.

2. The Bible _____ to be the inspired, inerrant Word of God.

2 Timothy 3:16, Luke 24:44–45, 2 Peter 1:20–21, Hebrews 1:1–2, 2 Peter 3:15–16, 1 Thessalonians 2:13

3. Many _____ made by the writers of the Old Testament have happened exactly as _____. Example: there is over 200 years between the prophecy of Isaiah and the life of Cyrus King of Persia. **Isaiah 44:28, Ezra 1:1–2**

4. The _____ that God’s Word has displayed over the years to _____ lives easily suggests that the Bible is supernatural. **Ephesians 1:18–20**

5. _____ is a constant reminder and _____ of God’s nature and existence. **Romans 1:19–20**

6. The unity and agreement between _____ books written over _____ years by over _____ different authors is an amazing proof of a common supernatural author.

7. _____ discoveries have continued to prove the _____ of the Biblical descriptions of historical events and places.

8. The _____ of the Bible over the years to continue to _____ and be passed on over many years basically _____ with its original message demonstrates that God is the one who is guiding the process.

- The books of Moses had been copied for more than 1,400 years!
- We have over 14,000 manuscripts today.
- Comparing manuscripts of the same books in the Bible there are several thousand textual variants or differences, mistakes that were made in copying. The Bible manuscripts are 99.5% in agreement, with the variants only consisting of less than a half percent. The mistakes are minor blunders and none of the variants affect any major doctrine.
- Compared to non-biblical manuscripts: We have only 7 manuscripts of the writings of Plato (380 BC).
- We have only 5 manuscripts of the writings of Aristotle (350 BC).
- In 1947, a shepherd boy was throwing rocks in a cave and heard something break. Inside the cave, archaeologists found jars of ancient manuscripts, which had been preserved for 2,000 years. Dead Sea scrolls were found in 11 caves. They found 28 nearly complete scrolls and the 100,000 fragments of another 875 manuscripts, and multiple portions of every book of the Old Testament. They found 25 copies of Deuteronomy. As they explored other caves, they found a copy of the entire book of Isaiah. When they compared the Dead Sea Isaiah manuscript with the book of Isaiah we have today, they were identical except for the spellings of a few words.

9. A key proof that the Bible is the inspired Word of God is the _____ by those who read the Bible that it is _____. **Hebrews 4:12**