

# I - GENERAL REFERENCE

The Bible is the only book currently available that was given to mankind by God through inspired men. It's comprised of 66 separate books written by at least 35 different authors over a period of at least 1500 years. All of the 66 books support each other, there are absolutely no contradictions among them, and they all point to Jesus Christ as Creator, Lord, and Savior of the universe. There are hundreds of prophecies that were perfectly fulfilled as well as dozens more that will surely be fulfilled in the future.

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. [2 Timothy 3:16-17].*

**“The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed; The New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.”**

It's important that we read the entire bible from cover to cover (hopefully many times). Reading plans can be difficult to keep up with for many people so it may be better to avoid them. It will probably take more than a year to read the entire Bible so please don't get discouraged. The bible is our “handbook for living” and it contains everything necessary to live a godly and righteous life. This includes direction about things like marriage, relationships, raising children, interacting with other people, prayer, worship, church leadership, science, miracles, magic, Satan, angels, fallen angels, demons and much more.

God tells us that our problems aren't specifically with other people but with the unseen evil spiritual entities that influence people to sin and do evil. Good spiritual entities are in a continual war against evil spiritual entities.

*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. [Ephesians 6:12]*

It's important that all Christians understand the historic lineage and process that brought us our current bibles. Men moved by the Holy Spirit recorded the words of God so that all of humanity might know God's will. As Christians, we should only use bibles that are based on the Hebrew Masoretic Texts for our Old Testament and the Greek Textus Receptus or “Received Text” (also called Antiochian Texts) for our New Testament. The Roman Catholic Church has tried to destroy and corrupt the scriptures since their inception. Texts known as the “Alexandrian Texts”, the Latin Vulgate, and the Septuagint have very devious and dangerous corruptions that have been purposely recorded within them in order to hide and corrupt the truth.

The Bibles we read are translations of these original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. There are poorly chosen words and textual corruptions (errors) in ALL translations. Many people get hung up about the King James Version (KJV) of the bible. While it's true that the KJV was an excellent translation from the late 15<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, it's also true that there are more readable and arguably better translations available today such as the English Standard Version (ESV), the New King James Version (NKJV) and the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

When we come to a section of scripture that we're having trouble understanding, it's important to refer back to the original Hebrew or Greek words used. This is accomplished by using a concordance such as “Strong's” or “Vine's” which index the text of the original language with the English translation. This allows us to see the meaning of the original text and gives a deeper understanding of many difficult words and passages.

Beyond the 66 books of the bible we currently refer to as “the canon”, there are 28 “source” or “lost” books. These books were specifically referred to by the Holy Spirit within the text of the current canon. All of the “lost” books played an extremely important role to a certain generation of people and when the usefulness of each book was completed, God took it away. The book of Enoch is the only complete “lost” book that still exists. It was preserved by the Ethiopian Church in their canon and was also found among the Dead Sea scrolls. It's interesting to note that it begins by saying that it was written for a generation that would come in the far future.