



# The Bible

## The Sacred Book

# The Bible

the sacred book

*“Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the **hope** that is in you with meekness and fear.”*

—I PETER 3:15

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## FOREWORD

The Bible has been described as a **literary masterpiece**. The Law given to Moses (the Ten Commandments) has long been recognized as the basis for the laws of most nations of the world. The moral precepts and code of conduct taught in the Bible present the **ideal** for which all good people of the world strive. It has been a guide and inspiration to all who have seriously considered it. It has been hailed as the torch of civilization. Its influence for good is without equal. It is translated into more languages than any other book and more copies of it have been sold than any other known book on earth. For these reasons alone, it should be in the home of any who seek truth and a rich and rewarding life.

For the **Christian**, the Bible is even more. It is the Word of God, and provides the counsel and instruction which helps us to love God and worship him, and to do what is right. In its pages, we find the answer to why we are here, what God expects of us, why present conditions are allowed even though they bring sorrow and pain and tears. In its pages we find a story of "Paradise lost – to Paradise restored." We are told the very thoughts of God as they relate to mankind and what the future holds for all who have ever lived and died since the time of the first creation of man. When properly understood, the Bible informs us that God has a plan, and that it will eventually bring, untold blessings to all of Adam's children (including Adam). The earth will blossom as the rose; all mankind will return to the days of their youth; God will wipe away all tears, and sorrow and sighing will flee away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against any nation, neither shall they learn war anymore; they shall sit every man under his vine and fig tree; and **none** shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.—Isa. 35:1,10, Rev. 21:4, Micah 4:3, 4

Some frequently asked questions have been gathered together in this booklet, as well as the answers to these questions. It is our hope you will find peace, joy, and comfort in the answers provided.

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### **1. What is the Holy Bible?**

The Holy Bible is the sacred religious book of Christians and is believed by them to be the inspired Word of God.

### **2. Why is it called the Bible?**

The word “Bible” came into English from the Greek and Latin **biblos**, book (from the city of Byblos, where the best writing materials were produced). Ancient books were written on papyrus which was writing material made from tall bamboo-like grasses, or vellum made of parched animal skins. The word “Bible” means “book.”

### **3. Who wrote The Bible?**

Many holy men of God who were prophets, seers, and apostles of God were inspired by God’s Holy Spirit to write what is contained in the Bible.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; 2 Sam. 23:2.

### **4. Who wrote the first books of The Bible?**

The first five books of The Bible were compiled by Moses. He was a Hebrew and a great and learned man who was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was called by God to serve Him as a prophet and deliverer of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt. He was commanded by God to write his experiences in a book. The last chapter, recording Moses’ death, was most likely written by Joshua.—Exod. 17:14; Num. 33:2; Deut. 31:9; Acts 7:22; Hosea 12:13.

### **5. Who wrote the other books?**

After Moses, Joshua wrote his book. (Josh. 24:26) Following him, Judges—Prophet Samuel; and many other prophets wrote their books.—1 Sam. 10:25; Isa. 8:1; Jer. 30:1, 2; Ezek. 24:1, 2; Dan. 7:1; Hab. 2:1, 2.

The books that were written before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ are called the Old Testament. (2 Cor. 3:14) The

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original 39 books of the Old Testament were written in the Hebrew language and were divided into three parts:

1. The Law, or the Books of Moses
2. The Prophets (Luke 24:27; Acts 28:23)
3. The Psalms

After the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, his disciples wrote about his life and teachings. The activities of the Early Church were also recorded, along with certain apostolic letters written to the churches. The collection of these writings is now called the New Testament. (2 Cor. 3:6) The original books of the New Testament were written in Greek and contain the following 27 books:

- 4 Gospels
- 1 Acts of the Apostles
- 21 Epistles (or letters)
- 1 The Revelation (a prophetic book)

### **6. What is the origin of the Hebrew language, who spoke that language, and how was it written?**

The forefather of the Jews or the Israelites was Abraham. He was a Hebrew. He and his descendants were called Hebrews and they spoke the Hebrew language.—Gen. 14:13; 39:17; 41:12; Jonah 1:9; Exod. 1:15.

During the days of the Jewish captivity in Babylon, the original Hebrew language became mixed with Aramaic – a similar Semitic language. (Neh. 13:23, 24) Yet, the original Hebrew was known to the priests. (Ezra 4:7; 7:12-26; Dan. 2:4) A few parts of the Old Testament were written in Aramaic (i.e., Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Dan. 2:4-7:28).

During the days of Jesus Christ and the apostles, they were called Hebrews. The Apostle Paul called himself a Hebrew. (Phil. 3:5). Jehovah, or **Yahweh**, is called “the God of the Hebrews.” (Exod. 3:18; 5:3; 7:16). The Apostle Paul spoke the

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Hebrew language. (Acts 21:40; 22:1, 2) Jesus Christ spoke to Paul in Hebrew. (Acts 26:14) The name of Jesus on the cross was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.—John 19:20; Luke 23:38.

The Hebrew language has 22 letters (א to ת, aleph to tav) and is written from right to left (like Arabic, Aramaic, and also Urdu in India). The 119<sup>th</sup> Psalm has 176 verses and they are divided into 22 parts, each under a letter of the alphabet. The Greek language has 24 letters (although early Greek had three more). Like English, they are written from left to right. Alpha (α) is the first letter of the alphabet, and Omega (ω) is the last.

### **7. In which year did Moses begin to write the first books of the Bible? Were there any ancient records before Moses? How could Moses write the past history?**

The past history, from the first man, Adam, to Moses at the Exodus, covered a period of about 2,513 years. Most of our ancient forefathers lived up to 800 to 900 years of age; so generations overlapped more than in our day. History could easily be transmitted from parents to children and grandchildren covering hundreds of intervening years.

From Adam to Moses there were 26 generations:

Adam lived 930 years—Gen. 5:5

Methuselah lived 969 years (to the year of the Flood)  
—Gen. 5:27

Shem lived 600 years—Gen. 11:10, 11

Isaac lived 180 years—Gen. 35:28

Levi lived 137 years—Exod. 6:16

Amram lived 137 years—Exod. 6:20

Moses lived 120 years—Deut. 34:7

Adam's life overlapped Methuselah's, who was of the 8<sup>th</sup> generation. Methuselah lived with Shem of the 11<sup>th</sup> generation. Shem lived with Isaac of the 21<sup>st</sup> generation. Isaac lived with Levi, his grandson. Levi lived with his grandson, Amram, of

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the 25<sup>th</sup> generation. Amram lived with his son, Moses, of the 26<sup>th</sup> generation.

From Adam to Moses there are only five links; so passing on history to future generations was not so difficult because the gaps were fewer. In our day, historians write about history dating back 2,000 years and more, getting their information from accumulated information. Moses, being highly educated, was able to gather the available information of this day, aided by God's Holy Spirit, and therefore could write the Book of Genesis about 1,615 years before Christ.

While many clay tablets have been discovered, which were apparently written before the Flood, as yet archaeologists have not unearthed tablets on which are recorded any part, or parts, of the Book of Genesis. However, according to archaeologists, there is good evidence that the Book of Genesis was first written on clay tablets. Scholars call our attention to strong internal evidence in the composition of the Book of Genesis to indicate that it was originally written in sections on tablets of clay. This internal evidence is found principally in the expression, "These are the generations of . . ." Scholars observe that this statement is in the form of a "colophon," which indicates the completion of a section. The colophon is given at the end of one tablet, and again at the top of the next tablet, to show continuity. The Hebrew word translated "generations" in this expression is **toledoth**, which means "history, properly of families," according to William Gesenius, a critical Hebrew scholar.

### **8. Are there any original writings of Moses and other prophets?**

The original writings were kept safe by the priests in the holy places such as the Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem. The priests and scribes made copies from the original for study use and teaching in their synagogues and places of worship. The kings of Israel were commanded to make their own copies from the original

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for their own study. (Deut. 17:18-20. Note Acts 15:21.) Travelling priests used “the Book of the Law of the Lord’ as they went about teaching the people. (2 Chron. 17:8, 9) The synagogue at Nazareth had a copy of the Book of Isaiah, from which Jesus read. (Luke 4:17, 18) The Ethiopian queen’s treasurer had his own copy of the Book of Isaiah.—Acts 8:27, 28.

At present, we do not have the original writings of the Book of the Law by Moses, or any other. Nevertheless, scribes, such as Ezra, made many copies of the originals which were distributed throughout the land of Israel. Thanks be to God that he has preserved several very old manuscripts and versions of the Holy Bible for us. “The Word of our God shall stand forever.”—Isa. 40:8.

### **9. What is the difference between a “manuscript” and a “version?”**

A hand-lettered copy of an original book (therefore, in the original language) is considered to be a “manuscript.” A “version” is a translation from a manuscript into a different language.

### **10. Which are the oldest manuscripts and versions of the Bible, and where are they found?**

The oldest complete Hebrew Bibles we have are only a thousand years old, though the Dead Sea scrolls contain many fragments which are two thousand years old, and there are very old New Testament manuscripts available, such as the *Codex Sinaiticus*, which has the Greek New Testament complete.

#### **a. The Sinaitic Manuscript (Ⲱ)—approx. 350 A.D.**

This manuscript was written in uncial Greek on 345 leaves of fine vellum. Part of it was found by Prof. Tischendorf in the Convent of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai in 1844 A.D., and more in 1859. It includes the entire New Testament as well as a large part of the Septuagint Greek version of the Old Testament. It was kept in the



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St. Petersburg Library, Russia, and in 1933 sold to the British Museum, London, where it remains on display. It is very good everywhere, although hastily written with many careless mistakes.

### **b. The Alexandrian Manuscript (A)—approx. 425 A.D.**

This manuscript, written in Greek, is now in the British Museum. It was given by Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople, to King Charles I in 1627 A.D. Some parts of the New Testament, and Psalms, are missing. (Matt. 1:1 to 25:6; John 6:50 to 8:52; 2 Cor. 4:13 to 12:6) It is considered to be a very good manuscript with the exception of the Gospels.

### **c. The Vatican 1209 Manuscript (B)—approx. 350 A.D.**

This manuscript, written in Greek, has been in the Vatican library, Rome, since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, and the book of Revelation are missing, as well as Hebrews 9:14 to the end. It is very good throughout, carefully written, though with more theologically-significant alterations than Sinaiticus (8).

### **d. The Ephraemi Manuscript (C)—approx. 430 A.D.**

This manuscript, which has been overwritten (palimpsest), is in the Paris library. Its Revelation text is very good.

### **e. The Bezae Manuscript (D)—5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century**

This manuscript was found by Theo. Beza in the Monastery of St. Irenaeus at Lyons in 1563. It represents the so-called “Western Text” of the gospels; used extensively by the Calvinists (Reformed movement).

### **f. Papyrus Manuscript Fragments—approx. 125 to 700 A.D.**

Fragments of a hundred papyrus manuscripts were

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found in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with over forty written before the time of Constantine (i.e., before 312 A.D.). The major finds are the Oxyrhynchus Papyri (published continually since 1898), the Chester Beatty Papyri (1933-1936), and the Bodmer Papyri (1956-1961). Notable large fragments are p<sup>75</sup> (Luke and John; early 3<sup>rd</sup> century); p<sup>66</sup> (John, ca. 200 A.D.); p<sup>52</sup> (John 18; ca. 125 A.D.); p<sup>74</sup> (Acts; 7<sup>th</sup> century, but very good); p<sup>46</sup> (most of Paul's epistles; ca. 200 A.D.); p<sup>47</sup> and p<sup>115</sup> (Revelation; 3<sup>rd</sup> century and ca. 300 A.D., respectively).

### **g. Some later Majescale (Uncial) Manuscripts—5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Other very good fragmentary manuscripts include **Z** (early 6<sup>th</sup> C.) and **0281** (ca. 700 A.D.) in Matthew; **L** (8<sup>th</sup> C.) and **Ψ** (ca. 800) in Mark; **040** and **070** (both 6<sup>th</sup> C.) in Luke; **048** in Acts and Paul; and **0232** (ca. 500) in the general epistles.

### **h. Some Minuscule (Cursive) Manuscripts—9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries**

A small, but non-zero, proportion of later manuscripts preserve a very good text, such as is commonly found before the time of Constantine; perhaps they have been copied in remote areas, or from ancient exemplars, but they are in any event good: 2427 (Mark; 14<sup>th</sup> C.); 81 (Acts, and maybe Paul's epistles; 1044 A.D.); 1739 (epistles; 10<sup>th</sup> C.); 33 (Paul's epistles; 9<sup>th</sup> C.); and 1611 (12<sup>th</sup> C.), 2053 and 2062 (both 13<sup>th</sup> C.) in Revelation. In all, about 300 uncial and 3,000 cursive Greek manuscripts and fragments are known, of which several percent are high quality.

### **i. The Septuagint Version—approx. 285 B.C. to the 1<sup>st</sup> century**

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The Greek Old Testament was made from the Hebrew, starting with the Books of Moses in 285 B.C., at Alexandria by 70 Hebrew scholars and therefore called *Septuagint*, or Version of the Seventy. It is a very valuable Greek Old Testament. It was made at the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt (B.C. 284-246). At the suggestion of his librarian, Demetries Phalerus, he sent an embassy to Eleazar, the High Priest at Jerusalem to obtain copies of the sacred books of the Hebrew Law, and to make a translation of them. Eleazar sent the copies requested, along with a body of 70 (or 72) translators. New Testament manuscripts  $\aleph$ , A, and B, above, each contain most of the Septuagint Old Testament.

### j. The Latin Vulgate Version

The Old Latin versions were first prepared, perhaps, in northern Africa (it<sup>e</sup>, it<sup>k</sup>), for Latin-speakers of the Early Christian Church, with the Old Testament translated usually from the Greek Septuagint. They underwent some change upon general acceptance and use in Italy. Sophronius Eusebius Heironymus, better known as Jerome, one of the great biblical scholars of his day, undertook the work of revising the Old Latin versions. He translated the Gospels into Latin, which was at that time the vernacular or vulgar (hence “Vulgate”) tongue. That was about 383 A.D. The remainder of the Bible was translated later. By the ninth century the Vulgate Version had entirely superseded the Old Latin version of the second century, especially in the Western Church. The Vulgate edition of Pope Clement VII (vg<sup>cl</sup>), of 1592-1593, is the source of the modern Douay Version, and is the accepted standard of the Roman Catholic Church. From the ninth to the fifteenth centuries the Vulgate Version of Jerome became corrupted from the intermixture of

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other Latin versions and scribal changes. The Vulgate editions of Wordsworth and White (vg<sup>ww</sup>) and Stuttgart (vg<sup>st</sup>) better preserve the early Latin Vulgate text, which is not quite as good in the Gospels as in the rest of the New Testament.

### **k. The Syriac (Aramaic) Version, made in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Although an Old Syriac version of the Gospels was apparently made in the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (represented by two fragmentary manuscripts, sy<sup>s</sup> and sy<sup>c</sup>), the main Syriac version is the Peshito, meaning “simple or plain language.” This old translation of the 5<sup>th</sup> century was very influential for four centuries until the Mohammedan conquest of Syria. It was in general use in Syria since the fifth century and has always been accepted by the Syrian (Monophysite) Church as authentic. Several Arabic translations have been made from it. The Old Syriac in the Gospels, and the Syriac-Harkleian (sy<sup>h</sup>) in Revelation, are fairly good texts.

### **l. The Coptic (Egyptian) Versions, made perhaps in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Mixtures of the Egyptian and Greek (especially for theological terms) languages are called Coptic, and contain many dialects: Sahidic (southern Egypt; cop<sup>sa</sup>), Bohairic (Nile Delta; cop<sup>pbo</sup> and cop<sup>bo</sup>), Middle Egyptian (cop<sup>meg</sup> or cop<sup>mae</sup>), Middle Egyptian Fayyumic (cop<sup>mf</sup> or cop<sup>fay</sup>), Achmimic (between Middle Egypt and the South; cop<sup>ach</sup> or cop<sup>ac</sup>) and Subachmimic (cop<sup>ach<sup>2</sup></sup> or cop<sup>ac<sup>2</sup></sup>) are all very good, except in Revelation.

### **m. Other Ancient Versions**

There are also other ancient versions of the New Testament in Armenian (arm), Georgian (geo), Ethiopic (eth), Arabic (arab), Persian (pers), Sogdian (Iran),

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Gothic (goth), and Slavonic (slav) languages. The Armenian is good in Paul's epistles; the Georgian and Armenian are fairly good in the Gospels.

Critical editions of the New Testament include *The Greek New Testament*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn.; U.B.S. (1993); *Nestle-Aland, Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27<sup>th</sup> edn.; Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (1993); supplemented by several volumes of Kurt Aland's *Text und Textwert der Griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*; Berlin: deGruyter (since 1987).

### **n. Hebrew Old Testament**

The best Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts mostly date from 895 to 1008 A.D. The Leningrad manuscript of the latter date is complete and is the basis for Kittel's 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Hebrew Bible (a Massoretic text). About a third of the Dead Sea Scrolls look like a Massoretic text, including 4QIsa<sup>b</sup>, 4QIsa<sup>f</sup>, MasEzek and MasPs<sup>b</sup>.

The best preserved work of antiquity is the Hebrew Old Testament. The next best preserved work is the Greek New Testament.

### **11. When was the English Bible translated?**

It was first translated and published in England in 1380 A.D. by John Wycliffe. In 1525 A.D., William Tyndale also translated and published the English Bible. In 1611 A.D., a committee of Bible scholars translated what is known as the *Authorized Version (AV)* or *King James Version (KJV)* of the Bible; it was corrected in 1614 and then slightly updated in 1769. In 1881-1885 A.D., the *English Revised Version (RV)* of the Bible was published, followed by the *American Revised Version in 1901 (ARV or ASV)*.

Roman Catholic authorities burned Tyndale's Bibles, and when they could not do so fast enough they burned Tyndale

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instead. The same authorities dug up the bones of John Wycliffe, burned them to ashes and scattered them in the River Thames. He is called “the morning star of the Reformation,” because he had exposed the wrong doctrines of the Roman Church.

In 1609 A.D., the Roman Catholic Church translated and published an English Bible from the Latin Vulgate. It is called the Douay-Rhims Version, and contains also the Apocryphal books (as did the original King James Version). Confraternity edition 1941.

### 12. Why are some Bibles called “Revised Versions?”

Many ancient manuscripts and versions of the Bible have been discovered since the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Existing Bibles, such as the King James or Authorized Version, have been compared to older manuscripts and as a result corrections have been made. It was discovered that many words and sentences were wrongly included in the Authorized Version because they were not found in the older manuscripts. Such verses are called “spurious texts” and most have been removed from newer revised versions.

For example, note the text in 1 John 5:7 in the Authorized Version, which says, “For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in the earth].” The portion in brackets is not found in any old Greek writings before the 5<sup>th</sup> century, nor in any Greek manuscripts of 1 John before the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and in no more than nine manuscripts (in seven forms), as against 500 Greek manuscripts that do not include it, according to Kurt Aland, *Text und Textwert der Griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*, Vol. 1: **ANTF** Vol. 9, 1987. The statement in brackets was first seen written in the margin of a Latin copy of the Bible and thus subsequently crept into the Latin text, and very late into a Greek manuscript. Dr. C. R. Gregory wrote: “There is every reason

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to believe that this manuscript [#61 of the 16<sup>th</sup> century] was written, with the words added, to compel Erasmus to add them, as he then did, 'for his oath's sake,' like Herod, to his text. It was a great pity that Erasmus did it. It has taken centuries to get the words out again."

Note another text, Revelation 20:5, that says, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." This text is not found in the Sinaitic manuscript or at least 68 other Greek manuscripts, nor in the Syriac (Aramaic) version, as against 112 manuscripts which include it, but in five different forms. Up to the 13<sup>th</sup> century the numbers on each side are about equal, while after that the proportion adding the sentence rises quickly to 100%. (If the sentence were genuine, it would say that the first resurrection is the absence of a resurrection!)

This spurious text (Rev. 20:5) is used by some Christians to teach mistakenly, that during the thousand-year rule of Christ on the earth, the earth will be empty, without human beings, for the dead would not have been raised.

For many more such spurious texts, see Dr. James Strong's Exhaustive Concordance under the headline, "Comparative Concordance, Notanda," page 260.

God warned his people that they should not add or diminish the words in the Holy Scriptures. (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18) "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." (Prov. 30:6) Texts were added to establish man's views and incorrect doctrines. Therefore, the Revised Version of 1881-1885, and other more recent translations, are good and useful because they take us back to the original meaning of the texts as found in ancient manuscripts.

Some Christians ignorantly accuse the translators of the Revised Version, and other modern translations, of tampering with the Bible because they have removed spurious texts, not realizing that they were originally put in to establish sectarian

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doctrines and traditions not part of the original Word of God. Many Christian scholars realize that the Authorized Version has many mistakes in it; therefore they support the printing and distribution of the more modern translations of the Bible, so that it may be better understood. Notable among these are: Rotherham and five Greek-English diatessaron (interlinear): Marshall, Concordant, Kingdom Interlinear, Douglas, and Wilson; in addition to the RV, ARV (ASV), NASB, and ESV.

### **13. Who divided the books of the Bible into chapters and verses?**

The original Bibles had no chapters and verses. The chapters were divided into their present form by Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1225 A.D. The chapters were divided into verses by the Paris printer, Robert Stephens, in 1551 A.D.

### **14. Are there any external evidences to prove what is recorded in the Old and New Testaments?**

Ancient and modern excavations in Bible lands, and the study of archaeology, do substantiate many facts of the Bible. Ancient Sumerian, Chaldean, Babylonian, Egyptian, Persian, Greek, and Roman clay tablets and monuments show religious inscriptions. Such things as the first man and woman (Adam and Eve) are shown. The tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the serpent, the Flood, the ark, the dove, the Tower of Babel, Nimrod—the first mighty king, Ur of the Chaldees, and many other Bible accounts are shown on clay tablets and stone.

The Great Pyramid of Giza gives scientific evidence which ties in with the Bible. The finding of the Dead Sea scrolls further confirmed the truth and preservation of the Bible. There are many Bible reference books, such as *Halley's Bible Handbook*, that have a great deal of information on archaeological discoveries. Dawn Publications (see address on the back cover)



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has an enlightening booklet entitled, “Archeology Proves the Bible.”

### **15. Why does the Bible contain the evil deeds of some good men as well as the evil deeds of evil men?**

Because the Bible records things as they are. No attempt is made to hide the weaknesses of those who served God in olden days. Those shortcomings were reproved and their virtues and faithfulness commended. This, then, becomes a good lesson to us.—Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6.

### **16. How can we study the Bible to obtain a proper understanding?**

One of the most important matters is a proper recognition of the time element in God’s plan. Failure to recognize this has led many to conclude that the Bible is contradictory and unreliable. There are, for example, three main time divisions in the plan of God. In a very general way we might speak of these as the world of yesterday, the world of today, and the world of tomorrow.

The first two of these worlds are predominantly evil. The third is described by the Apostle Peter as a “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:13) Failure to recognize that God is now permitting evil to flourish, and that his time for the establishment of righteousness in the earth is in the world to come, has led to various erroneous concepts of the divine plan, and of God’s will for his people at the present time. We recommend that all serious students of the Bible read *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, which we have available. Write to us for a copy. It explains God’s work in the different dispensations and has illustrated this on a chart of the ages.

It is also important to remember that the Scriptures were originally written in Hebrew and Greek. Therefore, it is important to learn the true meaning of significant Bible words

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such as, soul, spirit, hell, age, etc. It is helpful to use good concordances such as Young's, Strong's, or Englishman's. Different translations of the Bible are also a big help in Bible study.

It is good to carefully search the Scriptures and meditate on them. (Ps. 1:2; John 5:39) "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) We must also avoid man's wisdom, and "compare spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. 2:13) We are invited to learn the pure doctrines and to avoid all traditions and doctrines of men.—1 Tim. 4:6, 13, 16; 2 Tim. 3:16; Matt. 15:1-3.

### **17. What are the fundamental doctrines of the Bible?**

In brief, the doctrines can be summarized as follows:

- a. God's perfect creation.
- b. The entrance of Satan, sin, the curse, evil, and death.
- c. God's plan to destroy Satan, sin and death, and to save the world through Jesus Christ who gave his life as a ransom sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.
- d. God's plan to select a special class during this present Gospel Age for future heavenly work and glory.
- e. The thousand-year rule of Christ in the next age to restore the world of mankind to peace, health, and life in God's kingdom on earth—the dead to be raised and all the obedient to have the privilege of living forever.

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 21:1-5.

### **18. How can we believe that there is a God?**

"He who can look into the sky with a telescope, or even with his natural eye alone, and see there the immensity of creation, its

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symmetry, beauty, order, harmony and diversity, and yet doubt that the Creator of these is vastly his superior both in wisdom and power, or who can suppose for a moment that such order came by chance, without a Creator, has so far lost or ignored that faculty of reason as to be properly considered what the Bible terms him, a fool (one who ignores or lacks reason): “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” (Ps. 14:1; 53:1) However it happened, at least that much of the Bible is true, as every reasonable mind must conclude; for it is self-evident truth that effects must be produced by competent causes. Every plant and every flower, even, speaks volumes of testimony on this subject. Intricate in construction, exquisitely beautiful in form and texture, each speaks of a wisdom and skill above the human. How shortsighted the absurdity which boasts of human skill and ingenuity, and attributes to mere chance the regularity, uniformity, and harmony of nature; which acknowledges the laws of nature, while denying that nature has an intelligent Lawgiver.” - *Divine Plan of the Ages*.

We see the wonderful world, the universe, the solar system, the sun, moon, and stars in their regular order and design. From where did they come? Surely all the visible things of this world prove the existence of an invisible, intelligent, and powerful being whom we call God.—Rom. 1:19, 20; Isa. 40:26; Ps. 19:1, 2.

### **19. What does the Bible teach about God and his character?**

- a. God is eternal. He exists from eternity to eternity, without a beginning. Jehovah is, so to speak, in the present, who was in the past, and who shall be throughout all ages. —Rev. 1:8; Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:1, 2.
- b. God is immortal and therefore cannot die. He has life within himself and is the fountainhead and source of all life—1 Tim. 6:15, 16; John 5:26; Deut. 32:40; Ps. 36:9; Jer. 2:13; 17:13.

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- c. Jehovah God is changeless. He says, "I am that I am." He does not change nor take incarnations. He is never born in any form, nor can he die.—Exod. 3:14.
- d. Jehovah God is a spirit and therefore invisible to human eyes.—John 5:37; 6:46; John 1:18; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Exod. 33:20; 1 John 4:12.
- e. Jehovah God dwells in the heavens. Jesus Christ taught us to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." (Matt. 6:9) Therefore, it is not right to say that God, as a being, is everywhere—in every pillar, post, tree or water. The Bible teaches that God's spirit moves throughout the universe, it reaches everywhere, and nothing is hidden from him. "Whither [where] shall I go from thy Spirit, or... [where] shall I flee from thy presence?" (Ps. 139:1-10; 123:1; John 14:1) In heaven, in hell [the grave], or in the uttermost parts of the sea, there is God's hand, and his Spirit can uphold us.
- f. God is almighty and all-powerful. His almighty power is seen throughout the universe and in our world; all is upheld by God's immense power. (Gen. 17:1; Exod. 6:3; Rev. 1:8) With God all things are possible. (Matt. 19:26) "For with God nothing shall be impossible." (Luke 1:37) "Great is our Lord [Jehovah], and of great power: his understanding is infinite."—Ps. 147:5.
- g. God is all-wise. His great wisdom is revealed in the order and beauty in all his creative work. God manifests his wisdom in telling us about the future. Because of his wisdom he knows all things even before the foundation of the world.—Job 36:5; Ps. 104:24; 136:5; Jer. 10:12; 1 Tim. 1:17.
- h. God is righteous. "Righteous art thou, O Lord [Jehovah], and upright are thy judgments."—Ps. 119:137; Ezra 9:15; Ps. 11:7; 116:5; 145:17.
- i. God is love. He is as a kind father would be toward his

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children. The greatest manifestation of his supreme love is that he gave his beloved Son to redeem the world from sin and death.—John 3:16; 1 John 4:8, 16; Ps. 89:14.

j. God is holy.—Lev. 11:44; 20:7; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16.

### **20. Why does God in the Bible call himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?**

After the Flood, Satan, the prince of this world, deceived the people and nations to believe in many gods; the people were plunged into darkness, confusion and idolatry. It is written that Terah, the father of Abraham, and his family worshipped and served other gods. (Josh. 24:2) These gods were abominations and idols, and were great deceptions of the Devil. (Ps. 96:5) At such a time, the great Almighty God appeared unto Abraham, then to his son, Isaac, and then to Jacob, and revealed his plan and made covenants and promises regarding his plan to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:16-18; Acts 7:2-4) Therefore the only true Almighty God is called the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Exod. 3:6; 6:3) The apostles clearly taught the people, saying the God of our forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, raised Jesus, his Son, from death and also glorified him. (Acts 3:13) This great God of the Israelites is called “God the Father” in the New Testament. —John 6:27; 1 Cor. 8:6.

### **21. Does the Bible use any other word as a name for God?**

When Moses asked for the name of God, he revealed his name as **Jehovah**, or more likely in the Hebrew, “**Yahweh**,” and said, “This is my name forever, and this is my memorial [name] unto all generations.” (Exod. 3:15, translated, “The LORD God,” in the King James Version) This holy name, Jehovah, appears throughout the Hebrew Bible about 6,823 times. In our common authorized English version of the Bible, the translators and printers have used the word “LORD” (all **capital letters**) for the name Jehovah. Only in five places have they rendered the

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name as Jehovah or Jah. See Exodus 6:3; Psalms 68:4; 83:18; Isaiah 12:2 and 26:4. Alleluia, or **Hălelū-Jāh**, means “praise Jehovah.”—Rev. 19:1, 3, 4, 6.

### 22. What is the meaning of the Hebrew word **elohim** and how is it used?

In the Hebrew language there are three common words such as **el**, **eloah**, and **elohim** to denote “God.” These words simply mean “a mighty one.” God is mighty, and therefore he can rightly be called **Elohim**. These three words are translated as “God” in English.

The angels are mighty beings and they are called **elohim**. It is written that man was created a little lower than the angels (**elohim**). Note carefully Psalm 8:5 and Hebrews 2:7. Abraham was called an **elohim**-prince, a godly prince or a mighty prince. (Gen. 23:6) Moses was called **elohim**; he was made a “god” to Pharaoh. (Exod. 4:16) The thieves and their cases were brought before the **elohim** (the judges). “Whom the judges [**elohim**] shall condemn, he shall pay” the fines.—Exod. 22:8, 9; 1 Sam. 2:25.

All the pagan, heathen and false gods and goddesses are also called as **elohim**, “the gods or mighty ones.” (Exod. 12:12; Judg. 2:3, 12, 17, 19; 2 Sam. 7:23; Ps. 96:5) Satan is called “the god [**elohim**] of this [evil] world.” (2 Cor. 4:3, 4) Ashtoreth, a goddess, is also called **elohim**. (1 Kings 11:5) Our Lord Jesus quoted Psalm 82:1, 6 and said, “Is it not written in your law, I have said, Ye are gods.” The Almighty Jehovah calls the sons of men gods [**elohim**] “to whom the Word of God came.”—John 10:34, 35.

Thus we learn that the common Hebrew word **elohim** is used to denote angels, mighty men, judges, the saints, and the children of God. Jehovah is the **El-Elohim**, i.e., “the God of gods.” Jehovah is the **Shadai-Elohim**, i.e., “the Almighty God.” (Gen. 17:1; Exod. 6:2, 3) The Apostle Paul, in

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1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15, 16, describes Jehovah by saying, that he is invisible, the King eternal, immortal (or incorruptible); “the light unapproachable; whom no man has seen or can see: to whom *be* honour and power forever.”

Jesus prayed, **Eloi** [אֱלֹי] “My God”—singular (Mark 15:34; Psalm 22:1), while **elohim** [אֱלֹהִים] is plural, in Hebrew. He implied that, when he had been with Jehovah in Old Testament times, **elohim** meant not one but “two mighty ones.” (Compare 1 Cor. 8:5-6.)

Jesus prayed to Jehovah saying, “This is life eternal,” to “know thee [Jehovah] the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”—John 17:3.

### **23. What does the Bible say about Jesus in his pre-human existence, his earthly (human) existence and his existence after his resurrection?**

Jesus Christ was Jehovah God’s first begotten Son and also the only begotten Son. (John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 1:6) He manifests the power and wisdom of God. (1 Cor. 1:24) He is the “image of the invisible God [Jehovah]” and the firstborn of all creation (Col. 1:15-16) and he is the beginning of the creation of God. — Rev. 3:14; Ps. 89:27.

We quote Proverbs 8:22-31 (Revised Standard Version; NRSV, NEB, JPS are similar):

“The LORD [Jehovah] created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water, before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills I was brought forth. Before he had made the earth with its fields or the first of the dust of the earth. When he established the heavens I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit

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so that the waters could not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then was I beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men.”

The Authorized Version of the Bible says “the LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way.” The Hebrew word **oanah** is translated as “possessed.” The James Strong Concordance’s Hebrew Lexicon gives the meaning of this word (No. 7069) as “erect,” that is to say “create.” Now, many translations of the Bible use the word create, or form. Therefore, we learn clearly that our Lord Jesus Christ was Jehovah’s first Son, the firstborn, the only begotten Son of God because he was the first and only direct creation of God.

Another word used in reference to Jesus’ pre-human existence is the Greek word **Logos**. It is translated “word.” Because God spoke through the mouth of Jesus, he became the spokesman of God. A person or an advocate who speaks on behalf of another person is called the **logos** or the “word.” (Deut. 18:18; Acts 3:22, 23; John 12:49, 50; Rev. 19:13) Dr. Adam Clarke remarks that the word **logos** should not have been translated as “word” but simply left as **logos**. It is a title name for Jesus because God spoke through him.—Heb. 1:1, 2.

In the Gospel of John 1:1, 2, the AV writes: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” This translation has caused much confusion to the readers because it is not a proper rendering of the original verse. It seems to imply that Jesus and the Father are one and the same person. In the original Greek, we see in Benjamin Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott, interlinear word-for-word English translation, we note the difference: “In a beginning was the Word, and the Word was with **the God** and **a god** was the Word. This was in the beginning with **the God**.” We see that the proper thought is



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thus: the **Logos** was with **the God** [Jehovah] and Jesus was a **god** (a mighty one).

In the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6, God's Son is called a "mighty god." (In Hebrew, **gibbor elohim**.) Moffat translates it as a "divine hero." In the Authorized King James Version we read the titles of the Son of God as **Wonderful** and **Counselor** (as two names). But in all the revised translations we read **Wonderful Counselor** as one title. In the Septuagint it is translated as "The **Counselor** of the Mighty God" and also "the Messenger of the Great Counsel." (See also the Isaac Leeser Version, and the Sacred Name Bible.) Thomas addressed Jesus as, "My Lord and my god." This meant, "My Lord and my mighty one."—John 20:28.

Isaiah 7:14 is a prophecy of Jesus and says that "thou shalt call his name Immanuel" (meaning "God *is* with us"). But, the angel Gabriel told Joseph and Mary to call the holy child **Jesus**; in the original Hebrew the name is rendered **Jah-shua** or **Joshua**—meaning "Jehovah saves [his people from their sins]." He has **never** yet been named **Immanuel**! The prophecy only pointed to the fact that God had remembered mankind. It did not ever intend to imply that Jehovah God himself was born as a child. Jesus said, "My Father is greater than I."—John 14:28.

### 24. What is the meaning of the word "Christ?"

In Greek, the word **Christ** means "anointed one." In Hebrew, the word is **Messiah**—also meaning "anointed one." See John 1:41; also Daniel 9:25, 26. Jehovah God has anointed Jesus Christ by his Holy Spirit to be the Saviour of the world. (Isa. 61:1; Matt. 3:16; Acts 10:38) The Jews rejected Jesus as that Messiah that they had been looking for. Paul, after his conversion, boldly preached to the Jews (and the Gentiles) that Jesus is the Christ.—Acts 9:22; 18:28.

### 25. What is the meaning of the words of Jesus when he said, "I and my Father are one?"

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Jesus spoke about his followers as his sheep and also said that the Father who gave them to Jesus is greater than all. No one can snatch these sheep from his hands or from the hands of the Father. In this connection, in the work of safeguarding his sheep, Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." It is only the oneness of mind and unity of his work with the Father to which Jesus referred. It is incorrect to say that Jesus and the Father are one and the same person in body.

Jesus prayed to the Father that his followers should also be **one** even as he is one with the Father: "They all may be **one** in us." (John 17:11, 20-23) The point being made is that it shows the unity and the **oneness** of the mind and purpose that exists between Jesus and the Father, and between Jesus and the church, and God also.

Other texts using the same type of illustration:

"The people is **one**."—Gen. 11:6.

"The people gathered themselves together as **one man** [united]."—Ezra 3:1.

The husband and the wife are "**one**."—Matt. 19:4-6.

"He that planteth and he that watereth are **one**."—1 Cor. 3:8.

The Early Church was "with **one** accord."—Acts 2:44, 45, 46.

"For ye are all **one** in Christ Jesus."—Gal. 3:28.

### **26. What is the meaning of Jesus' words, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father?"**

In the same chapter and the 28<sup>th</sup> verse Jesus is continuing his statement and clearly says, "I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I." Again, Jesus says in John 6:46, "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is from God, he hath seen the Father." (Jesus here speaks of himself as being from God, and in his pre-human existence, he had seen God.) When

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Moses was anxious to see God he was told very specifically, you cannot “see my face: for there shall no man see me [God], and live.”—Exod. 33:20.

How do believers see God through Jesus? Through an understanding of God and his teachings; just as many in the world today—even the blind—use the same expression when they may finally understand a difficult matter—they say, “I see,” meaning they understand.

### **27. What is meant by the text that calls Jesus “The Everlasting Father?”—Isa. 9:6**

Adam was the father of all human beings of this present world. Abraham, however, was called the father of many nations. (Gen. 17:5) He is also called the father of circumcision, and of the faithful. (Rom. 4:9-13) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are called “forefathers” with reference to the Jewish people. (Acts 5:30; Rom. 9:5) Some are called “the fathers” because of their inventions and arts. Jabal was called the “father of all the tent dwellers.” Jabal’s brother, Jubal, was the “father of music.” (Gen. 4:20, 21) Satan is called the “father of lies.” (John 8:44) In the U.S.A., George Washington is called the “father of his country”—the new nation after the independence. Adam, the first father, by his disobedience brought sin, and death by sin, on all the human family. (Rom. 5:12) Jesus Christ is called the second (or last) Adam. (1 Cor. 15:45) Through Jesus Christ the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead, and everlasting life, are given.

The name “Everlasting Father” is properly translated, “the Father of Futurity,” by Rotherham. The Roman Catholic Douay Version says, “the Father of the world to come.” The Apostle Paul teaches this in a very easy to understand text which says: “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Cor. 15:22) Therefore this text does not support the thought that Jesus and the Father are one person. Jesus will be the father of the world to come.

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### 28. Why did Jesus say, “My Father is greater than I?”—John 14:28

He wanted to emphasize that he and his father were two different beings. He also emphasized that although God had given all power in heaven and earth unto him, yet God would still be excepted, as Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15:27, 28, that God will eventually be all in all (all-powerful).

### 29. What is the Holy Spirit, and why is it called “the Comforter?”—John 14:16

Throughout the Old Testament, the forefathers and the prophets, and all the Israelites knew the Holy Spirit of God as the **power** of the Almighty God. They called it, in the Hebrew, **ruach-qodesh** (Psalms 51:11; Isaiah 63:10-11). They never considered the Holy Spirit as a person. They also called it the Spirit of God used to perform mighty works, and this Holy Spirit was given to men to perform mighty works. Note in Strong’s Concordance the complete definition of the word No. 7307—**roo-akh**, or **ruach**.

The Spirit of God moved upon the waters at the time of creation.—Gen. 1:1, 2.

The Spirit of God was given to men to give them skills and wisdom—for instance, Bezaleel and Aholiab.—Exod. 28:3; 31:3; 35:31.

The Spirit of God was given to Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, the judges, to carry out some mighty deeds; and the Spirit of God came mightily upon Samson to tear a lion with his hands, to fight and kill one thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, also to pull down the pillars of the Temple of Dagon (fish god).—Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13: 25; 15:14; 16:28.

The Prophets spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.—2 Pet. 1:20, 21; 2 Tim. 3:16.

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The Holy Spirit helped men to interpret dreams and visions.—Gen. 41:38, 39; Dan. 2:19; 4:8.

The Authorized King James Version of the New Testament uses the word “[Holy] Ghost” for the word “Spirit.” The Revised Versions have more properly rendered the word as “Spirit.” John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.—Luke 1:15.

Regarding the birth of Jesus, the angel told Mary, “The Holy [Spirit] shall come upon thee, and the **power of the Highest** shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”—Luke 1:35.

The Holy Spirit of God descended upon Jesus when he was baptized. The Spirit of Jehovah was upon Jesus. With the power of the Holy Spirit, God anointed Jesus Christ.—Matt. 3:16, 17; Acts 10:38.

In Joel 2:28, Jehovah foretold that he would “pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy... shall dream dreams... shall see visions.”

Jesus promised his disciples that “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that... may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth... The Comforter, which is the Holy [Spirit], whom the Father shall send in my name,... shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now... [However], when the Spirit of truth is come, [it] will guide you into all truth.” (King James Version has “he will guide”—not a proper translation with a neuter noun)—John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7, 12, 13.

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Jesus, after his resurrection, told his disciples again: “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry [you] in the city of Jerusalem, until [you] be endued with **power from on high**.” (Luke 24:49) “Wait for the promise of the Father,... [you] shall be baptized with the Holy [Spirit]... [You] shall receive **power** after that the Holy [Spirit] is come upon you.” (Acts 1:4, 8) Just as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost. No **person** came, but a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting and they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke in different tongues. (Acts 2:1-4) None of the early Jewish Christians believed the Holy Spirit was a person, a God, or a third of God. It was only after 200 to 400 years after Christ that confusion and misunderstanding arose in regard to this matter.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew (a Semitic language). Jesus spoke Chaldo-Aramaic, a mixture of Hebrew and Syriac. The Gospels were written in Greek (an Indo-Aryan tongue). The Greek word **parakletos** is translated “Comforter.” This is defined as “intercessor, monitor, helper, consoler, and advocate.” The Greek scholars say that in the Greek, the gender is not based on sex and non-sex. Most of the nouns ending in “os” are masculine. But, the Greek word “Spirit” is **pneuma**, and it is neuter. In our common version we read, “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost [Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, **he** [it] shall teach you all things.” (John 14:26) Benjamin Wilson’s Diaglott renders it in this manner, “But the helper, the Holy Spirit, **which** the Father will send in my name; **shall teach you all things**.” Again, in the common version of John 16:13, 14, we read, “He [?] will guide you into all truth: for he [?] shall not speak of himself [?]; but whatsoever he [?] shall hear, that shall he [?] speak: and he [?] will show you things to come.” In this passage, the Greek word **heautou**

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should be translated as “**itself**.” This Greek word is translated in three ways in the New Testament: masculine, feminine, and common or neuter:

“Dishonoreth **her** head.”—1 Cor. 11:5.

“Which calleth **herself** a prophetess.”—Rev. 2:20.

“Love seeketh not **her** own.”—1 Cor. 13:5.

“Would judge **ourselves**.”—1 Cor. 11:31.

“Have addicted **themselves**.”—1 Cor. 16:15.

“Divide it among **yourselves**.”—Luke 22:17.

“Let the morrow take thought for the things of **itself**.”  
—Matt. 6:34.

“If the house be divided against **itself**.”—Mark 3:25.

“The branch cannot bear fruit of **itself**.”—John 15:4.

“There is nothing unclean of **itself**.”—Rom. 14:14.

Similarly, the word **ekeinos**, translated as “he,” is also translated as “that”, “those”, “the same”, “she”, “it.” (Consult a Greek-English concordance of the New Testament.)

The Apostle Paul says that through the Holy Spirit, the power of God, the children of God receive different “gifts” such as wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, diverse kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. All these were done by the same Holy Spirit, dividing to every man as God wills. (1 Cor. 12:7-11) The Holy Spirit can be likened to an electric current. It is invisible, yet very powerful. It pushes electric trains, trams; it is a light, it heats stoves, rotates fans, gives us energy for radio, telephone, TV. All these are done by the same electric current.

God pours out his Holy Spirit. (A person cannot be “poured out.”) The Holy Spirit fills a person. (How, if the Holy Spirit is a person?) God seals us with his Holy Spirit. (How can one person be used to seal another?) Thus we see how unscriptural and unreasonable it is to think that the Holy Spirit is a person.

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### 30. What is the origin of the Trinity doctrine, and what is the Trinity?

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there are three gods in one person, and one god composed of three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. This same (or similar) teaching is found in most heathen religions of the world. It is our firm conviction that it is not taught in the Bible.

The false doctrine of a triad (or Trinity) began first in the corrupt religion of Babylon. Nimrod, a descendant of Cush (a grandson of Noah) became a mighty hunter against the will of Jehovah, by wanton killing of animals. He became a rebel, and through violence he also became the first king on earth. (Gen. 9:5, 6; 10:8-10) He made himself a demi-god, and after his death, he, his father, Cush, and his mother, Semiramis, were worshiped. They became god the father, god the mother, and god the son. They thus formed a mysterious holy trinity, and were worshiped as such. Nimrod was also called **Ninus**, and one of his cities is called Nineveh. After Nimrod married his own mother, they first established an abominable religion with many secrets and mysteries. Read the book, *The Two Babylons*, by Rev. Alexander Hislop.

The Nimrod cult is worshiped by many different names in the world:

In India, it is Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva (**Tiumurthi**, “three gods”); in Babylon and Assyria they are Anos, Illinoios and Aos; in Phoenicia they are Ulomus, Ulosuros and Eliun; in Egypt they are Kneph, Phthas and Osiris; in Greece they are Zeus, Poseidon and Aidoneus; in Rome they are Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto; among the Germans they are Wodan, Fricco and Thor.

The Indian temples are full of images of the triune god, showing three heads on a single body. The Dalai Lama (Tibet) is stamped with a picture of a three-fold deity. Baal-Shalish means lord of three, a trinity. (2 Kings 4:42) A Tartar coin is



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stamped with a human figure with three heads. Thus, the god of the holy trinity is among most religions of the heathen world.

In the fourth century A.D., the pagan emperor of Rome, Constantine, became a Christian. Then many learned Greeks and Romans also became Christians. The pagan philosophers, after accepting Christianity, gradually brought their own doctrines into the Christian church. According to a parable of Jesus, this was a part of the sowing of “tares” among the wheat. (Matt. 13:24-30) By false and cunning interpretations they succeeded to establish that the Bible taught this trinity, saying that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one and the same substance, all three are coequal and coeternal. It was easy for the new pagan converts to accept because it was like their former religion.

After Constantine’s victory in a battle, which followed his seeing a vision which showed a cross and a sign above it which he was told, “In this sign, conquer,” he was converted to Christianity. In 325 A.D., a Council was gathered in Nicea, an ancient city in Asia Minor. About 280 bishops were gathered to discuss the doctrine of the Trinity. Athanasius, a young wealthy presbyter of Alexandria (Egypt), advocated the doctrine of the Trinity; but Arius, an older morally-upright presbyter, had argued against it, showing it was not taught in the Bible. He maintained that God and Jesus were two different beings. He pointed out that Jesus said, “My Father is greater than I.” How could they claim they were both equal in the face of Jesus’ statement? Arius and his plain truths were rejected; he was removed from his office, his books burned; he was banished, and his followers were hated and persecuted. Arius, on being recalled, was poisoned to death.

In the Bible, we never find the word trinity. From the beginning, Jehovah taught his selected people, Israel, saying:

“Hear, O Israel: the LORD [Jehovah] our God is one LORD

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[Jehovah].” (Deut. 6:4) Jesus also quoted this verse. (Mark 12:29) “There is none like unto the LORD [Jehovah] our God.” (Exod. 8:10; 9:14) “Who is like unto thee, O LORD [Jehovah], among the gods [mighty ones]. Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Exod. 15:11) “For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD [Jehovah]? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD [Jehovah]?” (Ps. 89:6) “To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?” (Isa. 46:5, 9) In view of all these statements, the teaching of the Trinity cannot stand true. Jesus is exalted, but not equal to God Himself.

Our Lord Jesus, as the Logos, though being in the form of God (as a spirit being) “did not meditate a usurpation to be like God.” (Phil 2:6, 7, Diaglott) (Satan had said in his heart, “I will be like the Most High.” Isa. 14:14.) In the case of Jesus, the common version translators who accepted the trinitarian idea, translated Philippians 2:6, 7, “[Jesus] thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Note other translations (more correct):

“who did not think it a matter to be earnestly desired”–

Clarke

“did not Jesus earnestly effect”–Cyprian

“did not think of eagerly retaining”–Wakefield

“did not regard–as an object of solicitous desire”–Stuart

“thought not a thing to be seized”–Sharpe

“did not eagerly grasp”–Kneeland

“not || a thing to be seized || accounted the being equal with God”–Rotherham

“did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped”  
–NASB

“did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped” –  
ESV

These last five are the most literal and precise.

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The apostle Paul, in comparing Satan and his actions with the thoughts and actions of Jesus (Paul knew of the descriptions of Satan in Ezekiel 28:13-15 and Isaiah 14:12-14), wrote to the church at Philippi, saying: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:7) "Jesus, though being in the form of God, did not violently strive to be equal with God." This is a fine translation by Dickenson. See also the *Good News Bible*, Today's English Version: "He [Christ] always had the nature of God but he did not think **that by force he should try to be equal with God**. Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had (the heavenly Glory) and took the nature of a servant, he became like man and appeared in human likeness. He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death, his death on the cross. For this reason God raised him up to the highest place above and gave him the name that is greater than any other name, and so, in honor of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth and in the world below will fall on their knees and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father." (Phil. 2:6-11)

The biblical facts, the words of Jesus and his apostles, clearly teach that the Father and Son are two glorious but separate beings, with different powers, glory, and honor. The doctrine of the Trinity is of pagan origin and cannot be accepted by discerning Christians.

For a time after Noah's Flood the world believed in one God. In far-away China, until 255 B.C., it is reported: "The Chinese were *monotheists* in an ancient world of polytheistic worship... In summary, we find that *the written language of China was conceived during the primeval, monotheistic period*, when the religious concepts were still pristine and the history of earlier ages unclouded by later innovations. This ancient pictographic and ideographic language has survived unscathed, and we believe bears a witness to the original beliefs of the Chinese, handed down by oral tradition. The record contained

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by many specific characters carries such a close similarity to the Hebrew Genesis that it would seem only logical to believe that both civilizations must have access to the same common historical knowledge.” (C.H. Kang and Ethel R. Nelson, *The Discovery of Genesis*; St. Louis: Concordia, 1979. p. 14, 20)

The Muslims are one of the largest religious groups in the world, next to Christianity, and are followers of Mohammed, the Prophet of Arabia, who was a descendant of Abraham through the family of Ishmael. In the sixth century A.D., Mohammed condemned the doctrine of the Trinity (**taslich** in Arabic). The Jews and the Muslims are strict followers of the one supreme God. They mock any foolish idea and belief of three coequal and coeternal gods, one-in-three, and three-in-one.

Sri Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a well-versed Hindu, read the Bible and had many talks with the English Baptist missionary, William Carey, and others. He said the Holy Bible does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity. Another great missionary scholar, Adam Clarke, who came from England to convince him, utterly failed to prove the Trinity, and finally he himself was converted by Ram Mohan Roy. He boldly said that the doctrine of the Trinity is nonsense, left the missionary work, and joined Ram Mohan Roy.

A learned High Court Judge of Allahabad said in his book, *The Fountainhead of Religions*, that the Bible does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity, but that the Christians have borrowed it from the great Hindu idea of Trimurti. Sri Dayananda Swami, the founder of the Arva Samaj, after reading the Bible, wrote in his book, *Sathyartha Prakash*, saying, “Jesus never said that he was a god but always said he was sent by God. He cannot be God, as he prayed to God. There is no trinity in the Bible.”

### 31. Who are the angels?

In the Hebrew language, an angel is called **malak**, and in the Greek is called **angelos**. These words mean “a messenger.”

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They are generally the heavenly messengers. Sometimes an earthly messenger—a prophet, a priest, a teacher, an ambassador, a king is also called a **malak**, or an angel. (Strong's Concordance –Word #4397.)

It is written in the Bible that God created all creatures through Jesus, including the angels—invisible spirit beings, heavenly beings. (Col. 1:15, 16; Luke 24:39) Their number is spoken of as ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. (Ps. 68:17; Dan. 7:10; 2 Kings 6:16, 17) At the time of Jesus, a legion of the Roman army was composed of 6,200 soldiers and 300 horses. Jesus said that if he asked his Father, Jehovah God, he would have sent more than twelve legions of angels to save him. (Matt. 26:53; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11) They are celestial creatures with spiritual bodies (they have spiritual forms) and are powerful, intelligent creatures. (1 Cor. 15:40, 44) God makes “his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.” (Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:7) God sent his angels to men and women to give messages to them. (Gen. 16:7; 19:1; Judg. 2:1; 13:3; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:11; 2:9) Angels were sent to safeguard and protect God's children—Dan. 3:28; 6:22; Acts 5:19; 12:7; Ps. 34:7; Matt. 18:10.

The angels of the Lord are sent to punish and destroy the wicked. (1 Chron. 21:15) An angel of the Lord destroyed the wicked King Sennacherib's army of 185,000 soldiers in a night! (2 Kings 19:35) The angel of the Lord smote King Herod. (Acts 12:23) Whenever angels came to men they were able to appear as human beings, and also as bright, powerful persons. The angels that appeared to Abraham and Lot in human form, also were able to eat food given to them.—Gen. 18:1-8; 19:1-3; Heb. 13:2.

Among other spirit beings are some called cherubim(s), and some are called seraphim(s). (Gen. 3:24; Ps. 18:10; 80:1; Isa. 6:1, 2) Of the angels, we know only three by name: Michael, Lucifer, and Gabriel. The angel Gabriel said he stands in the

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presence of God. He was sent as a special messenger to Daniel, Zechariah, and Mary. (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26) The angel of Jehovah is the archangel Michael, the great prince. In the Old Testament we see the phrase, “the angel of the Lord,” used: “The **angel of the LORD** [Yahweh] appeared” to Moses in the burning bush. (Exod. 3:2) “The **angel of God** [the LORD]” went before the Israelites. (Exod. 14:19) Now Jehovah said unto Moses, “Behold I send **an angel** before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: **for my name is in him.**” (Exod. 23:20-23) This angel always speaks in the name of Jehovah, as Jehovah in the first person. See Genesis 22:11, 15-18. Therefore, this angel is **not** Jehovah himself, but speaks **for** him. Michael is called the archangel. (Jude, verse 9) In Daniel 10:13, Michael is called the first of the chief princes who came to help Gabriel. In Daniel 12:1, Michael is called the “great prince” who stands for God’s children. In heaven, Michael fights with the dragon, the Devil, and casts him down to earth.—Rev. 12:7.

The promised seed of the woman who would crush the serpent’s head, is our Lord Jesus Christ. (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4; 1 John 3:8) The Hebrew name, Michael, means one “who is like God.” Jesus is the image of God. (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3) To “which of the angels said he [Jehovah], Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?” To which of the angels did God say, “Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool”? (Ps. 2:7; 110:1; Heb. 1:5, 13) Surely Jehovah did not tell this to any ordinary angel, but to his Son, Jesus, whom he raised from the dead.

According to the Prophet Daniel, at the time when Michael, the great prince who “standeth for the... people,” shall come:

1. There shall be a time of tribulation, such as never was since there was a nation.

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2. God's people, whose names were written in a book, would be saved.
3. The rest of the worldly people, who died and are sleeping in the dust of the earth shall awake—some (those who will then obey) to everlasting life and some (those who still disobey) to everlasting shame and contempt (second death).
4. The wise and those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the brightness of the firmament (the Sun) and as the stars forever and ever.

All four of these very important events were to take place when the great prince, Michael, comes. (Dan. 12:1-3)  
According to the words of Jesus:

1. At his second coming, there shall be a great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world, to this time, nor ever shall be again.—Matt. 24:3, 21; Mark 13:19.
2. At Christ's second coming, the elect church class, whose names are written in the book of life, shall be delivered in the glorious first resurrection.—Luke 10:20; Heb. 12:23; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; Rev. 20:6.
3. After Christ's second coming, there shall be the general resurrection of the world back to, and including, Adam. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection... [by judgments]."—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; 17:31.
4. After the harvest, at the end of the world (age), Jesus said that the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.—Matt. 13:39, 43.

The events of these two prophecies are so parallel that we

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can see that Michael, the great prince, the archangel, is none other than our Lord Jesus.

The name Lucifer refers to none other than the great enemy of all mankind, Satan, the father of lies, the great deceiver, who will eventually be destroyed.—Rev. 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8.

### **32. Why did Jehovah God create the earth?**

God created the earth not in vain, or to be a waste, but he created it to be inhabited by man. (Isa. 45:18) God says that heaven is his throne and the earth is his footstool. (Isa. 66:1) The earth is a very important place in the universe, though there are many other planets.

### **33. Will the earth be destroyed sometime in the future?**

No, “The earth abideth forever.”—Eccles. 1:4.

### **34. Where was the original dwelling place of man on earth?**

Jehovah God planted a garden, “eastward in Eden,” and there he put the perfect pair whom he had created. (Gen. 2:8) This garden is also called “paradise.” (See Roman Catholic Bible—Douay Version) A paradise means a park, a fruit garden. In these very ancient languages, the following words are used which mean “a beautiful park or garden:” Sanskrit—**pardeesha**; Armenian—**pardez**; Arabic—**firdus**; Syriac (Aramaic)—**dardaiso**; Chaldee—**pardeesa**.

### **35. Where was this original garden on earth?**

The Bible says that a river went out of Eden to water the garden and from there it divided into four rivers. They are called Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel (Tigris) and the Euphrates. (Gen. 2:10-14) Even today the two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, confluence in a place north of the Persian Gulf, between Baghdad and the ruins of ancient Babylon, and again upstream in Eastern Turkey. Nearby, the Araxes River flows



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towards a land where there are gold mines. The River Gihon is not now easily identified, nor which Asian land of Cush is to be associated with it. While the location of Eden is still not known, a location in the region of (possibly even under) Lake Van seems likely.

### **36. What was there in the paradise of Eden?**

In the garden there were many trees bearing fruit, and trees of great beauty. There were many living creatures—birds, animals, and fish—who lived in peace and who ate only food that was natural to their areas.—Gen. 1:29, 30; 2:9.

### **37. How was the first man created, and why?**

The first man, Adam, was created in the “image and likeness of God [in godly character of love, wisdom, power, and righteousness].” (Ps. 8:5-8; Gen. 1:26-28; 5:1) Jehovah God created man “of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man **became a living soul.**” (Gen. 2:7) Note here, carefully, that the body **and** the breath of life together constitute a living soul. There is no separate “soul” within the body.

The first woman, we are informed, was created by God from one of the ribs of Adam, the first man (and hence with his X-chromosome DNA). (Gen. 2:21, 22) The reason for creating man (and woman) was to “fill the earth” with a noble people who would care for and expand the original garden which God had planted. Man was given authority over the animals, birds, and fish of the sea. Adam gave all the animals their names. Thus all the works of God were good, until man sinned against God.—Genesis, chapters 1-3.

### **38. Who was the Devil? Did God create the Devil? How did sin, the curse, and death enter the good earth?**

God did not create a Devil or Satan. God’s Word says that the being that later became the Devil (Accuser), was created a

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beautiful cherub, an angel, with wisdom and power, and was anointed and appointed as a guardian angel in the Garden of Eden. He is figuratively spoken of as wise, rich, like the proud kings of Babylon and Tyre. This glorious cherub is called in the Hebrew, **Heylel**; in Latin **Lucifer**, meaning “brightness, son of the morning, or morning star.” “Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God... Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth.” (Ezek. 28:13, 14) Through pride, Lucifer rebelled against God and desired to be “like God.” (Isa. 14:12-15) He was “perfect...till iniquity was found in thee [him].” (Ezek. 28:15. See Ezek. 28:11-19) Jesus said, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” (Luke 10:18) Now, Lucifer is called the dragon, the old serpent, the Devil, and Satan. Therefore, Satan (Enemy) is the first sinner of the universe. He deserves the title of father of all those who are liars, wicked, evil, and disobedient to the precepts of God as given in the Bible.

### 39. How did sin enter into man?

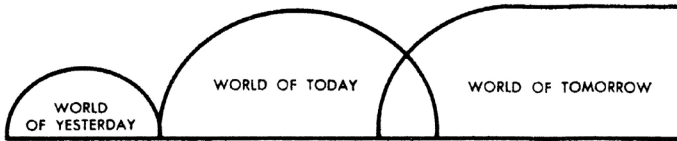
God gave Adam a commandment, saying, “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—Gen. 2:16, 17.

Satan appeared unto Eve and enticed her to eat of this forbidden tree, saying, “Ye shall not surely die.” (Gen. 3:4) Then Adam ate of the same fruit. Thus, both became sinners, although God in a sense partly excused Eve, because we read that she was deceived. But Adam was not deceived; thus he was in the transgression. (1 Tim. 2:14) Now “by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom. 5:12) Inasmuch as God’s law is, “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23), this is the reason for death passing upon all mankind. (Note: The wages of sin is **death**—not eternal torture, or a means into another life, such as is taught in other faiths.)

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### 40. Will mankind ever be able to enjoy perfect life in a garden such as Eden again?

Yes, for such is the promise of the Bible. The story of the Bible, when properly understood, takes man from paradise lost to paradise restored. The sacrifice of Jesus makes it all possible. “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Cor. 15:21, 22) Jesus taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) This will come to pass in God’s due time. In that kingdom there will be no more sorrow, tears, death, for these all will have passed away. – Rev. 21:3-5.

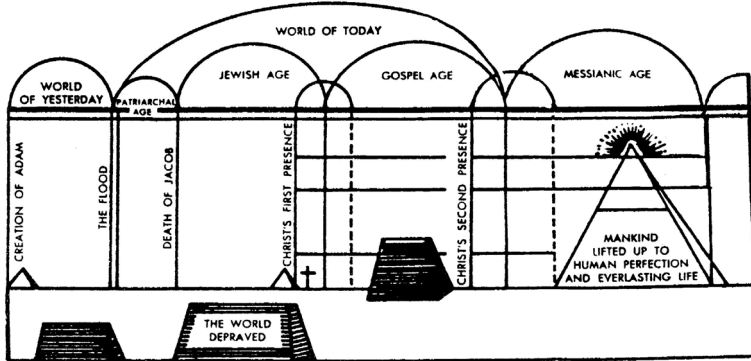


The Apostle Peter speaks of three “worlds” in 2 Peter, chapter 3. In this prophecy, the apostle uses the Greek word *kosmos*, meaning “an order of things.” The first, he tells us, came to an end at the time of the Flood. (vss. 5, 6) The second ends with the return of Christ (vss. 10, 12), while the third, which is God’s world (vs. 13) is “without end.” (Eph. 3:21) In keeping with the modern use of language, we might speak of these three worlds as “the world of yesterday,” the “world of today,” and the “world of tomorrow.”

Within these three worlds are other divisions which help us to understand the Bible and God’s plan. Certain scriptures apply at certain times in past history, and do not necessarily apply in our day, or in the future. An example would be, a scripture that would tell of a “coming flood.” (Gen. 6:13, 17) This would only apply to Noah’s time. Another example would be the scripture, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” (Amos 3:2) This text only applies during the time God dealt solely with the nation of Israel. (On the chart it is

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shown as a period called the Jewish Age.) For a more complete explanation the reader may wish to send for the booklet called, "God's Plan." (See last page.)



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## God and Reason

This helpful booklet is designed to be an aid to those who are seeking to learn the meaning of present world distress and what its final outcome will be. Many today are claiming that the only salvation for the tottering institutions of the world is for the people to return to God and the Bible. "God and Reason" raises the question as to what this would involve and points out from God's Word the many divine promises which give assurance that the time is near when God will establish order and peace in the place of present chaos and fear, that health and everlasting life are soon to take the place of sickness and death.

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