

Bible - not so trivia

1. What is the primary way in which God has made Himself known to mankind?

2. The Bible has two major divisions. What are they? _____
3. How many books are contained in these two divisions? OT _____ NT

4. What is the meaning of the English word testament? _____
5. The OT was written over a period of how many years? _____
6. The NT was written over a period of how many years? _____
7. In what languages was the OT originally written? _____
8. In what languages was the NT originally written? _____
9. Are these three languages still spoken today? _____
10. Jesus and the people of his day spoke Aramaic, so why do you think the NT was written in Greek? _____
11. Into about how many languages has the Bible been translated today? _____
12. What are the three dispensations (a system of revealed commands and promises regulating human affairs) of Bible history? _____

13. What are the three divisions of the OT? _____
14. What are the four divisions of the NT? _____
15. What is the central message of the OT?

16. What is the central message of the NT?

17. The OT was the rule of faith and practice for what people? _____
18. What is the rule of faith and practice for Christians today? _____
19. When Jesus referred to the scriptures He was referring to what? _____

Definitions

Canon - means a "rod" -- specifically, a rod with graduated marks used for measuring length. This word refers to the list of individual books that were eventually judged as authoritative and included as a part of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Apocryphal Books - The word apocrypha has come into the English language from the Greek and basically means hidden. It was used very early in the sense of secretive or concealed, but was also used in reference to a book whose origin was doubtful or unknown. Eventually the word took on the meaning of non-canonical, and thus for centuries the non-canonical books have been known as apocryphal books. yet in Protestant circles "the apocrypha" is the normal designation for those extra books which were found in the Catholic Old Testament. In a stricter sense, however, these books might be better termed "the Old Testament apocrypha" since there are New Testament writings as well.

Manuscripts - means anything written by hand, but by general consent in connection with the Bible it is restricted to the documents of the original tongues. Thus a New Testament manuscript is a Greek manuscript.

Exegesis - is the careful systematic study of the Scripture to discover the original intended meaning for those to whom it was written.

Hermeneutics - means determining what, if any, meaning a text has for us today and what application should be made.

Concordance - means a book with alphabetical listings of principal words in Bible verses and where they're located in the Bible.

Translation (version) - means a rendering from one language into another language.

Paraphrase - means an attempt to translate ideas from one language to another, with less concern about using the exact words of the original. It tries to eliminate as much of the historical distance as possible.

Context - means the parts of a discourse that surround a work or passage and can throw light on its meaning. The question of context are of two kinds - historical and literary. The historical context, which will differ from book to book, has to do with several things: the time and culture of the author and his readers, that is, the geographical, topographical, and political factors that are relevant to the author's setting; and the occasion of the book, letter, psalm, prophetic oracle, or other genre.

Literary context means that words only have meaning in sentences, and for the most part biblical sentences only have meaning in relation to preceding and succeeding sentences.

Where Did the Bible Come From?

Primary Source?

When you go to the bookstore and head over to the religion section, you will undoubtedly find Bibles - lots of Bibles. The assortment of translations and sheer volume of choices may overwhelm you.

It is claimed by believers that the Bible is God's book - or at a minimum, an important book about God. In light of such an audacious claim, one of the first questions raised is, Where did the Bible come from? We know it didn't drop down from heaven complete with leather cover and gold-gilt pages. In fact, it didn't drop down from heaven at all, even as a rough draft. People wrote it. Human beings, like you and me. Who were these people? Why did they write? When did they write it? And how do we know they were right about what they wrote?

Sometimes people will buy a Bible for a friend, and that person, out of curiosity, starts reading. Imagine you are someone who knows almost nothing about the Bible. What would be your first reaction as you perused its pages? Would you be able to make heads or tails out of it? What features would surprise you - or baffle you?

One of the first things that would stand out is the human quality of the writings. If you were expecting the Bible to be the Word of God, you are probably expecting the words of God - maybe something like a transcription of God's sermons. There should be commandments, pronouncements, even judgments - all with quotation marks as something God said to someone.

Yet the first words of the Bible are, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." God is spoken of in the third person. These are the words of a *man* saying what god did, not God saying what He did. This is true for most of the Bible; the writers seem to record their own words and commentary mixed in with actual direct quotes from God.

There are many more questions you might have. Are we supposed to believe the people who wrote the Bible should be taken literally? And when they do quote God, did He say something out loud that they could hear? If so, how did they know it was God talking and not a demon? If it wasn't an audible voice, but only an impression in their minds, how did they know it was God and not their subconscious? Why should we believe their inner impressions of what God supposedly said any more than our own?

Then we must ask, How did these writings come together in one volume? Who did the picking and choosing? What if they overlooked some book that god wanted included? What if they included something with errors? What if this whole business of a book from God is just presumption - a mere human asserting he knows for sure what

God said? The origin of this supposed book from God raises many tough questions. Get ready for some lively discussion!

Why Believe the Bible?

The Bible was written over a period of about 1500 years by more than forty authors with vastly different education, many different cultures, from three continents and three different languages, and finally not just one subject but hundreds. And yet the Bible is a unit. There is complete harmony, which cannot be explained by coincidence or collusion.

Unparalleled Manuscript Support

There is much more evidence for the reliability of the New Testament text than any other comparable writings in the ancient world.

"If the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt." (Dr. F.F. Bruce of the University of Manchester in England)

Author	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	Number of Copies
Caesar	100-44 BC	900 AD	1000 years	10
Tacitus	100 AD	1100 AD	1000 years	20
Suetonius	75 - 160 AD	950 AD	800 years	8
Herodotus	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1300 years	8
Aristotle	384 - 322 BC	1100 AD	1400 years	49
New Testament	45 - 100 AD	fragment: 125 AD; full copies: third and fourth centuries	fragment: 25 years; full copies: 200 - 300 years	24,000

(compiled from Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*)

It seems strange that the text of Shakespeare, which has been in existence less than two hundred and eight years, should be far more uncertain and corrupt than that of the New Testament, now over eighteen centuries old . . . with perhaps a dozen or twenty exceptions, the text of every verse in the New Testament may be said to be . . . settled by general consent . . . but in every one of Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays there are probably a hundred readings still in dispute.
John Lea, *The Greatest Book in the World*

Fulfilled Prophecies Indicate Inspiration

There are literally hundreds of prophecies found in scripture foretelling events that would take place in many cases hundreds of years later. All of these prophecies were fulfilled just as they were predicted.

Over 300 prophecies were made concerning Christ in the Old Testament hundreds of years before Christ was born. Christ fulfilled each one of those prophecies!

- born in Bethlehem - Micah 5:2 - Matthew 2:1
- born of a virgin - Isaiah 7:14 - Matthew 1:23
- called out of Egypt - Hosea 11:1 - Matthew 2:14,15
- pierced hands and feet - Psalms 22:16 - John 20:25
- cast lots for His clothing - Psalm 22:18 - John 19:24
- 30 pieces of silver - Zech. 11:12 - Matthew 26:15

Scientific Foreknowledge Suggests Inspiration

In each of the following cases, the Biblical writer had an opportunity to either state the widely held erroneous belief of his day, or to state a factually true description. In each case what was stated was true, demonstrating knowledge beyond the writer's ability and thus necessarily from God.

Fact As Stated in Bible	Biblical Reference	Common Belief of Day in Which Author Lived
don't eat animal that died naturally	Lev. 17:15	No restrictions on manner of death
Quarantine of certain diseases	Lev. 13-15	No isolation of diseased
Principles of avoiding bacterial contamination - one person to another	Lev. 15: 19-33	no rules of hygiene or isolation
Human waste products to be buried	Deut. 23:12-14	Human waste left on ground
Burning clothes, washing self after contact with deceased man or animal	Num. 19:5-22	No recognition of contagion problems
Earth is round, day and night taking place simultaneously	Isa. 40:22 Prov. 8:27 Luke 17:34	Earth is flat
Earth is not physically supported	None mentioned and Job 26:7	Earth held up by four elephants or Atlas (a man), etc.
The North is Empty (Our north pole points out of our galaxy)	Job 26:7	Seeing a few stars to the North refuted this idea until 1932
Space and stars are too large to be measured or counted	Gen. 15:5 Jer. 33:22	Attempts to number the astronomical bodies went on until 1932
All men are blood relatives	Acts 17:26	Men have different origins
The water cycle	Eccl. 1:7 Job 36:27,28	Gods pour new water on land continuously

Use of genetics in livestock	Gen. 30:30-43	No recognition of inherited physical properties
Seaworthy ratio for ship construction 30 - 5 - 3	Gen. 6:15	Ships ratio not considered; only the beauty
Concepts of id and ego	Rom. 7	God induced behavior explanations

Validation From Archaeology

Since 1974, 17,000 tablets have been unearthed from ancient Ebla (now northern Syria). These writings corroborate the world of the patriarchs (around 2000 BC). In his book *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell states,

The victory of Abraham over Chedolaomer and the Mesopotamian kings has been described as fictitious and the five Cities of the Plain (Sodom, Gomorrah, Adamah, Zeboim, and Zoar) as legendary. Yet the Ebla archives refer to all five Cities of the Plain and on one tablet the cities are listed in the exact same sequence as Genesis 14. The milieu of the tablets reflect the culture of the patriarchal period and depict that, before the catastrophe recorded in Genesis 14, the area was a flourishing region experiencing prosperity and success, as recorded in Genesis.

In 1963, a tablet was found during a renovation of the amphitheater in Caesarea (on the Mediterranean Sea). This tablet had the name "Pontius Pilate" inscribed on it. Up until that time, the name Pilate was found only in the New Testament and in a few other secular historical sources. This find is just one more validation that the people and events of the Bible are real.

No archaeological discovery has ever contradicted scripture!

Scriptures Claim Inspiration ("God-breathed")

"I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ." **(Galatians 1:11,12)**

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

(II Timothy 3:16)

"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." **(II Peter 1:20,21)**

Careful Copying Techniques

The scribes who copied the Bible were trained professionals, with stringent job performance standards. For example, rules for the Talmudists (100-500 AD) included:

No word or letter must be written from memory without the scribe looking at the codex before him.

Between every consonant the width of a hair or thread must intervene.

Between every section (parashah) the breadth of nine consonants.

Between every book, three lines.

The fifth book of Moses must terminate exactly with a line, but the rest need not do so.

The copyist must sit in full Jewish dress and be recently bathed.

He should not begin to write the name of God with a pen newly dipped in ink.

If a king addresses him while writing the divine name, the scribe should ignore him.

The Massorettes who followed (500-900 AD) likewise exercised great care in copying. As Sir Frederick Kenyon noted in *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*. They numbered the verses, words and letters of every book. They calculated the middle word and the middle letter of each. They enumerated verses which contained all the letters of the alphabet, or a certain number of them; and so on. These trivialities, as we may rightly consider them, had yet the effect of securing minute attention to the precise transmission of the text; and they are but an excessive manifestation of a respect of the sacred scriptures which in itself deserves nothing but praise. The Massorettes were indeed anxious that not one jot nor tittle, not one smallest letter nor one tiny part of a letter, of the Law should pass away or be lost.

Validation from Secular Sources

Often nonbiblical sources describe events as recorded in the Bible. The following are a few examples:

Now some of the Jews thought that Herod's army had been destroyed by God, and that it was a very just penalty to avenge John, surnamed the Baptist. For Herod had killed him, though he was a good man, who bade the Jews practice virtue, be just one to another and pious toward God, and come together in baptism.

*Falvius Josephus, Antiquities XVIII.5.2,
writing around 100 AD*

Hence to suppress the rumor, he falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius: but the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time broke out again, not only through Judea, where the mischief originated, but through the city of Rome also.

*Tacitus, Annals XV.44,
writing around 100 AD*

They affirmed, however, that the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verse a hymn to Christ as to a god, and bound themselves to a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft, adultery, never to falsify their word, not to deny a trust when they should be called upon deliver it up.

*Pliny, Governor of Bithynia,
Epistles X.96, writing to the emperor Trajan,
explaining what the Christians he arrested said to him*

The incredible influence the Bible has had on the lives of mankind down through the ages is an evidence that it is from God. (experiential argument)

If God is powerful enough to give us the scriptures to begin with, is He not powerful enough to make sure the Bible's reliability and integrity are not compromised down through the ages?

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Jesus - Matthew 24:35)

"As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day." (Jesus - John 12:47,48)

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." (Isaiah 40:8)