

Basic Bible Doctrine

Lesson 1: Bibliology

I. Introduction:

Literally meaning “Book” in Latin, the Bible is far and away the bestseller of all history. It has been more widely dispersed and translated into more languages than any other. Some have contended that this compilation of 66 books is an essentially human work – an account of man’s religious strivings toward and encounter with God. Yet, the first four words reveal far more: “In the beginning, God.” The Bible is God’s autobiography; He is the centerpiece.

- Why must a study of theology begin with bibliology – the study of the Bible?

II. General Revelation vs. Special Revelation:

- A. **General Revelation** refers to the knowledge of God’s existence, character, and moral law which comes through creation to all humanity. For instance, I look at the squirrel eating acorns from the tree, and I realize that God created the tree and the squirrel, and that God sustains the life of the squirrel. Looking around, I also realize that all people everywhere dislike selfishness, and even my own conscience is pricked by my overtly selfish behavior. All of these observations come as a result of “general revelation.”
- B. **Special Revelation** refers to God’s words addressed to specific people, such as the words of the Bible, the messages of the OT Prophets, and the very words of Jesus. In our case, it consists of what we know about God directly from the Bible.¹ It is this category which we will address today.

III. Inspiration:

- A. Definition: God superintended the human authors of the Bible so that they composed and recorded without error His message to mankind in the words of their original writings.²
- B. A few other terms help us to define the scope of the inspiration of God’s Word. It is *plenary* (not in part but the whole) and *verbal* (inspiration extends to the words as well as the ideas). Thus, when we speak of the verbal plenary inspiration of the Scriptures we stress that the totality of the Bible is the inerrant, infallible, and very Word of God.

¹ Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology p. 122-123.

² Charles Ryrie Systematic Theology p. 71.

C. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

Note on “inspired”: Literally “God-breathed,” this word offers the sense of words coming directly from the mouth of God. Nearly 4,000 times in the Old Testament you will find words like “the Lord spoke,” “the Lord commanded,” “Thus saith the Lord,” “The Lord said,” etc.

D. 2 Peter 1:20-21 *But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*

1. Consider the usage of “move” in *Acts 27:15* (especially in light of the interaction between the wind and the sailors). What does this suggest about the Holy Spirit’s role in writing Scripture?

Acts 27:15 and when the ship was caught in it and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and let ourselves be driven along.

2. What are some distinctly “human” characteristics of the Bible? How does this explain why different books have different styles?
3. Ultimately, who is responsible for the authorship of Scripture?

IV. Its Authority:

The doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* means that the Bible alone is the infallible rule of faith. The Bible contains all information pertinent to the knowledge of God, salvation, and everything necessary for a life of godliness. No other revelation is needed, and subsequently, all other teachings must be evaluated through the lens of Scripture. This important doctrine is the foundation for the Authority of the Bible, and it is taught by the Bible itself in the following passage:

2 Timothy 3:16-17 *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”*

- A. What is meant by the term *Scripture*? What did it mean to Timothy? (cf. *2 Tim. 3:14-15*)

B. A cynic may point out that the reference in **2 Timothy** refers exclusively to the Old Testament. Thus, to say that this passage teaches *sola scriptura* would make the New Testament superfluous. There are a few answers to this objection:

1. Paul had already recognized portions of the New Testament as Scripture. Compare the following:

1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”

Luke 10:7 “Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house.

2. Paul is emphasizing the *nature* of Scripture, not the *canon* of Scripture. If it is Scripture, then it is God-breathed, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. . . And, as we will contend, it is the nature of Scripture which makes it authoritative.

C. In **2 Tim. 3:16-17** what do the phrases “adequate” and “every good work” suggest about the sufficiency of Scripture? Do Christians need additional knowledge to live a Christian life pleasing to God? Why or why not?

D. Is all revelation that ever existed contained in the Holy Bible (cf. **John 21:25**)? Does that mean that our current copy of the Scriptures is somehow incomplete – why or why not?

V. Internal Testimony of the Holy Spirit:

This point explains how God helps believers to discern the truth from error. We do not need a man-made institution to unveil the meaning or composition of Scripture. Through the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit, *we* can recognize His voice in the pages of the Bible.

A. The Problem:

Matthew 13:13-15 “Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. “In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.’

Romans 1:21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

2 Corinthians 4:4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- According to these passages, why can't men understand the Bible?

B. The Solution:

1 Thessalonians 1:5 for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

Ephesians 3:14-19 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

2 Corinthians 3:16 but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

- How does one come to the conviction that the Scriptures are true?

C. The Result:

John 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

- What is the difference between recognition and comprehension? According to this passage, how does a believer know to follow Jesus?

1 John 2:27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

- According to this passage, do you need a teaching authority to instruct you in the Scriptures, why or why not?

With the internal testimony we are able to:

1. Believe the Bible
2. Understand the Bible
3. Grow in the Word (Sanctification)
4. Discern truth

In the words of Nigel M. Des. Cameron:

“The Scripture seems to be self-attesting, it is the divine author of Scripture, the Holy Spirit of God, who inspired the writing of that same Scripture, who is its final witness. He assures the believer that this canonical Scripture is verily the word of God written. That is, God offers his own witness to his word.”³

VI. Perspicuity (or Clarity) of Scripture:

Closely related to the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit is the idea of the Perspicuity or Clarity of Scripture. In our postmodern world, where “what the Bible means to me” is considered a legitimate interpretive principle, this point of doctrine has come under attack.

A. **Definition:** Wayne Grudem defines this as follows:

The clarity of Scripture means that the Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God’s help and being willing to follow it.⁴

B. **Scriptural Support:**

1. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 *“These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”*

- a. What is the general command in this passage?
- b. How does this passage support the clarity of Scripture? (Hint: remember the audience)

³Elwell, Walter A., and Walter A. Elwell. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. electronic ed. Baker reference library; Logos Library System. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997, c1996.

⁴ Wayne Grudem, “Systematic Theology” (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994,) p. 1204.

2. *Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*

- a. What does the term simple imply about the audience?
- b. How does the Scripture's impact on the simple affirm its clarity?

3. *Matthew 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?"*

- Did the fact that these Scriptures were written centuries before, and in a different cultural context, excuse the audience for their misunderstanding? Why or why not?

C. Why Do Some People Misunderstand Scripture?

When God-fearing Christians disagree on what Scripture teaches there are two possible explanations:

1. They are seeking to make affirmations where the Scriptures are silent.
2. They have misinterpreted the Word.

In both cases, the problem is not with the Scriptures themselves, but with our failure to correctly interpret the Bible.⁵

VII. The Canon:

The Canon of Scripture is the collection of books that met certain tests and thus were considered authoritative, and are our rule of life.⁶ Due to the presence of the Apocrypha – books which the Catholic Church views as authoritative but are not found in most Protestant Translations – some debate has ensued over which Canon is correct.

- Why is it important to determine which books belong in the Bible?
- In view of the Authority of Scripture, how should we discern the Canon?

⁵ If you would like more info on how to correctly interpret the Bible consult: *How to Get the Most From God's Word* by John MacArthur.

⁶ Charles Ryrie, p. 534.

One should also keep in mind that the Scriptures make claims to their own canonicity. In *Luke 11:51* Jesus states, “**from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah.**” Starting with Abel, the first martyr in the book of Genesis and ending with Zechariah, the last martyr in the last book of the Hebrew canon (Chronicles), Jesus lays out what he understood as the Hebrew canon. And this Canon excludes the Apocrypha which were not accepted by the Catholic Church until 1546 when they decisively affirmed the Canon of Augustine.⁷

Furthermore, the Old Testament canon closes itself until the opening of the New Testament. The Prophecy of *Malachi 4:4-6* seems to suggest that God will send an Elijah to announce the advent of the Lord. Until then, revelation from God would cease. This silence lasted four centuries until the angel appeared to Zacharias in the temple (*Luke 1:11*). Given the deity of Christ, it is logical to assume that every word that He spoke was indeed inspired. Christ also promises in *John 14:25-26* to give the disciples the Holy Spirit to “**teach you all things, and bring to remembrance all that I have said to you.**” The apostles, assisted by the Holy Spirit, were able to accurately comprehend and remember all things that Jesus had taught them. With that, they were able to teach and instruct the Church with all authority, since they were speaking on behalf of the Lord. Paul makes this very clear in *1 Cor. 14:37* where he teaches that one who is a prophet or spiritual will rightly recognize his commands as being from the Lord. In addition, there are several instances in which the apostles write with a commanding authority, and to disobey their words is to disobey God (*Gal. 1:9*). “[P]ortions of the New Testament were written with the expectation that they were to be received and obeyed.”⁸ The authoritative tone of all of the Epistles testifies to their authenticity. The apostles played an intricate role in the formation of the canon. Not only did they testify to their own work as authoritative, they pointed to other New Testament Works as inspired as well.

Finally, the end of the Bible seems to close the canon. Jesus' statement at the end of Revelation (*Rev. 22:18-19*) states the sufficiency of the prophecies contained in the book to cover all future events. “The comprehensive scope of Revelation’s coverage of encouragement- parenthesis (*chaps 2-3*) and predictive elements (*chaps. 4-22*) and of the extensive time span from the first century to the eternal state also commends the view that *vv. 18-19* anticipate no more prophecy.”⁹ Just like Malachi prophesied a gap in revelation until the first advent, it follows that the next revelation of God will transpire during His second advent (*Joel 2:28*).

In conclusion, historical recognition seems to vindicate the canon, as there was stunning unanimity among the early church as to what belonged in the canon. The books that were excluded seemed to be rejected for good reason since they taught bizarre doctrine and strange practices that seemed to contradict the rest of the teachings of the Scriptures (i.e. the Didache taught baptismal regeneration, the Gospel of Thomas taught that Mary needed to become a man, etc.).

- Do we need the Catholic Church to validate the Canon? Why or why not?

⁷ One should note that the translator of the Latin Vulgate (the official interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church for centuries) did not affirm the canonicity of the Apocrypha.

⁸R. Laird Harris, *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Scriptures*. (Greenville, SC: A. Press, 1995), 234.

⁹Robert L.Thomas, *Revelation 8:22 An Exegetical Commentary*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 517.

VIII. Inerrancy:

In recent years, modern scholarship has severely questioned the accuracy of the Scriptures. This has led some evangelical theologians to concede errors in the Bible with regards to dating, creation, etc. Yet they still maintain their evangelical faith by claiming that the Bible is infallible. In other words, while it may have errors, it speaks with perfect authority on matters of faith and practice.

- If someone affirms this position, what must they believe about the Bible? What must it contain?
- If the Bible has errors in regards to history, origin, etc., how can we be certain that it does not also err in its teachings about Christ?

A. Definition of Inerrancy:

The Chicago Statement on Inerrancy gives this brief definition:

*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.*¹⁰

Point of Clarification: Inerrancy pertains to the original manuscripts (autographs). To the extent that our copies and translations of the Scripture faithfully represent the original, they are inerrant.

B. Proof of Inerrancy:

1. Inerrancy can be proved through a simple syllogism.
 - a. God is true (**Rom. 3:4**)
 - b. Scripture is breathed out by God (**2 Tim. 3:16**)
 - c. The Scriptures must be true, because they were breathed out by God.
2. Christ Viewed the Scripture as Inerrant:

Matthew 5:17-20 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called

¹⁰ As quoted in Wayne Grudem, "Systematic Theology" (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994,) p. 1204.

great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

- How does affirming every “smallest letter or stroke” uphold inerrancy?

3. Key Passages Depend on these “smallest letters” and “strokes”.

Matthew 22:43-45 He said to them, “Then how does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying, ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET” ’? If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?”

- What single word serves as the crux of the argument? How does this support inerrancy?

Matthew 22:32 ‘I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB’. He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

- Why is the verb tense so important to Jesus’ argument? Again, how does this support inerrancy?

C. Parameters of Inerrancy:

1. ***Inerrancy allows for variety in style.*** The gospel of John was written in the simple style one might expect of an unlearned fisherman; Luke was written with the more sophisticated vocabulary of an educated person; Paul’s epistles reflect the logic of a philosopher. All of these variations are entirely compatible with inerrancy.
2. ***Inerrancy allows for variety in details in explaining the same event.*** This phenomenon is particularly observed in the synoptic gospels. It is important to remember that Jesus spoke in Aramaic and the writers of Scripture wrote their accounts in Greek, meaning they had to translate the original words into Greek. Two writers would use slightly different words to describe the same incident, yet both would give the same meaning. There is an additional reason for variety in details: the various writers may have emphasized different aspects of an event in order to best convey their message. This would make the details appear different, yet both would be accurate.
3. ***Inerrancy does not demand verbatim reporting of events.*** “In times of antiquity it was not the practice to give a verbatim repetition every time something was written out.”¹¹

¹¹ A verbatim quote could not be demanded for several reasons. First, as already mentioned, the writer had to translate from Aramaic to Greek in recording Jesus’ words. Second, in making reference to Old Testament texts it

4. ***Inerrancy allows for departure from standard forms of grammar.*** Obviously it is wrong to enforce English rules of grammar upon the Scriptures.
5. ***Inerrancy allows for problem passages.*** With a work as vast as the Holy Scriptures it is nearly impossible to provide solutions to all the problems. In one case the solution awaits the findings of the archaeologist's spade; in another case it awaits the linguist's research; in still others the solution may never be discovered. It is never an option, however, to take our inability to solve every problem and suggest that there are contradictions or errors in Scripture. If the Scriptures are God-breathed they must be entirely without error.
6. ***Inerrancy demands the account does not teach error or contradiction.*** In the statements of Scripture, whatever is written is in accord with things as they are.¹²

IX. Conclusion:

The foundation of all theology rests upon the rock of the Word. What you believe about the Word will determine what you believe about Creation, the Resurrection, Salvation, and the Return of Christ. Yet the Scripture is more than just a theological tome. In the words of the author of Hebrews:

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

May God give us a love and reverence for His Word so that we might pursue Him through the pages of Holy Scripture. In the words of Puritan Divine Thomas Watson:

The Word is the field where Christ the pearl of price is hid. In this sacred mine we dig, not for a wedge of gold, but for a weight of glory. The Scripture is a sacred eye-salve to illuminate us. "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light" (Proverbs 6:23). The Scripture is the chart and compass by which we sail to the New Jerusalem. It is a sovereign cordial in all distresses. What are the promises but the water of life to renew fainting spirits?¹³

would have been impossible to unroll the lengthy scrolls each time to produce a verbatim quote; furthermore, the scrolls were not readily available, hence, the freedom in Old Testament quotes.

¹²Enns, Paul P.: *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. Chicago, Ill. : Moody Press, 1997, c1989, S. 167

¹³ Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (Edinburgh and Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2003), pp. 35-36.

Appendix

COMMON OBJECTIONS AND ANSWERS

- A. **Objection 1:** We don't have the original Bible. After all, it was written thousands of years ago and passed down through the centuries by men.

The guardianship of the Old Testament was entrusted to the Masoretes—Hebrew scholars who meticulously copied the Old Testament. Using such techniques as numbering the letters, words, and lines in each book, as well as identifying the middle word, they successfully maintained the Old Testament. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls confirmed the efforts of the Masoretes. When scholars compared the Isaiah Scroll, which was dated around 150 BC, with the Masoretic copy, which was dated around AD 900, they discerned ninety-five percent agreement between the two texts. The variants were obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling.

Scholars, archeologists, and researchers have sifted through over 24,000 manuscripts related to the New Testament that date all the way back to the first half of the second century. By comparison, only 647 manuscripts of Homer's classic *Iliad* have been recovered. Through the science of textual criticism (comparing manuscripts of similar passages in order to detect human errors), scholars believe that we have at least ninety-eight percent of the New Testament accurately reconstructed. Of the remainder, it should be noted that it in no way interferes with orthodox (mainstream) Christian doctrine.

- C. **Objection 2:** Doesn't the Bible contradict itself?

Many people who carry this objection have never taken the time to actually read the Bible and see for themselves. For those who have found apparent contradictions, further study of the context of the passages often clears up these questions. For those who are seriously stumped, many books are available which can assist in resolving these apparent contradictions, such as Gleason Archer's *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* and Norman Geisler's *When Critics Ask*.

- D. **Objection 3:** What about other books of revelation, like the Koran?

First of all, unlike the Koran, the Bible consists of multiple authors, literary forms, and types of revelation and yet it maintains the same message. Secondly, books like the Koran and the Book of Mormon contain historical inaccuracies and misrepresent the Bible.¹⁴ Thirdly, the Bible has a proven track record of fulfilled prophecies.

Here are some examples:

¹⁴ For specific examples of the inaccuracies of the Koran and Book of Mormon consult: Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1994), pp. 549-556.

1. ***Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God. (Leviticus 26:44)***

In the near context of this verse, Yahweh tells the Israelites that the Promised Land will be abandoned on account of their unfaithfulness. Yet, as we read in verse 44, the Lord will graciously preserve them while they are in the land of their enemies. This passage clearly alludes to the Babylonian exile, which transpired roughly 850 years later (see *2 Kings 17:6; 24:10-16*).

2. ***And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; Nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, Nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there. (Isaiah 13:19-20)***

This prophecy was penned by Isaiah in the seventh century BC. At that time, Babylon was at its height and was a formidable military city. Yet today this once-prosperous city is a barren wasteland because of the extreme salinization of the surrounding farmland—a fulfillment of the words “*Nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there.*” The reference to Arabs not pitching their tents on the site of this once-mighty city is significant because they did not inhabit the region until the eighth century AD.

3. ***Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted. Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men. Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand. (Isaiah 52:13-15)***

Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He

was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:1-12)

The account of the suffering servant in *Isaiah 52:13-15* and *53:1-12*, composed during the late seventh century BC, offers a striking Old Testament portrait of the life and death of Christ. Phrases such as “He was pierced through for our transgressions” and “by His scourging we are healed” clearly point to the crucifixion of Christ and our spiritual salvation through His suffering on the cross.

For more examples of fulfilled biblical prophecy consult Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, pages 563-568.

Ultimately, the truth of the Bible will commend itself above and beyond any works such as the Koran. The wisdom of the Scriptures speaks for itself. When we adhere to its commands and precepts we will find that the testimony of the Word of God is true. However, we must be aware that the sinfulness, or deceitfulness, of our own hearts (see Jeremiah 17:9), may interfere with our ability to completely understand it. Jesus Christ leaves us with the following challenge in *John 7:17*:

If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.

God challenges you to test the veracity of His Word by committing yourself to doing what His Word tells you to do. Only by submitting to the precepts and commandments of God can you know for certain whether the Bible comes from God.