

About the Bible: Part 1

The Books of the Bible are Interdependent



There is a common phrase among people at Christmastime that Jesus is the "reason for the season." The fact is, Jesus is the reason for everything, especially within each book of the Bible. Each book has a type of scarlet thread running through it; a prophetic message that points to the Messiah. That message brings hope into the lives of all who read it: the promised Seed of Genesis will one day crush the head of the demon dragon of Revelation. But the message does not stop there. Everything that occurs in between consists of history's greatest dramas, adventures and love stories, an amazing journey into the heart of God Almighty.

Each book of the Bible is dependent on the others for the overall understanding. No book, or even part of a book, should be skipped, or thought of as insignificant. If God chose to have it written, then there is significance. Second Timothy 3:16-17 states that "*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*". All of the books of the Bible have a distinct purpose, a unified message, and the seal of authority from God Himself.

II 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.*" The written Word -- God's revelation to mankind -- was not fabricated by men who had an inkling to write, and nothing but time on their hands. No one could possibly know the mind of God unless God Himself chose to reveal His thoughts, His ways, His will, and the writers of the Word wrote only what the Spirit of God told them to write. In this manner, God communicated His heart to mankind, to be passed down from generation to generation.

The Bible is made up of 66 individual books, written by 40 different writers, over a 1600 year period, all with one Author, God Himself. Each book has a distinct Messianic undercurrent, often in surprising locations. The Promised Seed of Genesis is also the Branch of Righteousness in Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 23:5) The kinsman redeemer of Ruth is a foreshadowing of the Redeemer of the Gospels. The star that was to rise out of David in Numbers is also the King of kings and Lord of lords in Revelation. (Numbers 24:17)

No other author could fit together a more intricately detailed collection of writings, all with exact, divine cohesion. One book begins where the previous book ended, though it may have been written many years before. No human could possibly design a literary

work with the same depth and accuracy as is found in God's plan of redemption and salvation. Details abound in the Bible like no other piece of literature in all of history. War and Peace, Gone with the Wind, the works of Shakespeare, the Harvard Classics, are all overshadowed by the Word of God.

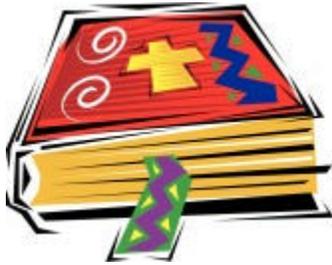
It is a privilege to have such an amazing book. No other book has stirred such division, yet brought such unity; caused such controversy, yet inspired such submission. No other spiritual writing has ever stood the test of time, nor stirred the heart of man like the living Word of God.

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About the Bible: Part 2

The Bible is Divided into Seven Distinct Sections



Some say the Bible is too difficult to understand. But with a solid overview of how the books are connected, readers can be inspired to read it, rather than avoid it. When approaching a book or section of Scripture that is obscure, the key is to keep reading through the mental block, and pray that God will open the eyes of understanding. Over time, God can pull together the necessary connections in the Scriptures to help them come alive.

The Bible can be divided into seven distinct sections, with each section building on the truths and developments of the previous. While some theologians may have differing opinions regarding names of the divisions, the following are general categories:

The Books of Law

This section consists of the first five books of the Bible, from Genesis through Deuteronomy. From the creation of man to the giving of the Law and the death of Moses, these books are also called the Pentateuch. While this section is not the most interesting to read, it does help develop a solid foundation for Biblical theology.

The Books of History

These books, from Joshua to Esther, lay out the entire historical record of the tribes of Israel, both the good and the bad. Beginning with the invasion of the Promised Land and ending with the return of the Judean exiles to Jerusalem, the books of History offer amazing insights into the common patterns of human nature, and the incredible patience of God.

The Book of Psalms

This book stands by itself as a praise and worship manual. David, who wrote most of the songs, knew what worship to God really was. Whether running from his enemies, or lamenting over the injustices of the world, or simply offering thanksgiving to the Lord, David always praised God and gave Him glory.

The Books of Poetry

This collection of books, which includes Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon, offers profound thoughts, emotions and philosophies of men. Yet despite the human influence, these books still point to God as the source and sustainer of life, love, fulfillment and wisdom.

The Books of Prophecy

These books, from Isaiah through Malachi, and the book of Revelation, together present the heart of God toward His people. His message is clear: obedience brings blessing, disobedience brings trouble. But God, in His mercy, gives His people multiple occasions to heed the warnings spoken through his prophets. God does not want anyone to perish, so He gives opportunity for people to turn from destructive behaviors.

The Books of the Gospel

This section, from Matthew through Acts, provides a clear picture of the life and ministry of Jesus, and the church that emerged after his ascension to heaven. The beauty of these books, placed at the beginning of the New Testament, offer just that: a new spiritual beginning for mankind. After 400 years of silence since the prophecies of Malachi, God finally speaks, only this time through the manifestation of His Son, the long-awaited Messiah.

The Books of the Epistles

These books, comprised of letters written by apostles to various churches surrounding Judea, are spiritual road maps for both Christians individually, and the Church as a whole. They are priceless guidelines for life, salvation, and living a peaceful, fruitful and effective Christian life. Many passages of scripture in these books are among the most heartfelt, edifying verses for believers today.

This series, which will include a general summary of each individual book of the Bible, will encourage the newly born-again believers to dive into reading their Bible, and the seasoned believer to see the Scripture through new eyes. Whether a simple seeker of truth or a devoted student, there is something for everyone in the collection of incredible books called the Bible.

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