

HOME BIBLE STUDY SERIES

# *How to Study the Bible*

- 1—Its Greek to Me—The Greek Alphabet
- 2—How to Use a Concordance
- 3—How to Use a Lexicon
- 4—How to do "Word" Studies
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Lesson One

***"It's Greek to Me!"***

Our New Testament that we use, read from, and study was originally given in the "koine" Greek language. We are blessed to have it in our English language so that we can understand the message of God to mankind! But in order to have the New Testament in English, it was necessary for some people to study the original "koine" Greek language and "translate" it for us. Do you and I have to know the Greek language in order to understand what God is saying to us? The Answer should be "no" in a general sense! However, it certainly helps to have some working knowledge of the language so that we can study things out for ourselves.

**Suggested Value**

One Greek Scholar suggested 5 values of knowing some Greek language:

1. **Without some knowledge of Greek, a person cannot understand the critical commentaries on the Scriptures, and a commentary that is *not* critical is of doubtful value.**
2. **A person cannot satisfy himself on why the changes in different English Versions.**
3. **A person cannot appreciate the critical discussions relating to the books in the New Testament**
4. **A person cannot be absolutely sure that his understanding is correct.**
5. **A person cannot be an independent student or a reliable interpreter of the Word of God.**

Whether you agree with the above or not—it certainly can help anyone to make use of the Greek-English reference works. That is the purpose of this 6-weeks series—to give you some insight on how to use Greek-English reference works!

**Why did God have the New Testament written in the "koine" Greek language?** One obvious reason can be suggested—it was the universal language of the first Century. The Greeks (Alexander, the Great) had conquered the known world in 330 B.C. The Greek language, literature, and culture covered the world. The Romans were the new conquerors at the time of Jesus' birth and death, but Latin took some time to supercede the Greek language as the world-wide language. The universality of Greek would be similar to the universality of the English language today.

### **Greek-English Words**

What a lot of people in this country do not know is just how many Greek words we have in our English language. Notice the examples below:

1. Pneuma—wind, breath, or spirit.  
Pneumonia—having trouble with breathing.
2. Kardia—the heart.  
Cardiac arrest—the heart stops.

The Greek word is taken directly over into English characters without translating them. They become an English sounding word. This is what is generally known as "transliteration"—not "translation!" Another word that is critical to us will help to illustrate this:

**Β α π τ ι ζ ω**

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Now, place the English letters underneath each of the Greek letters...What do you have? A Greek word carried over into our language without **translating** the word. In order to know the original meaning of the Greek word, you would need to make use of the Greek-English reference works to find the answer!

Another example will help you to see the value of using these scholarly works.

1 John 3:8-9—*"He who sins is of the devil...whoever has been born of God does not sin..."* It is quite obvious that even the best Christian among us **does** sin at times. Does that mean we all are "of the devil?" If you knew just a little something about the Greek language, you can very easily solve this question. Notice how **The Simple English Bible** handles this issue: *"The person who continues to sin belongs to the Devil...When God makes a person His child, that person does not continue to sin..."* The Apostle Paul stated it clearly: *"How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?"* (Rom. 6:2).

### **Greek-English Reference Works**

The purpose of this study is to look at, and learn how, to make use of several scholarly works that are dependable and helpful in our study of the New Testament. They are: **Greek-English Lexicons**, **Greek-English Interlinear**, **Greek-English Word Studies**, and the large **Concordance**. In this lesson, we want to expose you to the Greek Alphabet and to encourage you to learn them sufficiently so that you can recognize and properly pronounce Greek words.

**GREEK ALPHABET**

| <b><u>Capital Letters</u></b> | <b><u>Small Letters</u></b> | <b><u>Pronunciation</u></b> |  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| A                             | α                           | Alpha                       | a—as in father (long)<br>a—As in bat (short)   |
| B                             | β                           | Beta                        | b—As in ball                                   |
| Γ                             | γ                           | Gamma                       | g—as in gift                                   |
| Δ                             | δ                           | Delta                       | d—as in debt                                   |
| E                             | ε                           | Epsilon                     | e—as in met                                    |
| Z                             | ζ                           | Zeta                        | dz—as in adz                                   |
| H                             | η                           | Eta                         | e—as in obey                                   |
| Θ                             | θ                           | Theta                       | th—as in theme                                 |
| I                             | ι                           | Iota                        | i—as in magazine (long)<br>i—as in pit (short) |
| K                             | κ                           | Kappa                       | k—as in kin                                    |
| Λ                             | λ                           | Lambda                      | l—as in long                                   |
| M                             | μ                           | Mu                          | m—as in man                                    |
| N                             | ν                           | Nu                          | n—as in no                                     |
| Ξ                             | ξ                           | Xi                          | x—as in relax                                  |
| O                             | ο                           | Omicron                     | o—as in omelet                                 |
| Π                             | π                           | Pi                          | p—as in pay                                    |
| P                             | ρ                           | Rho                         | r—as in ring                                   |
| Σ                             | σ, ς                        | Si                          | s—as in sing                                   |
| T                             | τ                           | Tau                         | t—as in tale                                   |
| Υ                             | υ                           | Upsilon                     | u—as in unity                                  |
| Φ                             | φ                           | Phi                         | ph—as in Phonetics                             |
| X                             | χ                           | Chi                         | ch—as in chemical                              |
| Ψ                             | ψ                           | Psi                         | ps—as in taps                                  |
| Ω                             | ω                           | Omega                       | o—as in tone                                   |

**Concluding Thoughts**

It should be quite obvious that you do not have to know the Greek language in order to understand the Bible—but it can be very helpful in certain situations to know, at least, a little about the language. It will be helpful to be able to intelligently use the Reference Works that Bible Scholars have made available for our use. It is up to you individually as to whether you want to spend the time necessary to learn how to use these "tools" to a better understanding of the Message of God to man.

**Take Notes**

Lesson Two

## "How to Use a Concordance"

A Concordance is a listing of all the words in both the Old Testament and New Testament. But it has other valuable services that can be beneficial in studying the Bible. This Reference Work is probably used more than any other source for help in one's study of the Bible. There are three major Concordances: **Crudens**, **Strongs**, and **Youngs**. While each one will have something different to offer that the others do not; yet, they will all serve about the same purposes. The effort of these works is to lead the simplest reader of the Bible to a more correct understanding of it. Also, there are various kinds of "Study Bibles" that will have a smaller or more shortened form of a concordance—but without several valuable helps that the major works offer.

### **Helps offered by a Concordance**

Since such a work like this can take a lot of time to produce, it should be obvious that those who produce such a work feel it is worth the time. We will use **Young's Concordance** throughout this lesson because I am more accustomed to its helps.

1. All the words of the Bible are listed in alphabetical order in English.
2. It will give the literal meaning of the word from Hebrew or Greek.
3. It will also list how many times the word is translated from different Greek or Hebrew words.
4. It will give a quote from Scripture in which the word appears.
5. It will also tell something about a City or a Person that the English word identifies.
6. In the Index, it will list every Greek or Hebrew word used in the Bible with how it is translated and how many times it is translated.
7. It will also have written articles that are of interest to the Bible Student, in the Index, that Dr. William Albright has written from an archaeological viewpoint.

### **Value of a Concordance**

Suppose that you would like to find a certain verse of Scripture, but you cannot remember where it can be found. You pick a key word in the verse of Scripture and look it up in the concordance. It is usually very easy to find such. Would you like to study on a topic in the Bible? You can find all the Scriptures that speak about your topic and drawn good Biblical conclusions about that topic. Here is an example to illustrate.

1. You want to see how many times the word "**Hell**" occurs in the Bible.
  - a) It occurs 31 times in the KJV of the Old Testament.
  - b) However, you notice that only one Hebrew word is being translated by the word "**Hell**" in the Old Testament—**Sheol**.
  - c) The literal concept of the term means—"The unseen state."
2. But you are primarily interested in how the word "**hell**" is used in the New Testament.
  - a) It occurs 23 times in the KJV of the New Testament.
  - b) But you notice that there are three Greek words that are translated by the English word "**Hell**"—**Hades**, **Gehenna**, and **Tartarus**.
  - c) The literal meaning given of each word is:
    - ◇ **Hades**—"the unseen state."
    - ◇ **Gehenna**—"The Valley of Hinnom"
    - ◇ **Tartarus**—Not translated!
3. Conclusions to be drawn:
  - a) **Sheol** and **Hades** are both identified as "the unseen state."
  - b) **Gehenna** is identified as the Valley of Hinnom—but from the context, it has reference to a place of punishment.
  - c) **Tartarus** is not translated, but the context states that it is the place where fallen angels await the Judgment Day.
  - d) Further study of other Scriptures will help to clarify even further what each of these Hebrew and Greek words have reference to.

Suppose someone told you that the Greek word for Baptism means to immerse; but you have been taught that it can be immerse, sprinkle or pour. How would you find out your answer as to which is correct?

1. You first look up the word in Young's Concordance.
  - a) It occurs many times.
  - b) The Greek word is **Baptizo**.
  - c) It does not give the literal meaning of the Greek word.
  - d) And.....it looks like a "**transliteration**" rather than a "**translation**."
  - e) So, it is necessary to go to a **Lexicon** for a definition of the word; or look up each Scripture to see if it tells how the baptism takes place.
  - f) Look at Romans 6:4 for your answer.
2. In some instances, the other reference works are helpful in finding the answers to some questions.

Another use of a Concordance is to look in the index (in back of book) where there is a listing of all Hebrew and Greek words in the Bible. It will show how many times they occur and how they have been translated. To illustrate:



**Olam** (Hebrew word is translated as follows):

- a) Ancient time (1)
- b) Beginning of the world (1)
- c) Continuance (1)
- d) Ever (267)
- e) Everlasting (11)
- f) Evermore (19)
- g) Old (7)
- h) Old time (10)
- i) World (2)

This word primarily deals with time—as you can see above. But it primarily emphasizes the unendingness of time. The equivalent of this word is also found in the New Testament:

**Aion** (Greek word is translated as follows):

- a) Age (2)
- b) Beginning of the world (2)
- c) Course (1)
- d) World (32)
- e) Eternal (2)
- f) World began (1)
- g) For ever (27)
- h) For evermore (2)
- i) For ever and ever (20)

**Aionios** (A similar Greek word is translated as follows):

- a) Eternal (42)
- b) Everlasting (25)
- c) For ever (1)

As you can see, both Greek words are used in somewhat the same way that the Hebrew word is used—*"The unendingness of time."* When there is no stated end in time—it denotes the unendingness of time or Timeless-ness.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

I hope that this lesson has helped to introduce you to one of the best "reference" works to help us study the Bible—the Concordance! Learn to make use of it. Grow in your knowledge of our Redeemer, but as well in your correct knowledge of the Scriptures.

**Lesson Three**

***"How to use a Lexicon"***

A **Lexicon** is simply a **Dictionary**! But it is a special kind of Dictionary. All the Greek words in the New Testament are listed in alphabetical order. So, you need to know how to recognize a Greek word in order to look it up in a Lexicon. But it is also a Greek-English Dictionary! Under a listing of a Greek word, it will give the various usage of the Word in the New Testament—but in the English language! Since the 1800s there have been several scholarly Lexicons published. The one that has probably been used the most is Joseph Henry Thayer.

An illustration is given below from Dr. Thayer's Lexicon::

**Βαπτίζω**—"To dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge" There are other ways the word may be used; for instance, in a figure of speech. "to overwhelm."

We have already noticed that this Greek Word was not translated into the English language—leaving people to guess how it was to be performed. However, we have several passages that clearly indicate that it was immersion (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; Acts 8:36-39; Jn. 3:23). We can see that the Lexicon's definition corresponds to these clear statements or indications from Scripture.

**Further Help!**

Not only do we get a correct, scholarly definition of this Greek word, but we can also see that there are other Greek words for "sprinkling" or "pouring." You would need some help from a Concordance by looking up the two English words—Sprinkling and pouring. From the Concordance, we come up with two different Greek words—Rantizo and Ekcheo.

**Ραντίζω**—"To Sprinkle." God did not choose this word for "baptism." He chose "baptizo." (Heb. 12:24).

**ΕκΧέω**—"To Pour out." Again, God did not choose this word for "baptism." (Acts 2:17).

When you look at the various sources that these Scholars make use of, it certainly helps to give full credence to their work. Thayer's work was copyrighted in 1886 and also in 1889. Since that time, there have been efforts by various Bible Scholars to do any updating to these earlier works to make them more useful.

**Words not Translated!**

There are several Greek words in the New Testament that have not been translated. We just looked at one on the previous page—Baptism! But there are other Greek words, where, in some places they translate, but in others they transliterate. Observe the word "**Deacon.**" This is a Greek word carried over into the English language without being translated. When it is used in a somewhat official way, they do not translate the word. But in other places they do translate—Why the difference?

**Δια-κονεω——Diakoneo  
Deacon (English)**

This word is used in an official sense and not translated in the following passages:

**1 Tim. 3:8-13** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phil. 1:1** \_\_\_\_\_

Places where this Greek word **is** translated:

**Philemon 13** \_\_\_\_\_

**Lk. 22:26-27** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 6:2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 6:4** \_\_\_\_\_

**Defined by Thayer:** "be a servant, attendant, domestic, to serve, to wait upon, to minister to one, to render ministering offices to."

**Πνευμα——Pneuma  
Pneumonia (English)**

Some Greek words are taken over into our English language without being translated, but made into an English Word—like the above. Thayer gives the definition for this Greek word as follows: "**Breathe, Wind, or Spirit.**" The context usually determines which of the three it should be translated. When the Greek word is carried over into English—its meaning usually goes with it.

**Pneuma** means breathe, wind, or spirit. Our English word is **Pneumonia**, which indicates that a person is having bad trouble with breathing!

**Καρδια** is another word that we recognize also when we talk about a person having a heart attack. **Kardia** is translated into English as "heart." When a person has a "Cardiac Arrest".....we know that their heart has stopped beating.

**Θεος** is a word that we have heard often! **Theos** is translated into our English language as "God". Our English sounding word "Theology" means the "study of God." Or, **Θεοπνευστος** (Theopneustos) is literally translated "God Breathed." (See 2 Tim. 3:16).

### **Concluding Thoughts**

The use of a Lexicon can be of great help to the beginner in some areas of study; but, such becomes a necessity when we have to get into "deeper" water in our studies. There are reference works that give detail information about the grammar, tenses, syntax, etc. These will be used by those who are more accustomed to making use of these reference works.

As young people, you may feel that you would not use this kind of information; but, if you continue to grow in your knowledge, you will eventually make use of some of the basic reference works.

Lesson Four

***"How to Use 'Word' Study Books"***

If it scares you or if it is too hard for you to look up Greek words in a Lexicon, you can still make use of another reference work—the Word Study Books. W. E. Vine identifies them in this way—"A **Comprehensive Dictionary of the Original Greek Words with their Precise Meanings for English Readers.**" In other words, it is a dictionary that lists the words in English and defines their usage in English! But they also will give the various Greek words that are attached to the English word.

These works (and there are many of them) are primarily for the person who only knows English well enough to read and speak it. The writer will go into some detail on the following things:

1. It will give the English words that normally occur in the New or Old Testaments in alphabetical order.
2. It will list the one or various Greek words that our English word is used to translate the thought from the Greek to the English.
3. Scripture references are listed with each use of the word in English.
4. It may refer the reader to similar words that can help in the student's understanding of the use of the word.

**Example to Illustrate**

If you were to look up the word "Ability" ("able") in Vine's New Testament Word Study, you will see the variations of the use of the Greek and English languages.

1. It will give the "noun" form of the Greek word, *Dunamis*, with some kind of definition.
2. It will indicate how many times the word appears in the New Testament.
3. It will list the different Greek words that are all translated by the one English word "ability" or its equivalent.
4. It will give Scriptures where the word is used. It will refer you to additional words that relate to "Ability."
5. It will give the "verb" form of the Greek word with its various shades of meaning.
6. It will offer some thoughts to help clarify the use of the word.
7. It will also give the "adjective" form of the Greek word.

**Baptism, Baptist, Baptize**

Let's see how **W. E. Vines** handles these three words! There are several Greek words involved in the three English words above:

**Βαπτισμα**---"Immersion, Submersion, and emergence." The root word is Bapto—which means to dip. It is used in a literal sense; and, as well, in a figurative sense (Lk. 12:50; Mk. 10:38-39).

**Βαπτισμος**—"Ceremonial washings" (Mk. 7:4, 8).

**Βαπτιστης**—"A baptist"—used only with reference to John, the Baptist.

**Βαπτιζω**—"To dip"—Used in connection with dyeing a garment by dipping it into the dye. (Rom. 6:3-4). A baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). It is used in a figurative sense (1 Pet. 3:21; 1 Cor. 10:2; Matt. 3:11).

**Perfect, Perfectly**

This word is interesting to check on in connection with 1 Cor. 13:9-10 and a similar passage (Matt. 5:48).

**Τηλειος — (Τελος)**—"having reached its end, finished, complete, and perfect." It carries with it the idea of being full-grown or mature. In 1 Cor. 13:10, it has reference to the complete revelation of God will and ways.

**Matt. 5:48** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jas. 1:4** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 John 4:18** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rom. 12:2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jas. 2:22** \_\_\_\_\_

Notice how that the concept of perfection, when it relates to man, must be understood in "general" sense—not in an "absolute" sense! But God or things relating to God can be understood in the "absolute" sense!

**Επιτελεω**—"To bring through to the end."

**Gal. 3:3** \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Cor. 7:1** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ακριβως**--"Accurately" or "Perfectly." See 1 Thess. 5:2.

There are additional Greek words connected with the idea of "perfection," "perfecting," and "perfectness."

**Ἀριος**—"Perfect" as found in 2 Tim. 3:17 in the Authorized Version.

**2 Cor. 13:9** \_\_\_\_\_

**Heb. 7:11** \_\_\_\_\_

**Col. 3:14** \_\_\_\_\_

**BibleTranslators** have a challenging job in trying to get the right English word that will portray what the Greek word is trying to communicate. Bible scholars can usually be depended upon to give the right under-standing of the Greek, but they are not "PERFECT!"

### **Concluding Thoughts**

It is important to understand that words have meanings and shades of meanings....depending upon the context. Always try first to use the literal meaning of a word—unless something in the context would indicate that a variation is needed.

A good study if you have time is on Holiness, Holy, or Holily (W. E. Vines Word Studies of the New Testament, pp. 565-568).

Lesson Five

***"How to Use a Bible Dictionary"***

Most people have learned (early in life) how to make use of a Dictionary! An elaborate English Dictionary will generally give the original use of a word and point out the change in its usage over the years. Obviously, the present day use of the word may be different from the original use.

There are many Bible Dictionaries that have been produced and put into print. One of the better known is **Smith's Bible Dictionary**. It states in the front of the book—*"gives you thousands of important word entries with easy to understand definitions and explanations.....Fascinating archaeological and geological information make this book one of the most valuable and complete reference works ever published."*

There are other similar works that have been produced in recent years that are very helpful in not only defining the use of words, but have pictures or drawings that help to actually see what is being defined. These are usually referred to as "Pictorial Bible Dictionary." There is another work that has been produced that enlarges on what the Bible Dictionaries have done. These are called "Bible Encyclopedias." One of the better known publication is called **International Standard Bible Encyclopedia**—(ISBE). This work has five large volumes. If the Bible Dictionary does not give you sufficient information; then, turn to the ISBE for a fuller account on the subject matter.

**Dangers of Dictionary**

If you were to look up the word "**Baptism**" in a small English Dictionary, it probably would give you the modern use of this word. It will point out that it is perform by either sprinkling of water, pouring of water, of to immerse in water. This is (obviously) the modern day usage of this word. And since the Bible Translators did not translate the Greek word into English, most people would think that any "mode" of baptism would be acceptable. Fortunately, we have Bible Dictionaries, like Smith's, that will give the original meaning of this word (Page 73, under "Mode of Baptism). However, when they offer their opinions, this should be a "red flag" warning! This is generally an effort to give some kind of information that justifies something different. Be cautious! Be careful! Do some checking elsewhere to verify. There are a few references in early writings that indicate a deviation from immersion—but they clearly indicate that the practice was not the usual. Proper defining of words in the Bible can be critical to one's salvation.



**Interesting Observations**

1. **Look up the word "Jew."** (See page 301). Notice when the term was first used to refer to the descendants of Jacob. (2 Kings 16:6).

When was it first used? \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Look up the name of "Job."** (See pages 305-307) The author gives quite a bit of background information and surveys the book of Job.

Why did God allow Satan to bring harm and hurt to Job? \_\_\_\_\_

Why does the author (Smith) suggest an early date for the events in the life of Job? (See Page 307) \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Look up the name "Mary the Virgin."** (See pages 386-387). What are the four events where Mary is mentioned in Scripture during the Public Ministry of Jesus?

**John 2:1-8** \_\_\_\_\_

**Matt. 12:46** \_\_\_\_\_

**John 19:25-27** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 1:14** \_\_\_\_\_

What phrase does the author (Smith) use (in reference to Mary) to show he has been influenced by Roman Catholic thinking? \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Look up the word "Miracle."** (See pages 416-419). What is your evaluation of his definition of a Miracle? \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Look up the word "Septuagint."** (See Pages 625-627). What is the Septuagint? \_\_\_\_\_

Why was the Septuagint important in the early days of the Church? \_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding Thoughts**

It should be obvious from what we have seen thus far that the Bible Dictionary usually has more information about the various words in the Bible than some of the reference works. This also gives room for their prejudices to be given along with the biblical concepts. Thus, we want to warn you to use the Bible Dictionaries with some caution and evaluation.

Again, we emphasize that Bible Scholars can usually be depended upon to be accurate in their understanding of the Bible, but more biased in the expression of their opinions.

**Lesson Six*****"The Birth of the Bible"***

There was a period of time when there was no Bible! This may sound strange to some, but it is true. From the beginning of man on earth until the time of Moses, there was no written message from God...at least, no record of such has been found. In fact, there are no references to such in the Bible itself. There are no remains of such to be found. We have remains or specimens of heathen writings such as the work of Hamurabi (1900-2000 BC). The book of Job gives no evidence of any written laws given by God. It is probable that God gave verbal laws concerning Sacrifices and Clean Animals, etc., and they were passed on by word of mouth to succeeding generations. It is obvious from the Bible, however, that man was under Law to God but no indication that it was written down (Genesis 4:3-7; Romans 2:12-16).

**THE BIRTH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

God so designed man to be able to basically know right from wrong, but placed within him a conscience that helps to encourage him to do right (Romans 2:12-16; Acts 23:1). For centuries, man was left without a written code of living, except what he was able to understand for himself. In God's plan of things, it was necessary for Him to select out of the nations a peculiar people unto Himself to be that Nation through whom He would bring Redemption to sinful, rebellious mankind. God chose Abraham to be the father of the Israelite Nation and also the one through whom the Redeemer would come (Genesis 12:1-4; Galatians 3:15-19). A Covenant Law was given to govern the Israelites while they were gathered at the base of Mt. Sinai (Exodus 20:1-17). However, the first time Moses was commanded to write something down was recorded in Exodus 17:14 in regards to a promise of God. He was to write it in a book, indicating a collection of things would be included. The first five books of the Old Testament, called the Pentateuch, were written down by Moses and preserved (Acts 7:22; Exodus 24:4-7; Deuteronomy 31:9, 24, 26; etc.). The approximate time of writing is given as 1491 down to 1451 BC.

The remainder of the books of the Old Testament were written over a period of time from 1451 down to about 400 BC. The writers that God used to write down the Old Testament books were: Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, Ezra, Nehemiah, Mordecai, Plus the sixteen prophets whose book bears their name. More prophets were involved, but we have no way of knowing specifically who they were.

### **THE BIRTH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

The message from God this time was first spoken by Jesus during His public ministry. After His death, burial, and resurrection, His apostles were endowed by the Holy Spirit to speak God's revelation to man and guided them in the presenting of such (John 16:13). It wasn't until about 48-50 AD that the books of the New Testament began to be written down. The last book was written about 96 AD. The writers of the New Testament books were: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James, and Jude.

Thus, the Bible's origin covers a period of some sixteen hundred years in the writing, using more than thirty-two different writers in the process, and when the sixty-six books were gathered together, they make one harmonious book from beginning to end.

### **THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE**

One of the unique features of the birth of the Bible is its claim to be "Inspired" by God (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible not only makes the claim of being a Revelation from God, but also that this Revelation was written down by Inspiration (Ephesians 3:3-5; 2 Peter 3:15-16). This concept gives an assurance to the reader of the correctness of that which has been given through human instrumentality (2 Peter 1:21), whether spoken orally or written down, when under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-13). Complete trust can be given to the Bible as being an Inspired Message from God Himself.

The following are some of the suggestions for believing in the Inspiration of the Bible, and that it is not a mere work of men:

1. The Old Testament lays claim to such. Some 3800 plus times the Old Testament says: "*The Lord spoke,*" "*The word of the Lord came,*" "*The Lord said,*" etc. (2 Samuel 23:2; Isaiah 1:2; Ezekiel 1:3, etc.).
2. The New Testament lays claim to such (1 Corinthians 2:9-13; Acts 2:4; 2 Peter 3:15-16; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Galatians 1:11-12, etc.).
3. Jesus recognized the Old Testament as Inspired (Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 24:44-45)
4. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the Apostles to guide them into all truth (John 16:13; Acts 1:8).
5. The New Testament writers not only claimed guidance by the Spirit, but expected obedience to their teaching as the Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:13; 14:37; 2 Thessalonians 3:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:13).
6. The Apostles gave their lives believing in its divinity.
7. The early Christians accepted the concept of its Inspiration.

8. Its morality is the highest and it demands purity and holiness.
9. Its impartiality is obvious, telling both the good and bad about anyone.
10. Its calmness in recording events and teachings.
11. Its brevity.
12. Its all-sufficiency (up to date).
13. Its reasonableness—God is lifted up; the true description of man is given; but that man can be redeemed.
14. Because it has endured.
15. Its great influence on the lives in the world.
16. The unity of the Bible—no contradictions—in complete harmony.
17. Its agreement with Natural Science, but not its false theories.
18. Its accuracy in History.
19. Its fulfilled prophecies—especially concerning Christ.
20. It is man's only reliable guide to know the answers to the many perplexing questions about man.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

We conclude this study with an emphasis upon having a right attitude towards the Bible. It has been given by God (2 Tim. 3:16). It is inspired or guided by God (2 Pet. 1:21). But one of the main concepts is that God has preserved it for mankind (Matt. 24:35). Have you noticed how much these reference works goes back to the Greek Language for the New Testament? Any careful study of the Bible is helped when you can make use of the original languages in which the Bible was written.

God has not only preserved His Word, but it has been translated into new languages for centuries. We are truly blessed to have access to the Word of God in a good English translation.

**Take Notes**



