# **The Nature and Reliability Scripture**

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The Origin of Scripture / 2 Timothy 3:16

# Introduction & Recap

We are in session 4, titled “The Nature and Reliability of Scripture.”

In session 1, we covered the history of God’s revelation, concluding that throughout history, one of God’s goals is for humanity to KNOW Him. That’s *you*, personally. He wants YOU to know him. Hearing God’s voice used to be a rarity, but now, through the Bible, we have the incredible blessing of being able to hear from God any time.

In session 2, we looked at the history of Scripture, discussing how the texts were written. I shared how [2 Tim 3:16](https://ref.ly/2Ti3.16) declares that Scripture is inspired by God — God breathed — and that it is the actual words of God, yet written in the style and using the gifts of the authors. We talked about the languages God used, and how He has preserved the text through the centuries through the diligence of the scribes.

Then last week, session 3, From Manuscripts to Modern, we discussed the volume of extant material, looking at how we take these thousands of manuscripts and documents and produce a modern English Bible. We talked about textual criticism, with the outcome being that we can be extremely confident in the fact that God has safely transmitted His revelation to us. The main challenge for us is how to adequately express the original Hebrew and Koine Greek in English!

## Today’s Goals

What I want to achieve today is to talk more about the nature of Scripture. Can we prove it is supernatural in origin? How do we know what’s from God and what’s not?

So in our **outline**, we will

• Talk about how the books of the Bible were confirmed - the Canon of Scripture.

• Talk about Scripture’s reliability, so we will understand what we mean by the Scripture being “inerrant” and “infallible.”

• I'll show you how God anticipated human fallibility in His design by distributing key doctrines in multiple places throughout the whole Bible. This avoids “single-verse theology”

• Finally the Fingerprints of God. I’ve also promised to show you some miraculous evidences of supernatural features and design in the Bible too, so that’s coming up.

# The Canon of Scripture — Discerned, not Decided

“Kanon” is a Greek word that literally means “measuring stick” and more generally means “the standard.”

It refers to the list of books recognised as Scripture - as the Word of God.

The key point for your notes is this:

It was DISCERNED, not DECIDED.

## Old Testament Canon

[Background reading: https://www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-canon.html

https://bible-history.com/jewishliterature/the-old-testament-canon]

Let’s discuss the Old Testament canon first.

We’ve spoken about the writing of the Old Testament over many centuries. What we also observed is that the writings were considered God’s Word *immediately*. Moses wrote the Torah, and immediately it was holy writ for the people of Israel.

I’ve mentioned the Documentary Hypothesis, which we can safely reject on the authority of Jesus Christ. But that hypothesis shows that among scholars today there is a lack of certainty as to when and how the OT as it stands today was finalised.

We can say for sure that, by the time of Christ, the canon of the OT was complete. Jesus Himself refers to the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms in [Luke 24:44](https://ref.ly/Lk24.44).

The Jewish Historian Josephus wrote that:

“(38) For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another [as the Greeks have], but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine;”

His 22 books is less than our 39 because several were combined. The books of Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, for example. Lamentations was part of Jeremiah, etc.

He also said that their number was fixed by the time of Ezra.

### The Apocrypha and Other Writings

There is also the so-called Apocrypha, which means “hidden” or “doubtful.”

It comprises several additional books that have been considered Scripture alongside the OT by various groups throughout the centuries, and to this day is part of the Roman Catholic Bible. They are called the “deuterocanonical books” - which means second canon.

You’ll read that the books were incorporated as part of the Septuagint Bible, which was the Bible of the Apostles, and there is evidence that some early Church fathers accepted the Apocrypha as Scripture, or at least quoted from them in sermons. The books were also included in the Latin Vulgate Bible.

As we’ve seen, Josephus showed these books were not accepted as Scripture. Within the Dead Sea Scrolls, fragments of Apocryphal books were found. I read that only the canonical books were found on a special parchment and script, indicating an elevated status. And it’s plain that the OT was NOT quoted by any NT writer.

I think what was going on is that the Apocryphal books were considered valuable historical books, but not Scripture. The fact that some LXX manuscripts included the works only shows that they were valued, not that they were ranked as Scripture. In fact, the evidence is that they were *not* accepted as Scripture.

Their inclusion in the LXX, and the subsequent inclusion by Jerome in the Vulgate, shows the danger of including the words of men alongside the word of God. Study Bibles, for example, that provide an in-line commentary on the Bible text are very convenient. And I wouldn’t discourage their use. But, you **must** keep in mind that there is God’s Word, and there is man’s comments on it. Man’s opinions. The commentary could be incorrect, but the Scripture cannot be broken.

So to summarise the Old Testament Canon [SLIDE]

• Was immediately considered God's Word

• Affirmed by Jesus in [Luke 24:44](https://ref.ly/Lk24.44)

• Confirmed by the DSS and by Josephus

• The Apocryphal writings have historical value but there is no reason to believe they were considered Scripture.

## New Testament

[Background reading: https://www.theologymatters.com/articles/scripture/2014/the-formation-of-the-new-testament-canon/]

As we’ve seen, the text of the New Testament was written within one lifetime. And, as with the OT, the apostles considered it to be Scripture immediately. Peter uses the word Scripture to refer to the Old Testament prophesies, then in [2 Peter 3:16](https://ref.ly/2Pe3.16) clearly declares Paul’s writings to be Scripture too.

The early Church recognised and accepted the writings of the Apostles as Scripture - as far as we can tell - immediately. The words of Christ they had recorded, plus their clear teachings, were held as authoritative and distributed.

Paul himself commanded the reading of his letters:

**1 Thessalonians 5:27 NASB 2020**

I put you under oath by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers *and sisters.*

See also [Col 4:16](https://ref.ly/Col4.16), [Rev 1:3](https://ref.ly/Re1.3).

Now there were early challenges from the enemy that necessitated clarification:

• Marcion in the early 2nd C (so mere decades from the writing) had a corrupt and heretical theology based on a canon consisting of ten of Paul’s letters plus an edited version of Luke’s Gospel.

Even as recently as the Reformation, Martin Luther expressed doubt over some of the NT books. Apparently he called James “an epistle of straw” saying it “has nothing of the nature of the Gospel about it” in his preface to the NT in 1522.

So, not everything was unanimous and there was a need to clearly define the truly inspired Scriptural books.

The early Church historian Eusebius wrote “Ecclesiastical History” in 323AD in which he records his studies of the books and letters. He had 3 classifications:

• 22 that were universally accepted

• 5 widely accepted by disputed by some - James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, plus Jude

• 5 spurious books that some received, but are unanimously rejected today.

We do know there was some debate over Hebrews and Revelation too, though Eusebius listed them in his “universally accepted” list.

Another key event in resolving this was a letter written in 367AD by Athanasius, the “Easter Letter” - he clearly listed out the 27 New Testament books we hold today, stating clearly they were the *only* Christian Scriptures.

Separately to that, in the Western Church, there were two meetings where the 27 NT books were acknowledged. the African synods of Hippo Regius (A.D. 393) and Carthage (A.D. 397 and 419)

### Criteria

There were three criteria that were considered:

1. Apostolic Origin: the document should be the work of one of the Apostles. It was considered that Luke’s works were of Paul, and Mark’s Gospel was of Peter.

2. Doctrinal Consistency: the work must be consistent and in harmony with the rest of the Scriptures - OT and NT.

3. Universal or Continuous Acceptance by the Church: the work is already in regular use in worship and is bringing edification (meaning: bringing instruction and improvement). I.e. [2 Tim 3:16](https://ref.ly/2Ti3.16) is being proven true.

So it was not a matter of decision, but discerning what God had given through the Apostles, and by His Spirit led the Church to receive.

To summarise the New Testament:

• Considered Scripture immediately ([2 Peter 3:16](https://ref.ly/2Pe3.16))

• Distributed as authoritative ([Col 4:16](https://ref.ly/Col4.16), [1 Thes 5:27](https://ref.ly/1Th5.27))

• Subject to challenge and debate.

• Debated books included James, 2 Peter, 2-3 John, Jude, Hebrews and Revelation

## Canon Conclusion

The key point is that the Canon of Scripture was recognised through God’s providence, not human decision. It was not an arbitrary decision made by man in a council; it was a collective recognition and acknowledgement by the widespread people of God. They viewed the words of the New Testament as “self-authenticating.”

Links for further reading in the notes.

## Inerrancy and Infallibility — Understanding Biblical Trustworthiness

Now let’s talk about two related words that come up when talking about Scripture. Inerrancy and Infallability.

### Inerrancy

Inerrancy means without error. We assert and believe that the original biblical text are entirely truthful and free from error in all that they affirm. That would include doctrine, ethics, historical facts, and scientific affirmations.

This is true *of the original text only*. It’s entirely possible - and as we saw last week actual - that during the copying process, there are either mistakes or corruptions, which may then cause error in copies. Hence why we seek the originals via textual criticism.

#### Early Quotes

I thought I would show you a couple of early quotes to show what the Church fathers believed. The earliest quote is from Clement of Rome, around 95AD. In his 1st letter, chapter 45:

Ye have searched the scriptures, which are true, which were given through the Holy Ghost; and ye know that nothing unrighteous or counterfeit is written in them.

*https://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/First%20Epistle%20of%20Clement%20to%20the%20Corinthians.pdf*

That image is of an early copy of his letter found in Codex Alexandrinus

Iraneus and Origen spoke similarly in the late 1st and early 2nd C.

Augustine, in letter 82, around 405AD, said:

I have learned to yield this respect and honour only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error. And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either **the manuscript is faulty**, or **the translator has not caught the meaning** of what was said, or **I myself have failed to understand** it.

*https://www.roger-pearse.com/weblog/2014/01/27/augustine-to-jerome-on-the-inspiration-of-scripture/*

That image, amusingly, is from an 11th C copy of Augustine’s letters you can buy today for £15,000...

But we observe Augustine’s position: the *authors* were inerrant. If anything seems amiss, it could be a “faulty” manuscript, a translation problem, or simply a “me” problem.

**So inerrancy means that the original inspired text is free of error.**

The Bible doesn’t contain a record of *all* history. But, the history that it includes is necessarily correct and accurate.

The Bible is not a scientific fact book. But, where it speaks to issues that science also purports to speak, then the Bible is necessarily correct and accurate.

There are examples of men who used details in the Scriptures to make scientific or archaeological discoveries.

• Matthew Fontaine Maury (b. 1806), inspired by [Psalm 8:8](https://ref.ly/Ps8.8)’s reference to the “paths in the sea,” became the father of oceanography

• Sir William Mitchell Ramsey (b. 1851) used Acts to guide his archaeological work in Asia Minor. Its accuracy was part of his conversion from scepticism to faith.

• More modern: Bob Cornuke of BaseInstitute.org has used Biblical details in his projects to investigate locations such as Mt. Sinai and Mt. Ararat.

### Infallibility

This is a related term you’ll come across, meaning that the Word of God is incapable of failing or of being in error. The Bible itself makes this claim in several places:

**Psalm 19:7 NASB 2020**

The Law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul;

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

Really, it is simply a related term to inerrant.

Inerrant: without error

Infallible: cannot fail

### Caveats

To avoid misunderstanding, we must clarify some things.

**First**, this is true of the original word of God. The original autographa, that is, the original document the author wrote. We’ve seen how the manuscripts have been amazingly preserved, so we can be confident in what we have, but there are erroneous manuscripts and there are textual transmission issues. We should take note of our footnotes!

**Second**, we have to be mindful of translation issues. The originals, in the original languages of Hebrew and Greek, are inerrant. When translated to English, *especially if thought-for-thought or, worse, paraphrase is used* then inerrancy is at great risk. Hence in our study, we need to be as far left as possible on that chart I showed you last week.

**Third**, we have to be mindful of the original expectations of the culture. I have two illustrations of this:

First, we put a lot more emphasis on chronological accuracy than the ancients did. I had an email from Jeff Benner last week in which he gave a great example of this. Consider these two paragraphs.

"I got up and ate breakfast and read the newspaper. I then drove to work. While at work I read yesterday's reports. At noon I walked across the street for lunch. While there I read a magazine. Back at work I read my emails. After work I drove home and had dinner."

Compared to:

"I drove to work and walked across the street and I drove home. I ate breakfast and I ate lunch and I ate dinner. I read the newspaper and I read the reports and I read a magazine and I read my emails."

We probably prefer the first one, as it is chronological order. However, the second paragraph reflects what he calls “block logic” and presents events grouped by action and purpose.

Does that make it incorrect? No; it’s the same data, but you can’t create a chronology out of it.

We often expect things to be in chronological order, as if getting events in order by time is the most important thing. That’s simply not the case for Biblical writers.

The second example is to do with reported speech. In the ancient world, both Jewish and Greco-Roman, it was not standard practice to quote *verbatim*. Historians and authors were expected to convey the **essence** and **meaning**. The technical term is the Latin phrase “ipsissima vox” - the *very voice* - as opposed to “ipsissima verba” - the very words.

Link to more reading on that: https://www.gotquestions.org/ipsissima-vox-ipsissima-verba.html

So, inerrancy **must** take into account the expectations of the culture into which it was written.

**Fourthly** and finally, we must also try to keep in mind the intention of the author. A simple example of this would be the times when the author is recording something spoken. That speaker may not be correct. In a couple of weeks we’ll look at the account of the death of Saul and Jonathan, and there are two conflicting accounts. An error? No; one account is the author’s narrative and the other is the spoken account of an Amalekite, which must be erroneous as it conflicts with the narrative account.

The Bible text is inerrant insofar as it accurately presents what was spoken.

Also, we must consider the genre of the text. When David wrote [Psalm 1](https://ref.ly/Ps1) and declared that the blessed person is like a tree planted by water, that should not be taken literally! It is poetry!

When Jesus taught it parables about seeds, sowers and vineyards, it was not to make agricultural points! We understand this.

On the other hand, one falls into error if we allegorise text that is *not* meant to be allegorised. Those who seek to allegorise [Genesis 1-11](https://ref.ly/Ge1-11) are in error, because Moses’ clear intention was to *present history*. That the genre is poetry by no means allows us to assert Moses did not mean to give us accurate history of Creation.

That would be a whole separate study. Our point today is simply this:

We must seek the original intention, based on the cultural and historical context, and the genre of writing.

### Dealing with Problems

So we assert that Scripture, in the original autographa, were inerrant.

Now we know we have lost the original autographa, and we’ve talked about textual criticism as our way to identify the original text from the wealth of material that God has miraculously preserved.

Now God knew that this would happen. He knew that there would be places here and there where the precise original text would be in doubt.

Of course, the enemy has done everything he can to try and corrupt Scripture, to cast doubt on Scripture, etc.

His very first words were “Did God *really* say” and he has been seeking to cause doubt ever since!

And God knew this would happen.

So the last two sections in our outline discuss two things God has built into the design.

## Distributed Doctrines: God’s Design for Doctrinal Security

The first thing is that He has distributed doctrines throughout the Bible.

This is in keeping with His principle that “on the testimony or two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.” ([Deut 19:15](https://ref.ly/Dt19.15)).

Let me illustrate.

SLIDE

Please turn to the chapter in the Bible that deals with how God created the world.

I’ve told you that’s [Genesis 1](https://ref.ly/Ge1), of course.

But in fact, you could turn to any one of *dozens* of passages:

• [Psalm 33:6](https://ref.ly/Ps33.6)

• [Isaiah 40:28](https://ref.ly/Is40.28)

• [Colossians 1:16](https://ref.ly/Col1.16)

• [Hebrews 11:3](https://ref.ly/Heb11.3)

• Or even the very last book, [Revelation 4:11](https://ref.ly/Re4.11)

So we observe that the doctrine of Creation is distributed right across the Bible.

How long did it take? Is the earth super old, or just a few thousand years?

If you disbelieve Genesis for any reason, then Jesus Himself said in [Matthew 19](https://ref.ly/Mt19) and [Mark 10](https://ref.ly/Mk10) that God created male and female humans *from the beginning*. No long ages. And this truth is clear and consistent in both Old and New Testaments.

#### The Fact of the Resurrection

Where is it written that there will be a resurrection from the dead?

Of course, plenty of New Testament references to Jesus’ resurrection specifically:

[Matt. 28](https://ref.ly/Mt28), [Mark 16](https://ref.ly/Mk16), [Luke 24](https://ref.ly/Lk24), [John 20](https://ref.ly/Jn20), [1 Cor. 15:3-8](https://ref.ly/1Co15.3-8)

But what about the Old Testament?

We have Job’s testimony in [Job 19:25-27](https://ref.ly/Job19.25-27) where he declares simply his knowledge that after his death, he will see God *from his flesh on the earth*.

We have [Daniel 12:1-2](https://ref.ly/Da12.1-2), which speaks of the resurrection, with those sleeping in the ground will awaken, “these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.”

We could look at other plain verses, such as [Isaiah 26:19](https://ref.ly/Is26.19) and [Ezekiel 37:12-14](https://ref.ly/Eze37.12-14).

Jesus was challenged to find a passage proving the Resurrection *only from the Torah* and He silenced the Sadducees with one verse from [Exodus 3](https://ref.ly/Ex3), see [Matthew 22:31-32](https://ref.ly/Mt22.31-32).

#### Deity of Christ

What about the Trinity and the Deity of Christ? Can we show that this is also distributed throughout the Bible?

We saw last week the tricky problem with [John 1:18](https://ref.ly/Jn1.18), and if that were the only verse we had, we’d have a difficult time being confident in the gospel.

Of course, we have [John 1:1](https://ref.ly/Jn1.1), and also from John we have [John 20:28](https://ref.ly/Jn20.28) and [1 John 5:20](https://ref.ly/1Jn5.20).

From Paul, we have [Col 2:9](https://ref.ly/Col2.9) where he declares that in Jesus Christ “all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.” We also have [Titus 2:13](https://ref.ly/Tt2.13), where he calls Jesus Christ “our great God and Saviour.”

What about the Old Testament?

The plurality of God is grammatically stated in the language, because the Hebrew word for God “*elohim*” is a plural word. We see it brought out in [Gen 1:26](https://ref.ly/Ge1.26) with “let *Us* make man.

[Hebrews 1:8](https://ref.ly/Heb1.8) points us to [Psalm 45](https://ref.ly/Ps45) where the Sons of Korah speak of this majestic warrior-king - clearly a *man* - but then says “your throne, God, is forever and ever.”

We could look to those familiar Christmas verses:

• [Isaiah 9:6](https://ref.ly/Is9.6) has the Son to be born Who will be called “Mighty God.” [Isaiah 7](https://ref.ly/Is7) says he will be called “Immanuel” — God with us.

• [Micah 5:2](https://ref.ly/Mic5.2) has the One to be born in Bethlehem, whose “times of coming forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

And finally, we have it from Jesus’ own mouth, when He declared in [John 8:58](https://ref.ly/Jn8.58) that “before Abraham was, I AM.”

#### Salvation by Grace Through Faith

Let’s do one more distributed doctrine. The principle of salvation by grace, through faith. Salvation is not by obedience, but a gift from God predicated on believing Him.

So we could look to Paul, of course. [Eph. 2:8-9](https://ref.ly/Eph2.8-9) is one of the plainest statements. [Rom. 3:28](https://ref.ly/Ro3.28), [Gal. 2:16](https://ref.ly/Ga2.16) supplement this clearly.

Luke also states it clearly in [Acts 15:11](https://ref.ly/Ac15.11), where he records Peter stating that “we believe that we [Jews] are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they [Gentiles] also are.” So we have two witnesses.

What about the Old Testament? Well, again there are plenty we could turn to. A sample:

Paul hangs his arguments on the famous [Genesis 15:6](https://ref.ly/Ge15.6), where it says simply that Abraham “believed in the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness.”

[Isaiah 55:1-3](https://ref.ly/Is55.1-3) extends this amazing invitation for everyone who thirsts to come to God’s table. The emphasis there is the free availability, and to come and *listen* (to believe) and God will make an everlasting covenant with you.

[Habakkuk 2:4](https://ref.ly/Hab2.4) has the verse Paul frequently cites: “the righteous one will live by his faith.”

[Joel 2:32](https://ref.ly/Joe2.32) is the verse Peter uses in [Acts 2](https://ref.ly/Ac2) to describe what is happening at Pentecost - the birth of the Church. He quotes it “everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”

I hope that shows you. God, in His wisdom, distributed the key doctrines of our faith throughout the whole book. So even though we have the odd verse here and there that may be in debate, God has seen to it that ALL our key tenets of faith are secure and definite.

Praise Him!

# The Supernatural Fingerprints of God

To conclude today, I want to show you some proofs of the incredible nature of God’s Word. The Bible is utterly mindblowing!

## Prophecy Fulfilled

So we could spend a bunch of time here talking about the over 300 Messianic prophecies fulfilled in Jesus. We touched on some briefly already today, as the theology of Christ’s deity is written in advance. We could consider [Isaiah 53](https://ref.ly/Is53), [Psalm 22](https://ref.ly/Ps22), and many others as the familiar prophetic texts that speak of Christ’s death in advance.

In case you need a refresher on some of this, you could go back and listen to the two messages Ray did entitled “Jesus the Expected One” at Christmas.

There are plenty of other prophetic examples we could turn to. One awesome one is the way God names King Cyrus *in advance* of his birth. In [Isaiah 45](https://ref.ly/Is45) God plainly says I am the One “who calls you by your name.” Isaiah ministered around 700 BC; Cyrus came some 150 years later.

Or we could talk about the Jewish Feasts, which are like anniversaries in advance. Passover was the anniversary in advance of Jesus’ crucifixion; The Feast of Firstfruits was the anniversary in advance of Jesus’ resurrection; The Feast of Weeks is of Pentecost - the birth of the Church.

But we won’t get into that, actually we’re planning a series on that topic in the future.

## Current Affairs

One thing I do want to spend a few minutes on is the Bible’s foreknowledge of current events. In many respects these are even more striking for us. I have a short list:

#### The Rebirth of Israel

The history of the land and nation of Israel is a long study by itself. In 70AD, the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem including the Temple, just as Jesus prophesied. What began was the diaspora - the distribution of Jews throughout the globe.

Now the Jews had good reason to hide their culture and language. They have generally endured persecution and antisemitism wherever they went, and so it would be logical to try and lose their heritage and just assimilate. Indeed, Hebrew ceased to be a regular spoken language sometime in the 3 to 5th Century.

But God preserved the culture and language. The collective memory of who they were. Why? Because Jesus also predicted that the Jews would be regathered. He said in [Luke 21:24](https://ref.ly/Lk21.24) that Jerusalem would be “trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” The land was given over, it became quite desolate and sparsely population.

But there would be an end. The [2 Thes 2](https://ref.ly/2Th2) and [Revelation 11](https://ref.ly/Re11) both imply there will be a Jewish Temple and hence a regathering of Jews to their historic land. And of course, we have seen this. 14 May 1948 - 77 years ago - was the Israeli Declaration of Independence. God has supernaturally protected them there.

And currently, the plans for the third temple are underway. You can check out thirdtemple.org if you want to see the latest progress.

#### Cashless and Controlled Economy

In [Revelation 13:16-17](https://ref.ly/Re13.16-17) there is this enigmatic prophesy of this “beast” or “wild animal” that prevents commerce - buying or selling - without a specific mark (charagma = character/engraving) he gives.

Throughout the vast majority of history, it simply was not possible to prevent commerce. Who can stop me giving you money for something you sell? But now we are virtually cashless, with more and more transactions going through centralised banking systems, it’s very easy to see how this could be done.

#### Widespread Deception

In [2 Timothy 3:13](https://ref.ly/2Ti3.13), Paul warns:

**2 Timothy 3:13 NASB 2020**

But evil people and impostors will proceed *from bad* to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

This concept of widespread deception is happening now. Really ever since post-modernism started to erode the concept of “true” and “false” so that people start to genuinely believe things that are false. Perhaps one of the biggest examples in these days is the concept of transgender, where people in all sincerity believe the opposite of physical reality. It is a biological fact that the body is one sex or another, and yet we find some souls that dwell within male bodies declaring “I am female.” And there are charities and groups who will maintain and reinforce the deception.

It is proceeding from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

[2 Thessalonians 2](https://ref.ly/2Th2) shows that this is going to be one of the hallmarks of the days into which antichrist comes.

We could look at others. The prevalence of self-love. The rise of false Christian sects like JWs and Mormons. The rise of globalism.

People much more learned that I am have much more to say on it than time allows today.

The point is this:

• The Bible is timeless. The nature of Scripture is that it is God-breathed and speaks afresh to every generation. Everything it says is true, whether it is speaking of the past, the present or the future.

## Structural Wonders

Finally I want to show you some examples of structure to the Bible text that defy explanation. These are arguable proofs that the text is from outside human constrainst.

### The Gospel in [Genesis 5](https://ref.ly/Ge5)

We may have previously covered this. In [Genesis 5](https://ref.ly/Ge5) we have a list of ten names, from Adam to Noah. Ten pre-flood generations. All these names have a meaning in the Hebrew language.

You can check some of these out for yourself here: https://www.abarim-publications.com/NaLi/A-MaleBig.html

Also Chuck Missler coves this in his 1999 book Cosmic Codes. His result is a little different to mine, but the essence is the same. Another translation issue!

1. Adam - Man(kind)

2. Seth - “set” = put, placed, given

3. Enosh - comes from the Hebrew *anash* (strong’s 605) meaning “incurable” or “desperately sick.” It’s the word [Jeremiah 17:9](https://ref.ly/Je17.9) uses to describe the human heart.

4. Kenan [Qenan] - related to the word for lamentation or sorrowful dirge. It means sorrowful

5. Mahalal-el - literally means “praise God” or “praised God”

6. Jared [Yared] - is a verb that means to descend or to come down.

7. Enoch [Chanokh] - As far as I can tell, it means “dedicated” or “to initiate”

8. Methuselach - is a compound of “mut” - *death* and “shalach” - *to send or let go*. The apparent meaning is that his death shall send it. And indeed, his death occurred the very year of the Flood of Noah. See https://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Methuselah.html

9. Lamech - A tricky one. The machakh means those brought low, the depressed, humiliated or poor. The letter Lamed means “towards.” So I think this can be rightly translated as “to the poor”

10. Noah [Noach] - This one is easy from the text as his dad told us. It means comfort, rest and relief.

Those names in order spell:

“Mankind put desperately sick and sorrowful. [the] praised God descends, dedicating his death to send to the poor, relief.”

It’s amazing!

And just this week I read [1 Chronicles 1:1-4](https://ref.ly/1Ch1.1-4)

**1 Chronicles 1:1–4 NASB 2020**

Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

It’s literally those names, spelled out.

If you just opened a Hebrew Bible to [1 Chronicles 1](https://ref.ly/1Ch1) and start reading, you ge:

“Mankind put desperately sick and sorrowful. [But] the praised God descends, dedicating His death to send to the poor, relief.”

It’s the Christian Gospel! It’s *our* good news! And it’s there, not only in Genesis but in 1 Chronicles.

Amazing! I really cannot imagine that someone conspired to hide that message in there. And it’s *impossible* that anyone *could* have done that after the Septuagint was completed.

### The Heptadic Structure

Next I want to cover what’s called the “heptadic structure.” Heptadic just means that the number seven features heavily in the structure of the text. As you read the Bible you will find that the number seven comes up a lot. The seven days of Creation, the seven churches in Revelation, there are many. Seven is regarded as the number of completion and totality.

Now it also seems to be God’s favourite number!

Dr. Ivan Panin, from around 1890, started to discover mathematical design in the original languages of the Bible.

In 1904 he published this book, called Bible Numerics.

You can read it here: https://archive.org/details/1904-panin/mode/2up

Or read this summary page: http://www.xwalk.ca/seven.html

See also https://www.christianevidence.net/2018/11/genesis-11-evidence-for-god.html

In his introduction he says:

It is the purpose of the following papers to show that notwithstanding these circumstances the whole Bible is constructed on an elaborate mathematical design, which must have been planned by one mind; and incidentally that it contains within itself the infallible means for deciding between disputed readings of its text, where certainty from the usual sources is unavailable.

In page 99-101 he applies his method to show, in his mind, that [John 1:18](https://ref.ly/Jn1.18) should indeed correctly say that Jesus Christ is “the only begotten God” because of the underlying mathematics. Interesting!!

He went on to spend 50 years of his life devoted to this, producing over 43,000 handwritten pages of analysis before his death in 1942.

You can also read a much longer work, The Writings of Ivan Panin here:

https://archive.org/details/writingsofivanpa00pani/mode/2up

Here are just a couple of the incredible things he discovered:

#### In [Genesis 1:1](https://ref.ly/Ge1.1)

The first verse of Genesis is seven words in Hebrew. As just a sample of how this is built on the number 7:

\* 7 words in total

\* 7x4 letters in total (28)

 \* 28 is the 7th triangular number

\* First 3 words have 7x2 letters (14)

\* Last 4 words have 7x2 letters (14)

\* The 3 nouns (God, heaven and earth) total 7x2 letters (14)

\* 7x2 letters remain in the other 4 words

Panin catalogued dozens and dozens … probably hundreds … of ways that the number 7 (and also the number 3, the number of the Trinity) are here. He starts looking at the numerical values of the letters and shows again and again, it is some multiple of 7.

#### In Matthew’s Genealogy

Matthew’s gospel opens with the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

(full disclosure, I did not personally verify this one)

Here is a sample of some things mathematically true about that genealogy, specifically [Matthew 1:1-17](https://ref.ly/Mt1.1-17).

• Number of words is divisible by 7

• Number of letters is divisible by 7

• Number of vowels is divisible by 7

• Number of consonants is divisible by 7

• Words beginning with a vowel is divisible by 7

• Words beginning with a consonant divisible by 7

• Number of words occurring only once divisible by 7

• The most frequent word appears a multiple of 7 times

• Number of nouns is divisible by 7

• Number of non-nouns is exactly 7

There are many more that could be listed, again see Missler’s Cosmic Codes or Ivan Panin’s works directly.

The thing to bear in mind is that this genealogy represents over a *thousand* years. It would be near-impossible to contrive a fictional genealogy that met all of the structural criteria, yet here we have a genealogy crafted by GOD HIMSELF.

It is incredible.

### Hidden Acrostics

There is an amazing, miraculous letter pattern hidden in the Torah.

Screen shots taken from my own work and attached to the sermon notes.

TORaH is spelled forwards in Genesis and Exodus. There are 49 letters (or 7x7) in between each letter of TORaH.

You find it backwards in Numbers and Deuteronomy.

So they are pointing towards Leviticus, where you find the word YHVH encoded, with 7 letters in between each.

The design built in to the 5 books of the Torah is showing that the whole Torah points to the LORD, to Yahweh.

The whole thing would fall apart if one letter were missing.

Missler’s book Cosmic Codes has a bunch of these in the Book of Esther that I’ve not taken the time to verify for myself.

## Summary of the Fingerprints of God

• The Christian Gospel is hidden in Genesis and 1 Chronicles

• Both the Old and New Testaments exhibit numerical structures that defy naturalistic explanation

• The Bible contains hidden acrostic patterns and letter sequences that authenticate the text as miraculous

# Conclusion

Next week, our final session.

My aim to conclude our series is to look at the inseparable connection between the Word of God, and the Word of God. That is, Jesus Christ and the Bible.

And in addition to that, I want to talk about how we can interact with the Bible. Do we need to be super intellectual, or is it enough to just read it?