

Can I **TRUST** The Bible?

WHY SHOULD I BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE?

PORTICO
LEARNING HUB



FOUNDATIONS - MODULE 13B



"Most people would agree that the Bible is the "holy scripture of the Christian religion" that tells the history of earth and mankind, with hundreds of stories and lessons on morality, in a collection of 66 books divided into the Old Testament and the New Testament.

However, believing that the Bible is the "Word of God" and not just a compilation of books written by 40 authors, takes more than a worldly view - it takes faith.

So what does it mean when we say that the Bible is inspired by God?

In this module you will learn why the Bible is different from other religious texts that claim to be divine."

Rick Carroll

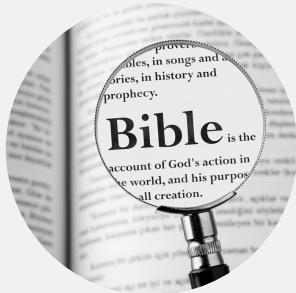
Key Topics



01
IS THE BIBLE REALLY THE WORD OF GOD?

02

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR
THE BIBLE TO BE INSPIRED??




03
HOW CAN WE KNOW THAT
THE BIBLE IS INERRANT?

04

HOW CAN WE BE CERTAIN THAT
THE BIBLE HAS NOT BEEN CORRUPTED??



05
WHY ARE THERE SO MANY TRANSLATIONS
AND CAN THEY BE TRUSTED?



*Such things were written in the
Scriptures long ago to teach us. And
the Scriptures give us hope and
encouragement as we wait patiently
for God's promises to be fulfilled.*

ROMANS 15:4 (NLT)

01

Is The Bible Really The Word Of God?

Internal Evidence

- The Bible is one **unified story**, interwoven throughout 66 books.
- The Bible has **fulfilled prophecies** spanning thousands of years (Daniel, Isaiah, Malachi).
- The Bible has **changed people's lives** (people have defended it to their death).

External Evidence

- The Bible has **historicity** - every year archaeologists in Israel discover new evidence of stories found in Scripture.
- The Bible is **resilient** - it has not changed in thousands of years.
- The Bible has **influence** - it's still the worldwide best seller of all time.
- The Bible is **indestructible** - cultures and political regimes have tried to destroy the teachings and annihilate its followers over the years.

The Bible is a book of faith.

Why is knowing the truth so vital for us?

- The deceitfulness of sin can tempt us into wanting the same control as God.

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?” “Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. “It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’” “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.” Genesis 3:1-5 (NLT)

- When sin and death entered the world it robbed us of our innocence.

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam’s sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned. Romans 5:12 (NLT)

- We all face judgment and need salvation.

And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him. Hebrews 9:27-28 (NLT)

God who is Himself truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Scripture to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ.

Reflection #1

What makes it hard for you to trust the Bible?

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

HEBREWS 4:12 (NLT)

02

What Does It Mean For The Bible To Be Inspired?

Inspiration - the belief that **God Himself** inspired the words of scripture

The Bible is an extension of God Himself, revealing His truth and teachings for our lives today.

Jesus affirmed the inspiration of the scriptures:

Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.

Matthew 5:17-18 NLT

Theories of Biblical Inspiration

1. **Verbal Plenary (Orthodox)** - Every word in the Bible is God's word, it's alive - it's "God-breathed." The word "verbal" refers to "the very words of Scripture," and "plenary" means "complete or full."
2. **Neo-Orthodox** - Post World War I belief that denies that the Bible is inspired by God. The Bible is a medium of revelation to point someone to Christ, but is not the Word of God, and therefore is fallible.
3. **Dictation** - God is the author of Scripture and used humans to dictate His words. Scripture is primarily God's work with minimal human contribution.
4. **Limited** - Scripture is primarily man's work with limited help from God. God guided the human authors and allowed them freedom to express themselves in the text, but the Spirit prevented doctrinal errors.

Visit "Got Questions" for more details: <https://www.gotquestions.org/inspiration-theories.html>

Tota Scriptura - Latin phrase meaning "scripture wholly" or "every part of scripture" - no extractions, additions or selections.

Reflection #2

If you had to describe to somebody how you thought the Bible authors knew what to write, how would you describe it to them?

*Every word of God proves
true. He is a shield to all who
come to him for protection.*

PROVERBS 30:5 (NLT)

03

How Can We Know That The Bible Is Inerrant?

God's Word is: **INFALLIBLE** and **INERRANT**

Infallible means incapable of error, without flaw, never wrong, absolutely trustworthy.

Inerrant signifies the quality of being free from falsehood or mistake.

Your laws are perfect and completely trustworthy. Psalms 119:138 NLT

Archaeological Proof of Inerrancy

- **Joseph's role as Viceroy in Egypt** (Genesis 41:39-42) - In 2006, Kenneth Kitchen discovered that between 1640-1550 BC there was a large Semitic migration in and out of Egypt, around the time Joseph was sold as a slave into Egypt, and then came to power as Viceroy to the Pharaoh. Known as the Hyksos people, they were eventually treated as slaves, which aligns perfectly with the story of Moses in Exodus.
- **City of Ur** (Genesis 11) - In 2013, a palace with a great temple was discovered, which aligns with the story of Abraham.
- **Tower of Babel** (Genesis 11:1-9) - In 2017, a tablet with an image of a tower, along with an inscription that referenced it as the "Great Ziggurat of Babylon" and a stamp with the king's name was discovered bearing an ancient mortar, bitumen, which was actually named in the biblical account.

God is perfect therefore God's Word is perfect.

Chicago Summary Statements on Biblical Inerrancy

- “God, who is Himself truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God’s witness to Himself.
- Holy Scripture, being God’s own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God’s instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God’s command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God’s pledge, in all that it promises.
- The Holy Spirit, Scripture’s divine author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.
- Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God’s acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God’s saving grace in individual lives.
- The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible’s own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the church.” a. Excerpt From: Sproul, R.C. “Can I Trust the Bible?.” Apple Books.

Reflection #3

Are there parts of the Bible that you find hard to believe are not the least bit wrong?

HOLY BIBLE

HOLY
BIBLE

*The grass withers
and the flowers fade,
but the word of our
God stands forever.*

ISAIAH 40:8 (NLT)

04

How Can We Know That The Bible Has Not Been Corrupted Or Changed?

Original writings are called "Autographs"

- No original autographs exist
- Old Testament was written between 1400 to 400 BC
- New Testament was written between 40 to 96 AD
- Copies of the Autographs are called "Manuscripts"
- It's been over 1900 years since the completion of the Bible

New Testament Manuscripts

- 5800+ copies exist today, dating back to only 200-300 years after the original content was written
- Some copies date back to only 100 years after the original content was written
- Entire copies exist from the 4th Century AD

Old Testament Manuscripts

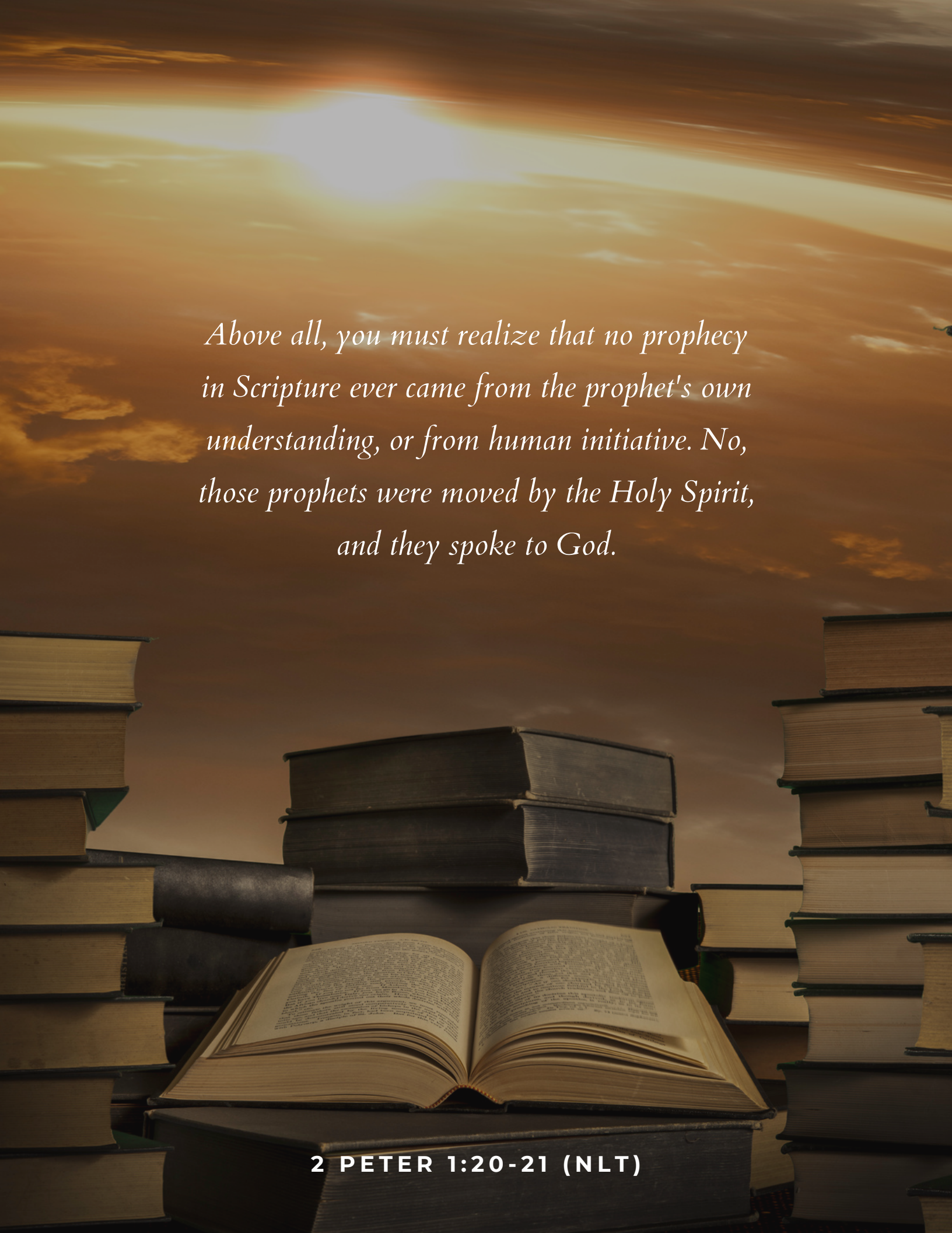
- Pre-date New Testament manuscripts
- Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in the 1940s in the Qumran caves.
- Cairo Geniza Manuscripts contain 200,000 manuscript fragments

Historical Writings vs The Bible

- Only 10 copies of Julius Caesar's writings remain, which were written 1000 years after the original manuscripts
- 8 copies of Herodotus' historical accounts exist, written 1400 years after the originals
- 643 copies of Homer's Greek poems exist today, which are only 95% historically accurate
- Whereas the New Testament Manuscripts are 99% historically accurate

Reflection #4

Does knowing the historical evidences of the unchanging reliability of the Bible help you trust it more? If so, how?

The image features a stack of several old, leather-bound books. In the center foreground, one book is open, showing its pages. The background is a dramatic sky with a bright sun low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and long, soft shadows. The overall mood is contemplative and scholarly.

*Above all, you must realize that no prophecy
in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own
understanding, or from human initiative. No,
those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit,
and they spoke to God.*

2 PETER 1:20-21 (NLT)

05

Why Are There So Many Translations And Can They Be Trusted?

How many translations are there?

As of September, 2022, the entire Bible has been translated from the "source language" (Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic) into 724 "receptor" languages (including Latin and English).

The New Testament has been translated into an additional 1,617 languages.

What's the reason for different translations of the Bible?

It is necessary for those who do not speak Greek or Hebrew to understand what God is saying through His Word.

What's involved in the translation process?

Translations need to be interpreted by the translator, who takes into account the meaning of the text.

"Textual Criticism" is where a translator compares the various copies to determine the most likely original text.

No translation can be perfect, since they are all an additional step away from the original Autographs, which no longer exist.

What's the history of the English translations?

- 400 AD - Jerome translated the Bible into Latin, when it was called the "Vulgate" (meaning common)
- 1380 AD - John Wycliffe translated the Bible from Latin to English
- 1526 AD - William Tyndale produced an English New Testament based on the Greek text
- 1604 AD - King James I commissioned a new English Bible

The Difference Between Translations

- Formal Approach: literal 'word-for-word' translation
- Functional Approach: idiomatic 'thought-for-thought' translation
- Paraphrase Version: is not translation from the original languages; it is a restatement of an English translation

Bible Translations Chart

More formal

More functional





Reflection #5

Which kind of Bible translation do you find most helpful to read?

How could you benefit from reading other translations?



Bible Reading Plan

At PORTICO we believe that it's necessary to read your Bible daily to grow in your spiritual journey of faith. That's why we've designed a Bible Reading Plan with Scripture verses for each day, to help you learn more about God.

[PORTICO.CC/DAILYDEVO](https://portico.cc/dailydevo)



All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16 (NLT)

The very essence of your words is truth; all your just regulations will stand forever.

PSALMS 119:160 (NLT)

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.

JOHN 1:1 (NLT)

Do not add to his words, or he may rebuke you and expose you as a liar.

PROVERBS 30:6 (NLT)

And if anyone removes any of the words from this book of prophecy, God will remove that person's share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are described in this book.

REVELATIONS 22:19 (NLT)