

My Holy Bible

Written by Ralph Kremer

A Very Special Book

How many books do think have ever been written? More than a million? More than a billion? More than a trillion? It's hard for us to imagine how many! Throughout history people have written on stretched animal skins, reed paper, scrolls, clay and wax tablets, and paper. People have written about many different things in many different languages. Even though all of these many writings seem so very, very different, they all share one thing in common. Can you imagine what that is? They were all written by people! That might seem foolish to mention, but it is really quite important because the book we are about to study did not have a human author. That's right! There is only one book ever written that did not have a person as its author. That makes this book more special than any other book. Do you know which book that is? Do you have a copy of this book? Let's learn more about the HOLY BIBLE.

A Very Special Author

Did you know that the author of the HOLY BIBLE was the almighty, eternal, all-seeing, all-knowing God? That's right! We will be studying a book which contains the real words of God. That is why of all the books ever written, the HOLY BIBLE is by far the most special!

A Very Special Title

What is the title on the cover of your Bible? Does it say HOLY BIBLE? Many do. The word "BIBLE" comes from the ancient Greek word "BIBLIA" which means BOOKS. Your HOLY BIBLE is not just one book but rather it is a group of many small books put together. Why do you think they are called HOLY? Think about the author. Think about the author's words. Think about the people who believe in these words. Now do you know why the HOLY BIBLE is called HOLY?

Matthew 4:4

Book Chapter Verse

Say: Matthew chapter 4 verse 8

It's Such a Big Book!

How many pages are in your HOLY BIBLE? _____ That must be more pages than in any other book that you own! How can we begin to find our way through such a large book? We will soon learn that the more we get to know our Bible the easier it will be to find our way through it.

Open your Bible to the page in the front named contents. This page lists the names of all the books that are in the HOLY BIBLE. It also tells us the page number on which each book begins. Find the book of Exodus. On which page does it begin? _____ On which page does Matthew begin? _____ Find both of them in your Bible. Did you notice that Exodus is listed under the books of the Old Testament and Matthew is listed with those in the New Testament? On which page does the last book of the Bible begin? _____ What is its name?
_____ Turn to it.

At the very beginning of the book of Revelation is a large number "1". This means Chapter One. The books

of the Bible are divided into sections called chapters. Now look carefully through chapter one and you will notice several smaller numbers. These are the verse numbers. How many verses are in Revelation 1? ____ The chapter and verse numbers help us find Bible passages very quickly. Just remember:

- 1) Find the book 2) Find the chapter 3) Find the verse.**

One Author - Many Writers

How could God have been the author of the HOLY BIBLE, but not the writer? Could you be the author of a letter and not the writer? Certainly! If you would tell a friend your thoughts and words, and if they would write them down on paper, you would be the author and your friend would be the writer. That is how the HOLY BIBLE was written. God chose about 40 men to do the actual writing. Perhaps you have heard of some of these men. Moses, King David, Joshua, Samuel, Peter, King Solomon, Daniel, and Paul are just a few of these writers.

How Did the Men Know What To Say?

God told each of the men what he wanted them to write. We say that God “breathed” the thoughts and words into these men and moved them to write what he told them. This is called *inspiration*. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and find what the Bible says about inspiration. “All Scripture is _____ - _____ and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every _____.”

It took many years to complete the entire HOLY BIBLE. There were about 1600 years between the time that Moses wrote the first book of Genesis and the apostle John wrote the last book of Revelation. Even though it took so long to finish, there is one very important thing to remember. Since God was the author, the HOLY BIBLE is correct in all it says. God cannot make mistakes. It is good to know and trust that everything in the HOLY BIBLE is true and correct.

Why Do We Have a HOLY BIBLE?

If you write a book, it is probably because you have something very special to say. That is why God gave us the HOLY BIBLE. He had a special message to share with all people. What message could possibly be that special? Read how God answers that question in John 20:31. Write in your own words what is so special about this message: _____

The Bible is not meant to be just a group of nice stories about people who lived long ago. It has a message that is important for everyone. This message tells us that:

1. God created a perfect world - including perfect people...
2. ...but man and woman sinned and were sentenced to die in hell.
3. God said he would send his Son to rescue man and woman.
4. God’s Son, Jesus, died on the cross to forgive everyone’s sins.

5. Everyone who believes in Jesus will not die in hell but will live with God.

This message is the reason for the HOLY BIBLE. Throughout the entire Bible God has two very distinct messages for us. They are called the *Law* and the *Gospel*.

In the Law, God tells us how we should live our lives as His children. He tells us things we should and shouldn't do. He promises blessings for doing the right things and punishment for disobeying. It's good that God tells us these things, and we work hard to keep the Law. But part of the Law is to do these things perfectly in not only what we do, but what we say and what we even think. Since we don't do them perfectly the Law shows us we are sinners in need of a Savior.

The Gospel is all about what God does for us. From His graciously giving us life and our daily bread the good news is that God cares for us. But even more the Gospel especially tells us the good news that Jesus died on the cross to take our sins away, and the for Jesus' sake God forgives us and will bless us with eternal life.

The Law	The Gospel
Tells us what <i>WE</i> should and shouldn't do. Shows us our sins Condemns us to hell.	Tells us what <i>GOD</i> has done for us Shows us our Savior Creates living faith and brings us to heaven

Learning to tell what passages are Law and which ones are Gospel is very important in order to understand the whole Bible. Here are a couple of examples:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart” (Mark 12:30-3). This is Law because it is telling us to do something for God. “The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace” (Number 6:24). This is a passage of Gospel because God is the One doing the activity.

Sometimes Law and Gospel are right next to each other as in 1 John 1:8-9:

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us” (Law because it tells us we're sinners)

“But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (Gospel because God is at work forgiving and making us clean).

Sometimes Law and Gospel are in the very same verse as in Romans 6:23:

“For the wages of sin is death” (**Circle one:** Law or Gospel ?)

“but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (**Circle one:** Law or Gospel ?)

Finding Our Way

Perhaps by now you are getting better at finding your way through the HOLY BIBLE. You've looked up a few passages and are getting more familiar with it all the time.

You've learned that the HOLY BIBLE is divided into books, chapters and verses. You also learned that the message can be divided into two parts, the LAW and the GOSPEL. Did you know that the Bible can be divided in three more ways?

The Old Testament and the New Testament

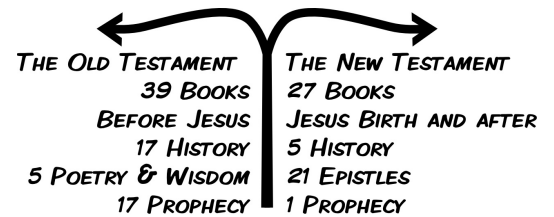
The Old Testament was written before Jesus was born. The New Testament tells the life of Jesus and looks at the people who lived shortly after Jesus went back to heaven.

66 Books

There are sixty-six books in the HOLY BIBLE. 39 of them are in the Old Testament and 27 are in the New Testament. To find any passage easily, we must first know the name of the book. That is why it is so important to memorize the names of all sixty-six books in order.

Groups of Books

The Old Testament books have been bunched together into three groups: seventeen storytelling history books, five poetry and wisdom books and finally seventeen prophecy books which speak about the future. The New Testament begins with five history books, then twenty-one letters or epistles and finally one prophecy book.



The Pentateuch

The first five books of the HOLY BIBLE fit together like a set of five books. A set of five books is called a pentateuch. These books belong together because they all had the same writer. Find his name in Deuteronomy 31:24. Who is it? _____

When Moses died, God said that no prophet had risen in Israel like Moses, whom he knew face to face, and who did all those miraculous signs and wonders. It was a great honor for Moses to be chosen to write the first books of the HOLY BIBLE. Since these books are part of the history group, we know they contain mostly stories. You probably know some of these stories very well by now.

Genesis, the title of the first book, means “beginnings.” Read Genesis 1:1. What is the first story in the HOLY BIBLE? The other four books - Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, speak about the children of Israel leaving Egypt and traveling to the promised land of Canaan. The Pentateuch also has many laws which God gave to his people, including the very famous laws given in Exodus 20. What do we call these laws?

Sing a Song To the Lord!

God’s children love to sing? One of the most wonderful gifts God gives us is to be able to sing songs and make music. Wouldn’t it be a sad world if we never heard a song? We sing at home, in school, and in church. In fact, we have a special book in church called the hymnal (Lutheran Service Book) that we use just for songs. Did you know that God’s people used a hymnal long before Jesus was born? It was very different from our hymnal today, but it is still found in the HOLY BIBLE. This hymnal is called the book of Psalms. The word Psalm means “song”. Open your Bible to this book. It’s too bad we don’t have the melodies and music still written down for us that we might hear what the Psalms sounded like. All that we have today are the words of the Psalms like you see them. How many Psalms are there? _____

Who Wrote the Psalms?

Some of the Psalms tell us who wrote them. Before the first verse in some of the Psalms, the HOLY BIBLE shows the name of the writer. Some Psalms even tell us when or why they were written.

Who wrote Psalm 4? _____

Who wrote Psalm 72 and Psalm 90? _____

When was Psalm 3 written? _____

Why was Psalm 30 written? _____

Look at Psalm 119. Each section of this Psalm begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Draw 3 of the characters and write the name for them. These are some of the Hebrew ABCs.

_____ = _____ _____ = _____ _____ = _____

What's special about Psalm 136?

The Old Testament Said That Jesus Was Coming

It must have felt unusual living in the days of the Old Testament. The people talked about Jesus, but he hadn't yet come to earth. They didn't know when he would be born, what he would look like or where he would live. All they knew was that he was going to come to save them from their sins. They looked ahead to the time when he would come to the earth.

If we look carefully through the Old Testament, we find many hints about Jesus. These hints showed the people that Jesus would be born and that he would suffer and die. There were hints that wise men would come to visit him and give him precious gifts, and that he would be sold for thirty silver coins. If we study the Old Testament closely, we can find over one hundred of these hints.

These hints are called *prophecies*. A prophecy is a hint about something that will happen in the future. Although these prophecies are found all over the Old Testament (beginning in Genesis 3:15), the last seventeen books of the Old Testament were written by men called prophets. These men spoke God's word to His people, they preached about the future of God's people and they foretold the coming of Jesus.

There is only one book in the New Testament that is a prophecy book. Revelation speaks about God's protecting His people until the day when Jesus comes again.

Did Jesus Know the Bible?

Did you ever wonder if Jesus had a HOLY BIBLE to use? What do you think? Yes, we know that he studied the HOLY BIBLE and even memorized it. Of course, Jesus only had the Old Testament to use. Why couldn't he read from the New Testament? _____ When Jesus was a child, he studied the Scriptures like the other Jewish boys. A rabbi or teacher showed him how to read Hebrew, the language in which the Old Testament was written. When the boys were about twelve years old, they were ready to read from the scroll of the HOLY BIBLE in front of the entire congregation.

As Jesus grew older, he studied and learned more about the HOLY BIBLE until he became a rabbi. In Luke 4:14-17 we find that Jesus also taught in the churches - much like our pastors do today. Jesus spent the last three years of his life teaching and preaching.

What Are the Gospels?

Did you ever hear your pastor say in church, “And the gospel reading for today is...”? Do you know what he meant by a gospel? There are four books in the HOLY BIBLE which are called the gospels. They are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They’re easy to remember since they are the first four books of the New Testament. The word gospel means “good news”. Why do you think they are called the four “good news” books? What do you think is the best news that the HOLY BIBLE could tell?

Remember that the good news gospel tells us that Jesus died for our sins and rose again and that those who believe this will go to heaven to live with Jesus forever. That is the best news anyone could hear. This good news is found in each of the four gospels because each book tells about the life of Jesus. If you want to read about Jesus birth, miracles, teaching, death, and resurrection, turn to one of the four gospels.

The writers Matthew and John were two of Jesus’ twelve apostles. Mark was a friend of Paul and Luke was a doctor. What word is used to describe how did these men know what to write (pg. 2)? _____ Although only some stories of Jesus’ life are found in each book, they all tell about his death and resurrection.

Where Did Jesus Live?

Almost all of the stories in the HOLY BIBLE took place in an area that today is called the Holy Land or the Middle East. It can be found on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea. Can you find it on a globe? Great people of the HOLY BIBLE like David, Moses, Paul, Abraham, Isaac, Ruth, Samuel, and of course Jesus all lived in this area. Many of the towns and cities that Jesus visited are still there today. Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Nazareth are all where they were when Jesus lived on the earth, although they may not look quite the same.

Did You Ever Write a Letter?

Did you ever get a letter in the mail? Have you learned how to write a letter? Who would be the first person to whom you would like to write a letter? What are some things to remember when you write a letter? Letters help us talk to people by using only written words. Some letters are long and some are very short. Some are written to large groups of people and some are very private. Usually it is not polite to read someone else’s letters unless they want to share them with you.

Did you know there are twenty-one letters in your HOLY BIBLE? They are called the *epistles*. The word “epistle” is the Greek word for “letter”. These letters were meant for everyone to read and to share with others. They are all found in the New Testament from the book of Romans to Jude.

Thirteen letters were written by a missionary named Paul. Maybe you remember the story when Paul became a believer in Jesus. Paul spent much time traveling from church to church. Since he did not have a telephone to learn how each church was doing, he would write them long letters.

The last eight epistles were written by other followers of Jesus like Peter, James, and John. All of the epistles tell us how to live as believers in Jesus. They also tell us how much God loves us and how we are to love him in return by trusting in Jesus and following His instruction.

The Last Book of the HOLY BIBLE

We finally made it to book number sixty-six! And just as God made the first book of the HOLY BIBLE tell about the beginning of the end of the world and the beginning of a new life in heaven. The book of Revelation is

not an easy book to understand. The name revelation means a showing of something. God sent an angel to the apostle John to show him pictures of what the end of the world would be like and what it will be like to live with God in heaven. Read this interesting story in Revelation 1:1-11. The pictures were so different that John had a hard time putting them into words for us to easily understand. That would be like trying to tell a friend about a dream you had. Even though you can see it clearly, it is hard to describe to someone else. We do know that John writes in his book that heaven will be a place more wonderful than we will ever be able to imagine.

The last few verses of the Bible are some of the most beautiful words ever written. They were spoken by Jesus. Read them in Revelation 22:12-16.

What Should We Do with the HOLY BIBLE?

Read It!

You can not know what is really inside a book unless you read it. This is also true of the HOLY BIBLE. God has much to tell us. He shows us how to live. He shows us how much he loves us. He shows us how to handle every problem we will ever find. He shows us how to get to heaven. Those who do not read the HOLY BIBLE miss all of the wonderful things that God has to tell us. Many people read the Bible every day. That is the best way to get used to reading it. Even children can begin to read it every day.

Believe It!

Do you think it is possible for someone to get to heaven if they have memorized the entire Bible word for word but they do not believe what it says? If we do not believe what the Bible says is the true and faithful word of God, it will be of no more use to us than a group of interesting fairy tales. It says in the Bible that those who believe in its words will be saved. With this believing we will also make it a guide for our way of living. All of our thoughts and actions and words should be guided by what we learn in the HOLY BIBLE. What a wonderful feeling that gives us!

Share It!

If someone gives you a very precious and special gift, you will be excited to show it to as many people as you can. That is the way we should share the Word of God. It is the most precious and special gift that anyone could have. Remember, it is the only book in the world that had God as its author. How could we possibly keep such good news all to ourselves?