

The Bible

By Ron Boatwright

The Bible was written by about 40 different inspired men over a period of about 1600 years dating from about 1500 BC to about 90 AD. These men wrote Scripture as they were inspired of God. As 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Peter 1:20-21 says, "knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as *they were* moved by the Holy Spirit." All 66 books of the Bible are inspired of God.

The Bible is the most translated book in the world. It has been translated into more than 1700 different languages and dialects which is more than any other book that has ever been written. The Bible was the first book to be printed in 1454. The Bible continues to be the best seller in the world. The Bible is the only book that reveals the origin, mission, and destiny of man. It answers some crucial questions. Who am I? Where did I come from? What should I be doing now? Where am I going? Nowhere else can we find answers to these questions. It is our only textbook on how to go to Heaven. There are now in existence about 4000 known manuscripts of the Bible or parts of the Bible made between the 2nd and 15th centuries. This is far more than the manuscripts of any other ancient writing.

The backgrounds of the 40 inspired writers were very diverse. They include Samuel the judge; Amos the sheep herder and farmer; Ezra the priest; Nehemiah the statesman; David & Solomon were kings; Peter and John were fishermen; Matthew a tax collector; Luke a physician; Paul a tentmaker; and a host of other backgrounds. The 66 books of the Bible were written in palaces and prisons, in cities and in wildernesses, in times of war and in times of peace, and many other circumstances. It was written in three languages. Some were written in Hebrew, some in Aramaic, and others in Greek. They were written concerning events on three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. The prophecies stand alone in their graphic detail, accuracy, and exacting fulfillment. Yet with the 40 different writers over 1600 years span of time in three different continents, there are no contradictions because they were all inspired by an all-knowing all-wise God. According to 2 Peter 1:3, "as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and

virtue". Everything we need to know to be pleasing to God is found in the Bible.

Many of the inspired writers were unaware of one another's writings and sometimes in the dark as to the meaning of their own words. 1 Peter 1:10-11 says, "Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow."

It is better to speak the truth in love that makes one uncomfortable than to speak a falsehood that comforts and then causes one to be eternally lost. Acts 20:26-27 Paul says, "Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* innocent of the blood of all *men*. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God." We must declare the whole counsel of God. It is not love or friendship if we fail to declare the whole counsel of God. It is much better to be disliked for telling the truth than to be loved for telling a lie.

Revelation 22:18-19 gives us a very serious warning: "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book." Any teaching that is without Bible authority and integrity is false teaching and will cause both the teacher and those being taught to be eternally lost. Any teaching that is more than, less than, or different from what the Bible teaches is false teaching. We have a lot of false teaching going on in the world today. Anyone who teaches that which is different from the Bible will be held accountable by the Lord on Judgment Day.

Paul says in Galatians 1:6-8, "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." We dare not teach anything that is different than what the Bible says. We are commanded in Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." To do anything in the name of the Lord Jesus is to do it by His authority.

Down through the ages the Bible has come under attack with criticism, perversion, and abuse in Satan's effort to cast doubt on the truthfulness of God's word. Many have sought to ban and destroy the Bible. The Bible has been banned from many of our public schools. In some countries in the past Bibles have been confiscated and burned. In spite of all this the Bible has survived completely intact. There is no conflict between the Bible and the facts of science. But there are conflicts between the Bible and the evolutionist theories of so-called scientists.

The Bible is our roadmap to Heaven. But for us to go to Heaven James 1:21-23 says, "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." Only by studying and following God's word can we be saved and go to Heaven.