



Scripture

part 2

From Malachi (*the last book of the O.T.*)

"I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. Malachi 3:1

"See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction." Malachi 4:5-6 (*Last words of the O.T.*)

Angel's words about John the Baptist (*Luke 1:16-17*)

"Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

How were the 66 books chosen?

Canon is a word meaning "a measuring rod." The canon is a standard that all scriptural books must meet. The books of the Bible were authoritative and shared particular traits which distinguished them from other mere books. The criteria by which a book was accepted as inspired resulted from the commonalities among those sacred books the Holy Spirit had inspired and chosen for the canon of sacred scripture.

The five criteria

1. Was it written by a _____ of God? (Deut. 18:18–22; 1 Peter 1:20–21)
2. Was the prophet confirmed by an _____ of God? (Heb. 2:3–4)
3. Does it tell the _____ about God? (Gal. 1:8; Deut. 13:1–5, 18:22)
4. Does it have the _____ of God? (Heb. 4:12)
5. Was it accepted by the _____ of God? (1 Thess. 2:13; Deut. 31:24–26; Josh. 24:26; 1 Sam. 10:25; Dan. 9:2; 2 Peter 3:16; 1 Tim. 5:18; Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27)

Apocryphal & Pseudepigraphal Books

During the 400 years of silence between the end of the Old Testament and the coming of Jesus, many of the apocryphal works were written and include such things as books of history, fiction, practical living, and end times speculation. While these books were read by some of God's people, they were treated like Christian books in our own day and never accepted as Scripture. While the Old Testament is quoted roughly 300 times in the New Testament, none of the apocryphal (hidden books) or pseudepigraphal (pen name authored books) are ever quoted in the New Testament or recognized as Scripture by Christians until the Catholic Council of Trent in 1546.

Can Scripture be written today?

Hebrews 1:1–2 tells us that God has spoken to us through Jesus and that we have no need of any more revelation beyond what was recorded of His life and work and the subsequent apostolic explanation. The Book of Revelation deals with the end of all things and tells us to expect no more Scripture than what we already have (Rev. 22:18–19). Any new book of the Bible would require eyewitness verification, a new working of God after 2000 years of silence, absolute consistency with the rest of Scripture, and perfect prophecy without any error. We would also have to assume that God had some pertinent revelation that He has withheld from His people for the past 2000 years that He has for some reason now decided to make known. Lastly, the Scriptures warn us of adding to them (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5–6).

How did we get our English Bible?

The existence of the Bible is actually a fascinating and miraculous process that many volumes have been written to explain. To understand the process in a brief and simple way it can be viewed as a five step process that begins with God and ends in a changed life.

God > Revelation/Inspiration > Transmission > Translation > Interpretation > Application > Your Life

Why Should I Trust that the Bible is Accurate?

Three general tests exist for determining the historicity of any ancient text: the bibliographical test (number and quality of manuscripts), the internal test (the consistency of the text to not contradict itself), and the external test (the accuracy of the text in relation to other works of history from that period).

Test #1 – The Bibliographical Test

The bibliographical test seeks to determine the quantity and quality of documents, as well as how far removed they are from the time of the originals. The quantity of New Testament manuscripts is unparalleled in ancient literature.

AUTHOR	DATE WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPY	TIME SPAN	# OF COPIES	ACCURACY
Homer	Ca. 850 BC	unknown	unknown	643	95%
Plato	Ca. 380 BC	ca. AD 900	1,300 years	7	Not enough copies to reconstruct the original.
Aristotle	Ca. 350 BC	ca. AD 1100	1,400 years	5	
Caesar	Ca. 60 BC	ca. AD 900	950 years	10	
New Test.	Ca. AD 60	ca. AD 130	100 years	14,000	99.5%

If someone seeks to eliminate the trustworthiness of the New Testament then to be consistent they would also have to dismiss virtually the entire library of western literature and pull everything from Homer to Plato and Aristotle off of bookstore shelves and out of classroom discussions.

Test #2 – The Internal Test

This test of the Bible's accuracy is indeed important because each book is a witness to a body of truth and much like a legal case in our day if a witness were to contradict themselves then their testimony should not be deemed trustworthy. In the Bible we see hundreds of fulfilled prophecies extending hundreds, and sometimes over a thousand years into the future.

Consider the few following prophecies and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ:

1. **Born of a woman (Gen. 3:15 cf. Matt. 1:20; Gal. 4:4)**
2. **Descendant of Abraham (Gen. 22:18 cf. Matt. 1:1; Gal. 3:16)**
3. **Born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14 cf. Matt. 1:18)**
4. **Born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2 cf. Luke 2:1–7)**
5. **Propheesied by the forerunner John the Baptist (Isa. 40; Mal. 3:1 cf. John 1:19–52)**
6. **Rejected by his own people (Isa. 53 cf. John 1)**
7. **Presented as a king riding a donkey (Zech. 9:9 cf. Luke 19:35–37)**
8. **Betrayed by a friend (Ps. 41:9 cf. Matt. 26:50)**
9. **Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12 cf. 26:15)**
10. **Blood money thrown on temple floor & used to buy a potters field (Zech. 11:13 cf. Matt. 27:5–7)**

Note: the temple was destroyed in 70 AD so the Messiah must have come prior to then.

11. **Crucified (Ps. 22:16 cf. Luke 23:33)**

Note: crucifixion didn't exist until hundreds of years after Psalms was written

12. **Crucified with thieves (Isa. 53:12 cf. Matt. 27:38)**
13. **Forsaken by God (Ps. 22:1 cf. Matt. 27:46)**
14. **Lots cast for His clothing (Ps. 22:18 cf. John 19:23)**
15. **Buried in a rich man's tomb (Isa. 53:9 cf. Matt. 27:57)**
16. **Resurrected & exalted (Ps. 16:10, Isa. 52:13, 53:10–12 cf. Acts 2:25–32)**
17. **Ascended into heaven (Ps. 68:18 cf. Acts 1:8, Eph. 4:8).**

Test #3 – The Historical Test

The historicity of Jesus and events surrounding the time of his life has been well established by early Roman, Greek, and Jewish sources. Such ancient historians include Flavius Josephus, Mara BarSerapion, Cornelius Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger, Lucian, and the Jewish Talmud. Simply, when the New Testament mentions such historical facts as rulers, nations, people groups, political events, and the existence of Jesus non-Christian historical sources confirm the accuracy of the New Testament accounts.

Why Are There Different Bible Translations?

Word for word translations make a special effort to carefully interpret each word from their original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic into English. Probably the best word for word translations are the **New American Standard Bible (NASB)**, English Standard Version (ESV), and the New King James Version (NKJV).

Thought for thought translations attempt to convey the full nuances of a passage by interpreting the scriptures entire meaning and not just the individual words. Thought for thought translations may include words that were not included in the originals in an effort to give the same meaning that the reader of the original languages would have had. The best and most widely read thought for thought English translation is the **New International Version (NIV)**. A very contemporary version on the NIV has been recently released as the **Today's New International Version (TNIV)**.

Paraphrased translations pay even less attention to specific word meanings than thought for thought translations in an attempt to give the poetic or narrative essence of a passage. For this reason, many paraphrased translations do not even have verses in them. Examples of paraphrased translations include The Message, **The New Living Bible**, and The Amplified Bible.

Since each style of translation has different strengths and weaknesses it is best for students of the Bible to use multiple translations that include word for word, thought for thought, and paraphrase versions to gain a fuller insight into the Scriptures.