

Is There Even One Mistake in the Bible?

(Infallibility of the Bible)

by Gary T. Panell

You may have heard people say something like, "The Bible is a pack of lies!" The same people who believe this, when asked to point out the mistakes, cannot do it. They may, however, come up with "difficulties" in the Bible. By this I mean they come up with things that they do not understand about the Bible. For example, they may think that there are discrepancies between the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We will address this subject of "difficulties" in the Bible, and still you will find that there are no contradictions or mistakes in the Bible. We will look at how wonderful it is to hold the very revelation from the God of the universe in our hands!

In order to see that the Bible is the perfect revelation of God, we need to look at the way the Holy Spirit gave us His Word. The importance of Qumran [Israel] surfaced in 1947. A Bedouin shepherd tossed a stone inside a cave on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, hoping to locate his wandering goat. Instead of hitting the animal, his rock smashed a clay jar that contained leather scrolls, which eventually were purchased by the State of Israel. Since then, hundreds of caves in the area have been explored, and some have yielded manuscripts now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Shrine of the Book, located at the Israeli Museum in Jerusalem, displays many finds from Qumran.

The Dead Sea Scrolls (they contain about 200 copies of the Jewish Scriptures, as well as other writings) were copied between 250 B.C. and A.D. 68, when they were hidden from the invading Roman army that destroyed the community. Although scholars disagree about many details, they affirm that people known as the Essenes placed the scrolls in the caves. These strict Jews abhorred the unholy priesthood in Jerusalem and lived separately, in their own community.

Their writings reveal that they anticipated the end of the world, culminating in a battle between the sons of light and the sons of darkness. It may be more than a coincidence that the scrolls of ancient Israel were discovered in the very year that modern Israel was founded. (May/June 2006 Issue of *Israel My Glory*)

First, we need to define the word "Bible" when we talk about the Bible being infallible or without error. The Bible is inspired by God, and no other book can prove this claim except the Bible. Inspiration is God's superintending or oversight of human authors so that using their own individual personality's men composed and recorded, without error, His revelation to man, the Bible, in the words of the original autographs. There are 66 books in all, 39 in the Old Testament, and 27 in the New Testament.

"Many people wonder why the 66 books of the Bible are recognized as sacred by most of Christendom, and would like to know why some Bibles include the Apocrypha. Then, too, why haven't Christians accepted as inspired anything written since the book of Revelation? To answer

these questions we will consider how the canon of Scripture, the books of the Bible that are recognized, came to be established." (*The Book You Can Trust* by Richard W. De Haan)

"Meaning of the word "CANON": The word canon comes from the root word 'reed' (English word "cane"; Hebrew form "ganeh" and Greek "Kanon") The "Reed" was used as a measuring rod and eventually meant "standard." Origen used the word "canon to denote what we call the 'rule of faith,' the standard by which we are to measure and evaluate." Later it meant a "List" or "index." The word "canon" applied to Scripture means "an officially accepted list of books."

One thing to keep in mind is that the church did not create the canon or books included in what we call Scripture. Instead, the church recognized the books that were inspired from their inception. They were inspired by God, when they were written!"

Test of a Book for Inclusion in the Canon:

There were basically five guiding principles used to determine whether or not a book is canonical or Scripture. Geisler and Nix record these five principles.

1. **Is it authoritative**-did it come from the hand of God? (Does this book come with a divine "thus saith the Lord"?)
2. **Is it prophetic**-was it written by a man of God?
3. **Is it authentic?** [The fathers had the attitude of "if in doubt throw it out"]
4. **Is it dynamic**-did it come with the life-transforming power of God?
5. **Was it received, collected, read and used**-was it accepted by the people of God?

2 Peter 3:16 Peter acknowledged Paul's work as Scripture parallel to Old Testament Scripture." (*Evidence that Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell)

"The people of Israel looked upon certain books as inspired from the very beginning of their history. As the sacred Scriptures were being written, the Israelites accepted them as the Word of God. Their 24 books are precisely the same as the 39 that make up our English Old Testament. [They were divided up differently, for example First and Second Kings might be together.]* (My own comment, Gary Panell)

Josephus declared that no inspired writings were composed after Artaxerxes (424 B.C.), stating that there had been no prophet since Malachi. He said that the Hebrew Scriptures had not been added to, subtracted from, nor changed in any manner during that time, and that many of God's children had endured horrible torture and even death because of their loyalty to them. The testimony of Josephus is especially valuable, for he was dealing with a subject he knew well, and concerning which he could speak with authority.

The people who claim that a council of rabbis decided early in the second century B.C. which writings belonged in the Holy Scriptures are making a serious mistake. The evidence indicates that the books which make up our Old Testament were recognized by the servants of God as sacred when they were written, and that they were readily accepted as inspired. Some 400 years before Christ the same books that make up the present Old Testament were finalized as the authoritative Word of God." (*The Book You Can Trust* by Richard W. De Haan)

The Apocrypha

"You may wonder about the Apocrypha. Although the Council of Trent in the 16th century officially received these 14 books [with the Old Testament]* in addition to the 39 that were recognized in Christ's day, many people today refuse to accept them, being convinced that they are on a much lower level morally, spiritually, ethically, and historically than the Old Testament." (*The Book You Can Trust* by Richard W. De Haan)

"The Apocryphal books were evidently written during the period between the Old and New Testaments. Only one is dated. Two books Judith and Tobit, tell of the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions. Two more, First and Second Maccabees, record the Jewish War of Independence at about 165 B.C. Two more are books of wisdom, Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom of Solomon. One is an addendum to Jeremiah. There are also short additions to Esther and Daniel.

Several other books written during this period are not accepted by either Romanists or Protestants. These give the history and thought of the inter-testamental period. They are such books as *Enoch*, *Jubilees*, and *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Fragments of these, found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, were not received nor quoted as Scripture. They are of some value, but have never been in the canon.

The New Testament quotes from almost all 39 canonical books, but not once from the Apocrypha. Jesus referred to the Old Testament once as 'the Law of Moses,' 'the Prophets,' and the 'the Psalms' (Luke 24:44) The New Testament often cites the Old Testament in two divisions, the Law and the Prophets or Moses and all the Prophets (Matthew 5:17; Luke 16:29; 24:27). It never cites the Apocrypha.

The Dead Sea Scrolls supply further confirmation. They indicate the Scriptures are the word of Moses and the Prophets. They quote many Old Testament books as Scripture but none of the Apocrypha.

The situation is a closed case except for one problem. Present-day copies of the Septuagint [Greek translation of the Old Testament, it is often referred to as the LXX because it was thought to have been done by 70 Jewish scholars in Alexandria. The best estimate of its date seems to be around 200 B.C.] contain the Apocrypha. Since the New Testament frequently quotes from the Septuagint Old Testament, many scholars argue that the New Testament sanctions the Apocrypha. It is important, however, to know that our Septuagint copies come from a late time—about A.D. 325. There is no evidence that the early Septuagint contained the Apocrypha. Indeed there is evidence against it." (*You & Your Bible*, Evangelical Training Association)

"Moreover, the Jews themselves never listed them among their sacred books, and not one of them is quoted in the New Testament. Nor were they recognized as part of the Scriptures by early Jewish historians or philosophers. Some centuries later, Jerome, the man who gave us the Latin Vulgate, classified the Apocryphal books as valuable but not inspired. For these reasons the Apocrypha has not been accepted as part of the Old Testament." (*The Book You Can Trust* by Richard W. De Haan)

Original Manuscripts

Let's talk more about the original manuscripts as they were written down. "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of 'Scripture' is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:19-21) "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 Bible in its entirety is God's written Word to man, free of error in its original autographs, wholly reliable in history and doctrine. Its divine inspiration has rendered the Book 'infallible' (incapable of teaching deception) and 'inerrant' (not liable to prove false or mistaken). Its inspiration is 'plenary' (extending to all parts alike), 'verbal' (including the actual language form), and 'confluent' (product of two free agents, human and divine). *Inspiration* involves *infallibility* as an essential property, and infallibility in turn implies *inerrancy*. This threefold designation of Scripture is implicit in the basic thesis of Biblical authority." (*A Defense of Biblical Infallibility* by Clark H. Pinnock)

God did not dictate most of His Word to man as some mistakenly think, but the Holy Spirit used men's personalities, in a perfect way, so that everything that they wrote was exactly what God wanted to be written down. ".holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit." This applies only to when they were prophesying Scripture.

There were those who wrote down what the prophets said and no mistakes were in what they wrote when they were writing down prophesy of Scripture; this in itself is a miracle, but for God nothing is too hard, we need to believe this and trust God's Word. The Ten Commandments and the Law, on the other hand, are exceptions to this rule of God not dictating His Word. God wrote the Ten Commandments Himself, and angels dictated the Law to man.

So the Ten Commandments were written down by the finger of God, and the Law was given by angels. "And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God." (Exodus 31:18) You will remember that Moses broke the first ones when he came down from the mountain and saw the people into immorality. So God had to make another set for the Ark of the Covenant. "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on these tablets which you broke.'" (Exodus 34:1)

The rest of the Law was written down by Moses, but was dictated by angels. "What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator (Moses)." (Galatians 3:19)

"For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (Hebrews 2:2-4) "who have received the law by the direction of angels." (Acts 7:53a)

So let me repeat again, God's Word the Bible, is true and without error, this is called 'inerrancy' by Bible scholars. It has to do with the accuracy of the original manuscripts. To put it another way they are incapable of mistake and wholly true: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." (John 17:17)

Secondly, the Bible, as we have it today, has been protected by God, so that it is essentially the same as the perfect "blue print" given us by God in the original documents. You say how can you be so sure of that? The reason I am sure of it is because of the verse we read earlier from 2 Peter, if you read it carefully it is pointing out that God will continue to protect His word down to us today. ".which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."

This means that the Bible is being protected by God so we can heed or follow its message until we get to heaven. If it were not being protected by God how would we know what was true, so we could follow it, and what was added or taken away by mistake? Many people today consider the Bible to be out dated, full of errors and politically incorrect, but Jesus said of it:

"For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled." (Matthew 5:18) In other words, Jesus is saying that not even the dotting of an 'i' or the crossing of a 't' from the words of the Bible will pass away until heaven and earth pass away, and that there are no mistakes in the Bible!

Some Christians are concerned that maybe even though God had men write His Word perfectly in the original documents; maybe errors have crept into the Bible through the years. Let me put it this way, if God went to all the trouble to have Jesus die on the cross for our sins, to show us He loves us, do you think He would not preserve the copies of His Word also? Do we have enough faith to believe God can raise Jesus from the dead, but not enough faith to believe that God can protect His Word down to us today?

Let's look at evidence of how God has protected the Old Testament through hundreds of years of copying. "The long time span between the originals and the earliest existing Hebrew documents is not a serious problem. Scholars have always been quite sure that the Hebrew text they possessed was accurate, for they knew that the Jewish scribes were very meticulous about copying the Scriptures.

These transcribers were so exacting that before beginning to copy a portion of the Scriptures, they first counted every word and then every letter in the book. After the transcribing was completed, the words and letters were again numbered, and if the totals did not exactly correspond, the entire manuscript was destroyed and the whole process repeated. A special ink was used, and each word was pronounced aloud by the scribe as he wrote it. Therefore, Old Testament scholars were never greatly disturbed by the fact that their oldest copies came into existence about 1400 years after the originals.

Solid evidence justifying this confidence in the careful work of the scribes became available in 1947 and the years immediately following. The well-known Dead Sea Scrolls were then discovered, including excellent Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament dating back to about 125 B.C.

A careful comparison of these documents with the Massoretic Text [Hebrew Old Testament from about A.D. 900] reveals that not one single passage was changed in any essential detail. As scholars studied these manuscripts, which were transcribed more than 1000 years before the Massoretic Text, they found the documents to be essentially the same.

The Bible stands above all other books. It is fully authoritative, in other words it is without defect, it can be trusted, and will never change, nor can men destroy every copy. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." (Matthew 24:35) Through the centuries there have been men and countries that have tried to get rid of the Bible, but they have not succeeded!

We have talked some about the Old Testament and God's protection of it, but what about the history of the New Testament, didn't God promise to protect it too?

"When we consider the evidence for the authenticity of the New Testament, we must begin by acknowledging that the actual manuscripts on which Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, and the other New Testament writers inscribed their words are not available to us. This is not at all surprising, for they wrote on papyrus, a material which wears out rapidly when it is rolled and unrolled for reading and copying.

The fact that we do not have these originals, however, need not cause us dismay. New Testament scholars have nearly 4500 Greek manuscripts at their disposal, many of them dated very early.

Three of them which contain almost the entire New Testament text come from A.D. 200-250. Then, too, the John Rylands Library located in Manchester, England, contains a papyrus fragment of John's gospel which is dated at A.D. 125. This gives us evidence that a copy of the gospel of John was in circulation within 35 to 40 years of the time it came from the beloved apostle's hand.

The New Testament is unique both in the abundance of the manuscript copies available and in the brief period of time that separated them from the originals. F. F. Bruce, whose book *Are the New Testament Documents Reliable?* Has been widely quoted, points out that Caesar's Gallic

War exists today in only nine or ten manuscripts, the oldest of which was written some 900 years after Caesar's death.

He also refers to the works of the famous Greek historian Thucydides, and reminds us that the earliest existing manuscripts of his work come from about A.D. 900, 1300 years removed from the original. Strangely enough, historians and students of the classics do not question the authenticity of these copies, but will deny the reliability of the New Testament manuscripts.

This refusal to acknowledge the trustworthiness of the New Testament is all the more difficult to understand when we remember that it exists in many early translations from the Greek language. The Old Syriac and Old Latin versions were translated about A.D. 150, and the earliest rendition into the Egyptian language was made about A.D. 200. Then, too, parts of the New Testament can be found in quotations made by the early church fathers.

When we consider the 4000 Greek manuscripts, the thousands in other languages, and add to this the quotations of the New Testament in the writings of early church fathers, we marvel at the abundance of material God has made available to us." (*The Book You Can Trust*, by Richard W. De Haan)

Here is a Scripture that will help us learn some important things about the Bible. "What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. (Gr. LOGION, a diminutive of *logos*, a word, narrative, statement, denotes a Divine response or utterance. Vine's) For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: 'That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged.'" (Romans 3:1-4)

We learn some important principles from this passage of Scripture, first, that the Bible came through the Jews, and second, that there are no mistakes in the Bible! Man may lie, but God doesn't! This is such a basic concept, but so misunderstood today. I believe the reason for this is because so many have accepted the lie of evolution, that they no longer trust the Word of God.

They think or say, if God cannot be trusted when He tells us how everything in this world came about, "How can He be trusted as telling the truth in the other parts of the Bible?" That would be true if evolution (evil-o-lution, British pronunciation) were true, but it is not true. We did not evolve, but were created by God! You could go to our articles on this subject to learn more. ([Christian Worldview Part Two](#), [Evolution or Creation](#), etc.)

"We believe Satan is still using the same tactics he used in the Garden of Eden. He asked Eve, 'Did God *really* say that?'" (Genesis 3:1). He knew that if he could get her to question the authority of God's Word, sin would follow.

Today, he's doing exactly the same thing. For 200 years, he's been convincing many in the church to reject the Bible's clear teaching about the *history* in Genesis. Consequently this generation no longer listens to the Bible's message about morality because it is based in that history.

To restore morality, we need to restore the foundation that the Bible's history, beginning in Genesis, is true. All Christian morality and all Christian doctrine are, ultimately, based in that history. Once people know they can believe the history in the Bible, they will be more willing to listen to the message of the gospel and adhere to Christian morality." ([Answers in Genesis](#) by Ken Ham)

"I have carefully examined the evidences of the Christian religion, and if I were sitting as a juror upon its authenticity, I would unhesitatingly give my verdict in its favor." (Alexander Hamilton)

(1) Why do we believe that the 39 books of the Old Testament were inspired by God?

(A) Christ believed it: We believe the Old Testament is inspired, because Christ believed and taught this, listen to just one example of many: "Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:25-27) Beginning at Moses, would be beginning in Genesis, and the first five books of the Bible (Together these books are called the Pentateuch.), and the Prophets would mean the rest of the books of the Old Testament.

(B) The Apostles believed it: The writer of the book of Hebrews says of the Old Testament, "God who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets." (Hebrews 1:1) Also Paul told Timothy, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. (2 Timothy 3:16a)

(C) Fulfilled Prophecy confirms it: "The hundreds of fulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament confirm that the Old Testament is inspired of God. The argument from prophecy is equally striking. Bible prophecy includes definite, positive, often long-range predictions that no observer could expect, no matter how wise. Of course, shrewd observers can predict certain things. The weatherman attempts a limited forecast. Political 'pollsters' attempt to predict election results weeks in advance. But true predictive prophecy is supernatural."

How do skeptics treat these prophecies? Very cleverly. When a chapter in Isaiah predicts Cyrus' reign, they say, 'That chapter was written after Cyrus came to the throne.' If the books of Kings predicts Josiah by name, they erroneously teach that 'Josiah's name was slipped into the verse by a later copyist after Josiah arose.' If Daniel predicts the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, that is held to be positive proof that Daniel was written after 165 B.C. The liberal scholars' attitude toward predictive prophecy is the reason they insist that the Old Testament was written at a later date and by authors other than the books allege.

What is the answer to such objectionable criticism? First, the bias against supernaturalism must be pointed out. Next, it can be shown that both internal and external evidence favor the earlier dating. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls are copies of Daniel made about 110 B.C. that prove that Daniel could not have been written by a false Daniel in a hoax about 165 B.C. It could hardly have been copied and recopied widely and its false origin kept hidden and its canonical authority

recognized all I the space of 55 years. The Dead Sea material strongly supports the earlier date for Daniel. And that makes Daniel predictive prophecy.

Second, many Bible prophecies refer to the first coming of Christ or to events during this age, long after any possible date for this utterance. Many instances could be cited. The prophecy of the 'virgin' birth of Christ is a case in point (Isaiah 7:14). Critics say that the word means 'young woman,' and referred to Isaiah's son soon to be born or to an expected child of Ahaz. In the context this child, Immanuel, is also called 'Wonderful,' and is promised to be of David's line (Isaiah 9:6, 7).

Isaiah already had a son, Shearjashub, so the passage could not refer to him. Nor could it apply to Ahaz's son. By this time, Hezekiah, his son, was over nine years old. He was 25 when he succeeded Ahaz and Ahaz had reigned for 16 years. As further proof, the word 'virgin,' used six other times in the Old Testament, is never applied to a married woman. At least three times it clearly means a 'virgin.' Further, the Septuagint translation uses a word specifically meaning 'virgin.' Long before Christ's birth, the Jews accepted this clear prophecy of a virgin birth. Only critical bias prevents the acceptance of this great prediction." (*You & Your Bible*, Evangelical Training Association)

(2) Why do we accept the 27 New Testament Books as inspired by God?

(A) "The New Testament authors themselves were aware that God had given certain writings a special authority. In his second letter to the Thessalonian Christians, Paul demanded that 'if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him. (2 Thessalonians 3:14).

Paul would not have dared make such a strong assertion if this were just an ordinary letter. On at least three different occasions the New Testament writers made reference to or quoted from other New Testament books in a manner that made it clear they recognized them as having special authority. Listen to the words of Peter:

'And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother, Paul, also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.' (2 Peter 3:15, 16).

Here Peter includes all of Paul's epistles in the same term he and others had used when speaking of the Old Testament. He spoke of Paul's 'epistles' and made reference to 'the other scriptures,' indicating that they had the same authority.

After the apostles died, their works were circulated throughout the churches. The literature of the first-century church revealed that these early believers know which books were truly inspired, for they read the very ones that later found their way into the New Testament in their worship services, and quoted them as authoritative.

Through-out the following years, many books appeared claiming apostolic authorship. They were not universally accepted, but did cause some confusion. For that reason an early church council laid down a number of rules by which every sacred writing could be evaluated. To be received as Scripture, the book had to meet the following requirements:

(B) (1) that an apostle had either written it or confirmed it; (2) that it had enjoyed universal acceptance from apostolic days; (3) that it had been read in all the churches; and (4) that it had been recognized by the church fathers as inspired. After careful examination it was decided that only 27 books possessed the marks of inspiration and divine authority, and they were precisely the 27 we have today." (*The Book You Can Trust*, Richard W. De Haan)

There are several authors that were not of the twelve Apostles that were authorized to write Scripture. Not all of the twelve Apostles even wrote Scripture. St. Paul wrote fourteen books of the New Testament. This includes the book of Hebrews whose authors name is not on it, but Paul's style and closing is. The reason Paul could do this was because He was authorized first and foremost by the Lord Jesus Christ to write Scripture. Speaking of Jesus appearing to him he said, "After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time." (1 Corinthians 15:7-8)

Paul not only saw Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, but he also saw him several other times as recorded in Acts. So he was authorized to be an Apostle and write Scripture, even though he was not one of the original twelve. "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?" (1 Corinthians 9:1)

Paul was recognized by the other apostles as being authorized to write Scripture. Saint Peter says of his writings, "-as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures." (2 Peter 3:15b-16)

St. James was also authorized to write Scripture because he was a half brother of Jesus (some would claim that he was a step brother only, but I see no evidence for this), and he was acknowledged by the other apostles as an elder in the church of Jerusalem. By the way he was not born again until Christ rose from the dead. "Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, 'Men and brethren, listen to me. Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church.'" (Acts 15:6, 13, 22) In the book after his own name he says of himself, "James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. (James 1:1)."

Then you have St. Jude who was also a half brother of Jesus, and was not born again until Christ rose from the dead. Jude is called Judas sometimes and is mentioned as a brother of Jesus in the book of Mark. "Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us? And they were offended at Him." (Mark 6:3) He identifies himself as Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James. The James that he is speaking of is the brother of our Lord. Jude was as a leader or elder in the church. You can look at the references in Acts 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:12)

St. Mark was another person who was not one of the twelve, but was authorized to write Scripture, and that is because: "Even though the Gospel of Mark is anonymous, early tradition is unanimous that the author of this Gospel was John Mark, a close associate of Peter (see 1 Peter 5:13) and a companion of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. The earliest witness to Marcan authorship stems from Papias, bishop of the church at Hierapolis (about A.D. 135-140), a witness that is preserved in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*. Papias describes Mark as "the interpreter of Peter." Although the early church was careful to maintain direct apostolic authorship for the Gospels, the church fathers consistently attributed this Gospel to Mark, who was not an apostle. This fact furnishes indirect confirmation of Mark's authorship." (*New Spirit Filled Life Bible*)

Then you have St. Luke who was authorized to write Scripture although he was a Gentile and not an Apostle. He is the only Gentile who wrote New Testament Scripture. He was given authority to write by the fact that he was a close associate of Paul (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24; 2 Timothy 4:11)

St. Luke had interviewed many firsthand witnesses of Christ's ministry including, we are quite certain, Jesus' mother. "Luke was with Paul on some of his missionary journeys, as indicated by the various 'we' passages in the book of Acts (Acts 16:10; 20: 5, 6; etc.). He seems to have been with Paul continually on his third missionary journey, except for the two years of his imprisonment at Caesarea. It may have been during those two years, while Luke was in Palestine, yet separated from Paul, that he was able to do the research and writing for his Gospel." (*The Defender's Study Bible*)

This concludes this section on who was authorized to write New Testament Scripture and why. Again any individual who would write Scripture had to be authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ or his Twelve Apostles. In order to be an Apostle, one of the twelve, you had to be with Jesus throughout his earthly ministry, or in the case of Paul, have seen the Lord. "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 'beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection. And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles." (Acts 1:21-26) So this means that no one after this time could write Scripture, not Joseph Smith, not Mohammed, not anyone!!!

You might ask: "Why didn't God preserve the original writings of the Bible?"

This is a good question, but I believe there is also a good answer for it. There is history in the Bible that will help us answer this question. You may remember that when the children of Israel sinned in the desert, God sent snakes to punish them, but if they would look at a pole that Moses put up, that had a serpent on it, they would be healed.

This pole with the serpent on it served its purpose and was good at the time, but then later the people started to worship the pole with the snake that Moses had made. So King Hezekiah had to destroy this pole that the people were worshipping. "He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had

made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehustan (Bronze Thing, serpent) (2 Kings 18:4)

I believe that people would do this same thing to the original autographs of the Bible if God had allowed them to be preserved. People would worship the writings, we are not to worship the Bible, but we are to worship the God of the Bible. As much as we love the Word of God and reverence it, we need to understand that the Bible points us to God, and we worship Him, and only Him!

For another example, people have claimed to have pieces of the cross of Christ or the nails from the cross. Some people even bow down to these and in effect worship the cross. As much as we love what Christ did for us on the cross, we do not worship the cross, but the One who died on the cross for our sins. So too, we do not worship the Bible, but the God of the Bible!

Some people are surprised and perplexed because there are difficulties in the Bible.

I mean by this, things that they do not understand and things they do not have an answer for. For example someone might ask, "How can Jesus be God and man at the same time?" Or they ask, "How can there be three persons in one God, such as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? First, we need to understand that a difficulty is not the same as a mistake, there are no mistakes in the Bible. These are matters of faith and not some sort of error in a fact of history or geography and so on.

God is 'infinite' (having no boundaries or limits, immeasurably great) where as we are 'finite' (having bounds, limited). So we should not be discouraged when we do not understand everything in or about the Bible. Think of it like an ant looking up at a sky scraper, there is no way to explain to an ant how that sky scraper was made. So it is with us, there will be things in the Bible that we will not understand until we get to heaven, if even then, but in the mean time we need to trust God and believe what He says.

To give another example of difficulties in the Bible one might ask, "Where did Cain get his wife?" They do not understand that, to begin with, people married their relatives until there were more people in the world, and until the Law was given through Moses. Genesis 5: 4 says, "After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. So we know that Cain married one of his many sisters." (We have a study on this called [Where did Cain get his wife?](#))

However, most of the Bible, probably ninety-percent of it is easy to understand like: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Do you see any hard words or hard concepts to understand in this verse? No, of course not, most of the Bible is like that, and even a child can understand it. However, about ten-percent of it is hard to understand and takes study. It was Mark Twain, though, that said (I'll paraphrase), "The things in the Bible I don't understand are not what bother me, but it's the things I do understand in the Bible that bother me." (Samuel Clemmens)

A difficulty in the Bible or an objection that someone has to the Bible does not in any way prove that the Bible is untrue.

People in general for many years thought that the world was flat, but this did not change the fact that it is a sphere. So too, people may believe the Bible is full of errors, but this does not change the fact that it is perfect. By the way if people had studied and believed the Bible, like Christopher Columbus did, they would have found that the Bible taught all along that the world was round, "It is He who sits above the circle of the earth." (Isaiah 40:22a)

1. Just because someone says that the Bible has errors in it does not make it true. Someone, years ago before we had gone into outer space, may have argued, "Well the world looks flat." That may have seemed like a good argument at the time, but later this argument would be proved wrong. So too, people may have their arguments why they think the Bible is wrong on any given subject, but they too will be proved wrong in the end, and the Bible justified as correct. If we have difficulties with the Bible it still does not mean that there is something wrong with it. The problem is with us and our 'finite' minds, there is nothing wrong with God's Word! Also there are those who do not want to believe in the supernatural that the Bible talks about, they believe everything can be explained by science and the laws of nature only.

2. Higher Criticism and the Bible: "All Bible students should learn something about the attacks that have been leveled against the Bible. By so doing, they will be prepared to try the spirits and be able to resist being led away by those who are unstable and distort the Scripture to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). Similarly, a medical student studies diseases in order to learn how to keep people healthy.

There have always been people who disbelieve the Bible. In our day there is a particular type of unbelief expressed in *higher criticism*. We need not study all the details of this viewpoint, but it is wise to know that such criticism actually exists.

Higher criticism includes the study of the date and authorship of Bible books. Many higher critics hold that some or all of the books of the Bible were not written by the men that the books claim as authors; that the books were not written when they claim to be written; and that they were often not unified books anyhow, but composed of several document pieced together.

The phrase higher criticism usually refers to the unbelieving type outlined above. It has been and is destructive of faith and fatal to Christian endeavor. If the Bible is a mass of falsehood as the liberal critics teach), why read it at home or preach it abroad? Why teach our children to keep the Ten Commandments, if the Commandments themselves bear false witness to Moses' experience with God on Sinai?

In order to understand this erroneous theory, it is necessary to review certain historical backgrounds. In 1753 a French physician, Jean Astruc, noticed that the name for the deity in the book of Genesis is sometimes "God" (Hebrew, *Elohim*) and sometimes "Jehovah" or *YHWH* (called LORD in the King James Version). Astruc suggested that the variation was the result of Moses' having used two different sources when he composed Genesis, one called an "E source"

and the other a "J source." Astruc did not deny that Moses was the author, but he concluded that these two sources woven together make up our Genesis.

Later writers in the rationalistic era of French and German though extended Astruc's theory and said that the Pentateuch was actually the work of someone much later than Moses. "E" was said to be the early document and "J" the later.

In 1853 Hupfeld of Germany turned things around. He declared that the "E" document was itself made up of two parts, one of which was very late. Later German critics, especially Wellhausen (1878), went further and claimed that they could find four documents in the Pentateuch. Their names "J" "E" "D" "P". He held that none of the Pentateuch was written by Moses and that the whole record of the priestly or sacrificial system was presumed to have been compiled by men living 1,000 years after Moses.

[On and on this goes denying one thing after another of the Precious Word of God, "having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!" (2 Timothy 3:5a)]*
Gary T. Panell

This diabolical reconstruction of Israel's early religion and history was the 'fully assured result' of German rationalistic criticism at the turn of the twentieth century. To deny it was to be labeled as backward and ignorant of the facts. Thank God, many thousands of Bible-believing Christians never surrendered to the subtle attacks of the liberal higher critics.

Higher criticism affects our view of both the Old Testament and the New. It is quite clear, as studied ., that Christ and the apostles fully believed the Old Testament, Jesus taught that 'it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail' (Luke 16:17). He declared that the Old Testament was more convincing than if one should rise from the dead (Luke 16:29-31). He believed the historical reality of Adam and Eve, Jonah and the huge fish, the manna from heaven, and all the other Old Testament events.

Christ was not a higher critic. Modern criticism, therefore, pictures Christ as a child of His time, subject to the simple, non-critical, erroneous teaching of His day. Liberal critics teach that He gradually became aware of His Messiahship, was mistaken about His second coming, and died not as the divine substitute (1 Peter 2:24, 25), but as a human martyr. Higher criticism strips the Old Testament of its value and robs the New Testament of its Lord.

And, sad to say, it has become widespread and deeply entrenched. It is the very basis of what is often called modernism. In the early days of the twentieth century, promising young theologians went to Europe to take advanced training and often came back infected with the modernistic teachings of the German learning. Most of the older, larger theological schools accepted this liberalism as the basis of their theological teaching and their graduates for years preached these idea.

Most local Christian workers and leaders can hardly realize the extent of this influence. It has been resisted by the Bible institutes and Bible colleges and by a goodly number of orthodox evangelical colleges and seminaries, especially those seminaries founded after 1920. But it has

affected a large percentage of the Protestant preachers of our generation. It should be thoroughly understood by every Christian worker and Sunday school teacher." (*You & Your Bible*, Evangelical Training Association)

Dr. Pinnock has seen all this and unhesitatingly affirms that modern theology, in its denial of an infallible Bible, has cast itself upon a subjective sea of conjecture with no guiding light." (*A Defense of Biblical Infallibility*, by Clark H. Pinnock)

"A knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible." William Lyon Phelps

3. Often people think that they have found an error in the Bible and they proclaim loudly that the Bible is wrong.

Then some time later they are proven wrong and the Bible is proven to be correct all the time. For example: "Luke, who records more history than any other New Testament writer, was meticulous in the care he used to give specific names and offices when he wished to establish the exact date of an event.

For a time, some scholars claimed that Luke was not completely accurate, and they set forth examples to establish their argument. But once again the critics were proven wrong. From sources outside the Scriptures, evidence has been gathered which shows that Luke was accurate to the smallest detail.

In fact, when Sir William Ramsey, an authority on the geography and history of Asia Minor, began his study of the book of Acts, he first declared that it was an 'a highly imaginative and carefully colored account of primitive Christianity,' But as the remarkable accuracy of this book came to light, the great scholar changed his mind. He later declared that Luke must be considered one of the greatest of the Greek historians. (*The Book You Can Trust*, by Richard W. Dehaan)

There are many more, and much greater difficulties in the way of the teaching that holds to the Bible being of human origin, and defective, than there are in the way of the teaching that the Bible is of divine origin, and is perfect.

"The internal and historical characteristics of the Bible are unique in its unity and internal consistency despite production over a 1500-year period by 40-plus authors writing in several nations, discussing scores of controversial subjects yet having agreement on all issues." (*The Facts On Why You Can Believe The Bible*, Ankerberg)

"When we bear in mind the fact that the Bible has been the special object of never ending persecution the *wonder* of the Bible's survival is changed into a *miracle*. For two thousand years man's hatred of the Bible has been persistent, determined, relentless, and murderous. Every possible effort has been made to undermine faith in the inspiration and authority of the Bible and innumerable enterprises have been undertaken to consign it to oblivion. Imperial edicts have been issued to the effect that every known copy of the Bible should be destroyed, and when this measure failed to exterminate and annihilate God's Word then commands were given that every

person found with a copy of the Scriptures in his possession should be put to death. The very fact that the Bible has been so singled out for such relentless persecution causes us to wonder at such a unique phenomenon." (*The Divine Inspiration of the Bible* by W. Pink)

Someone who believes the Bible is of human origin would need to explain away fulfilled prophecies of the Bible, and changed lives. There are hundreds of fulfilled prophecies, but just to give two examples: In Psalm 22:16 It says, ".They pierced My hands and My feet" This was written over a 1000 years before Jesus died on the cross, where they pierced His hands and His feet with nails. This was written even before the form of death called crucifixion was even invented.

Then there are two prophecies of a world leader king, where his name was given before he was even born. Cyrus was the founder of the Persian Empire, who conquered Babylon, and assisted the Jews in B.C. 536. "Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, and he shall perform all My pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, 'You shall be built,' and to the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'" (Isaiah 44:28) "Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held-to subdue nations before him." (Isaiah 45:1) This was written down 100 years before his time.

Billions of lives have been transformed by the living Word of God. Since I have been a Christian, for about 50 years at this writing, I have heard thousands of testimonies of the life transforming power of the Lord Jesus Christ as He penetrates hearts and lives. "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12) (One example, is my Dad's testimony, you can read it on our web site it is called [What Happened to Shorty?](#))

One example of how the Bible can change lives is seen in the true story of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. This event is an amazing testimonial to what the Bible can do. In 1788, a group of English sailors who had spent six months on a South Sea island decided to remain. They mutinied against their captain and set him adrift in an open boat. A punitive expedition from England captured 14 of the mutineers and transferred nine of them to another island, where they formed a new colony.

The Encyclopedia Britannica tells us that these people degenerated so rapidly and became so fierce that life there turned into a hell on earth. Having learned to distill whiskey from a native plant, they soon were involved in quarrels, drunken orgies, and violence. Finally all the men except Alexander Smith were dead, and he was left alone with a group of native women and half breed children. Then a wonderful thing happened. Finding a Bible in an old sea chest, Smith read it and believed it. He gathered the women and children around him and taught them the Word of God.

Twenty years later, an American ship visited the island and found a Christian community. There was no disease, no crime, no insanity, no illiteracy, and no strong drink. The moral standards of the people were so high that no law enforcement agency was necessary. The island seemed to be a small paradise. What had brought about this astounding transformation? Just reading the Bible, believing it, and putting it into practice!!!

People who do not believe that the Bible is supernatural need to try and explain away hundreds of fulfilled prophecies, and the billions of lives that have been changed since the beginning of the Bible. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17)

"Western civilization is founded upon the Bible; all our ideas, our wisdom, our philosophy, our literature, our art, our ideals come more from the Bible than all other books put together."
William Lyon Phelps

The fact that you cannot solve a difficulty does not prove it cannot be solved, and the fact that I cannot answer an objection is not proof that someone else can't.

Often after the passage of time and study the difficulty can be resolved. "Some years ago it was considered a mark of ignorance to believe a man named Abraham could have lived in the kind of world pictured in the book of Genesis. Many scholars insisted a highly developed civilization did not exist in Ur of the Chaldeans at this time. These critics confidently declared that Abraham was only a mythical character.

Today, however, they must admit that they were wrong and the book of Genesis is right. The latest archeological evidence shows that the city of Ur was characterized by great buildings, artistic sculpture, and active industries during the 21st and 20th centuries before Christ. Mathematics, law, and government were carefully studied and even reduced to systems. Weaving, metal working, and gem engraving were practiced with great skill. Writing was well known, for clay tablets were impressed with letters and collected into libraries. There, the Biblical picture of Abraham as a wealthy and educated chieftain who was respected, honored, and recognized by kings is confirmed as being authentic by these discoveries." (*The Book You Can Trust*, by Richard W. De Haan)

A difficulty is far more troubling for superficial readers than for avid students of the Bible.

A person who is reading the Bible for the first time will have more difficulties than a person who has read the Bible through several times. Keep reading! For example some people believe that there are contradictions between the four Gospels. Let me assure you that there are no contradictions.

The four Gospels are four different witnesses with four different themes. One is Matthew who emphasis Jesus Kingship. Mark's theme is Jesus as servant. Luke, talks about Jesus as a divine man. John speaks of Jesus as God. We have what are called the [Four in One Gospel](#) series that you might to look at, where the Gospels are show as fitting together perfectly without any errors. Someone has said, "The closer you look at man work the more mistakes you see in it, but the closer you inspect God's work and Word the more perfect it looks!

The difficulties sometimes rapidly disappear upon careful and prayerful study of the Word of God.

If a person is not born again ([we have an article on this](#)) this person will not understand many things in the Bible. The reason for this is because some of the Word of God is understood only

when you are saved. "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Jesus showed in His teaching that if a person were not a believer He could say things that would cause them to be offended by what He said. Only those who are truly saved know what He means when He says things like, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world. Then Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, 'How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?'

Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can understand it?'" (John 6:51-60)

The text from which our Bible was translated can cause some people difficulties.

1. **Is it possible for someone to make a mistake copying the Bible?** Yes, in fact, there is one Bible that was copied that I heard about that had accidentally said, "Thou shalt commit adultery" instead of "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Only one word was left out by mistake, but as a result that Bible could not be sold at the time. Of course, as a collector's item today it is worth millions of dollars, because as I remember it, it was one of the first Bibles printed.

So, yes, people can make errors in copying the text and this has happened often in individual copies. Remember inerrancy only applies to the originals. However, does that mean that God has not protected His Word, of course not, we can become careless with it and make incorrect copies or we may even lose it for a time, but God's Word will still exist and come to light again. There is an example in Scripture where God's Law was lost for a time in Israel because of carelessness and indifference.

"Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, 'I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.' And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, 'Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the LORD.' The Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, 'Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.' And Shaphan read it before the king. (2 Kings 22:9-13)

Let me tell you the rest of the story, evidently Israel had gotten so far away from the Lord that they had carelessly lost every copy of the Law (the first five books of the Bible). Fortunately years ago someone had put a copy in the foundation of the Temple, so when the Temple was being repaired by Josiah it was discovered. This tells me God holds us accountable for the careful keeping of His Word. Oh, yes He is overseeing it to make sure it is not lost completely or totally destroyed, but we have a responsibility in keeping it as well.

2. People can deliberately change their copy if they want to; one example of this is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures. It is printed by the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society of Pennsylvania, and is the work of the Jehovah's Witnesses. To show you how they have changed it here is just one of many alterations in there 'translation.' For example in John 1:1 and I quote: "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." Obviously they don't believe that Jesus is God, because all the rest of the versions of the Bible translate it correctly as being not 'a god,' but as 'God' speaking of Jesus.

So is it possible to deliberately change God's Word? Yes, it is, but the people who do this will incur God's wrath for the last few verses of the Bible make this perfectly clear. "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18-19)

Some people say that this is only speaking of the prophecy of the book of Revelation, but my question to that person is "**Are you willing to take that chance?**" We believe that Revelation was the last book to be written, and therefore it belongs at the end of the Bible like it has been placed, and that this warning is not just for adding to the book of Revelation, but is a warning to anyone who would try to add other words to the Bible and say that they are Scripture.

Now with that being said, "Is it possible to make accidental mistakes while coping?" That is why we need to be careful with the text, but it will happen by accident at times. "From time to time you will read reports in popular magazines that the real text of the New Testament cannot be determined because 180,000 variant readings occur in the manuscript copies. This means that existing know manuscripts differ from one another in about 180,000 places.

This may seem to be a serious problem, but is actually not the case. All except about 400 of these variations are of such a nature that the meaning of a passage is not changed one iota. Most of the differences are minor variations in spelling, like the English 'honour,' compared with our American 'honor.' Of the 400 differences where the sense of the passage is involved, not one is of such a nature that a single basic doctrine of the Christian faith is at issue. You could accept any one of the variants you choose without denying one foundational Christian truth.

Therefore, all this talk about variant readings is a smokescreen cleverly designed to obscure the unique nature of the Bible as compared with all other literature of antiquity. The striking agreement of these 'thousands of manuscripts is an eloquent testimonial to their accuracy and dependability.

The late Sir Frederick Kenyon, who is universally acknowledged as an authority on ancient manuscripts second to none, declared: "The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established." (*The Bible and Archeology*, p.288).

Sometimes there are difficulties translating from one language to another or knowing which the best translation is.

As you may know the Bible was translated from Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic into Latin, German, English and many other languages of the world. In fact, missions like Wycliffe Bible Translators and New Tribes Mission and others are still translating the Bible into all the languages of the world. This is not an easy task and we need to pray for and support these groups. Remember, though, that inerrancy deals with the original languages and not the translations. However, I do believe God is protecting even these translations as the Bible goes into the different languages of the world.

Many of us have enjoyed reading several of the modern English versions of the Bible. As you read, though, sometimes you notice in the margins such comments as "some of the oldest manuscripts omit from verse 9 through 20". This is the very comment at the end of Mark 16 in the New American Standard Bible, and many other versions.

These comments do not set well with me because they leave some doubt in the reader's mind without backing up their claim with proof, nor are there arguments given on the other side showing why the men responsible for the King James Version (KJV), included these verses.

The (KJV) was so named because of the part King James of England played in the Bible's production into English. It was brought about in 1611 by six panels of translators (47 men in all). Most of these men were leading Biblical scholars in England. (*The English Bible* F. F. Bruce)

These men used as their basis what is called the Byzantine text (or Syrian text), which dates back to A.D. 347-407. This Byzantine text, from which we get our (KJV), does have Mark 16:9-20, but the Alexandrian text from which the Revised Standard, New American Standard, and New International Version relied heavily upon, does not have these verses, unless they are put in the margin, or a note placed there that says something like [The two most reliable early manuscripts do not have Mark 16:9-20], etc. Since the Alexandrian text is considered by "some Bible scholars" to be more reliable than the Byzantine text, and since the Mark passage is not included in the Alexandrian text, it is assumed by "some Christians" that this passage is not Scripture. (*The Books and the Parchments*, F. F. Bruce)

The Codex Sinaiticus (A.D. 350) and the Codex Vaticanus (A.D. 325-350) do not have Mark 16:9-20, nor do they have John 7:53-8:11. For these reasons, some are ready to omit these same passages today from Holy Scripture.

However, these same Bible scholars that want to omit the above verses from Scripture, do not go on to tell you what else they know about Mark 16:9-20. Dr. C. I. Scofield in the Scofield Bible does tell us, "The passage is quoted by Irenaeus and Hippolytus in the second or third century." Hippolytus in the years from 170-236 A.D. had these passages in his works. (3) Also Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons in 180 A.D., had these verses in his writings. He was a student of Polycarp (Bishop of Smyrna, Revelation 2). Polycarp was martyred in 156 A.D., he had been a Christian for 86 years, and was a disciple of John the Apostle.

Even though Irenaeus did not leave us a complete manuscript of the Bible, he does quote much of it in his own commentary, which does include the Mark 16: 9-20 passage. It would seem strange for him to quote this part along with other Scripture unless he knew it was truly part of Scripture. Also, being a disciple of John the Beloved, he must have known what was considered Scripture and what was not!

Think about some other arguments: Would God allow us to believe and teach this passage for at least 1900 years and then let us discover it is not Scripture? Then too, the book of Mark is not complete at verse 8. No doubt, as today, some people did not like these two passages, and so in their translations omitted them. Also everything that is mentioned in Mark 16: 9-20 agrees with the rest of Scripture.

Let's also talk about the John 7:53-8:11 passage, since it too has been left out of some manuscripts, or a note placed there like [The earliest and most reliable manuscripts do not have John 7:53-8:11] Let me quote Dr. H. A. Ironside, Litt. D. and his research here: "We should recognize at the very beginning that in the minds of many people, many Bible critics, many Christian scholars, this entire passage is considered questionable because in some of the older manuscripts you will not find these eleven verses. On the other hand, it is rather an interesting fact that in a number of very ancient manuscripts, while these verses are omitted, there is a blank space left on the page, showing evidently the scribe meant to indicate that in some other manuscripts that something came in between verse 52 of chapter seven and verse 12 of Chapter eight. In other manuscripts this section is omitted altogether. Others again give us the passage, but do not place it here. They put it at the end of John's Gospel as a kind of postscript.

"On the other hand, we have very good authority for regarding it as genuine, for it is found in many old Greek manuscripts, and it seems very evident that it is part of this Gospel. The reason that it is omitted in many instances, I take it, is because some of the early Christians apparently felt that a story such as this, which seemed to suggest a lenient attitude toward immoral behavior, might be misunderstood, and particularly by a people just emerging from heathenism, with all its vile and impure practices, which were often connected even with the worship of their gods." (*Addresses on the Gospel of John*, H. A. Ironside)

"This striking narrative, from John 7:53-8:11, has been deleted from a few very ancient (but error-filled) Greek manuscripts. Accordingly, it has been deleted or relegated to a footnote or special section from most modern English translations. However, it is unreasonable to assume that someone would invent such a story and insert it in an accepted copy of John's gospel. Furthermore, these twelve verses do appear in the over-whelming majority of extant Greek texts. There is no good reason not to retain it as is." (*The Defender's Study Bible*, Dr. Henry M. Morris)

*Note to the reader, any time you have a question about a given Scripture that someone has placed a note on, as not found in the "best manuscripts," go to *The New Defender's Study Bible* by Dr. Henry M. Morris for information on that verse. He has done a tremendous job of defending Scripture! Now he is home with his Lord Jesus Christ enjoying heaven and all those who have gone on before, but he is missed here!

I do not believe, however, like so many Christians who say, "If the King James Bible was good enough for Paul it is good enough for me." This just shows their ignorance of the Bible itself, ignorance of its transmission throughout history, and ignorance of its translation into different languages like English. St. Paul spoke several languages, but English was not one of them! I believe I know what they mean when they say this, but it would make more sense if they said something like, "I believe the closest to the original documents of the Word of God is the King James or New King James Version."

Though we believe people can make mistakes as they copy Scripture, or even deliberately change it, still God has been behind the scenes protecting His Word and has brought it down to us as it was given. I personally believe that the best we have today is the King James Version (KJV), and the New King James Version (NKJV). The NKJV helps people because it is written in contemporary English without departing from the original text. Also, people who have memorized a lot of Scripture in the KJV will not find it hard to transition into more up to date English. Some Christians also think that the King James Version's English of the Bible has not changed since 1611, they are greatly mistaken. They would not even understand what was being said because of the spelling differences, and so on.

Here is an example of what our Lord's prayer looked like in English in 1534: "O oure father which arte in heven, hallowed be thy name. Let thy kyngdome come. Thy wyll be fulfilled, as well in erth, as it ys in heven. Geve vs thisdaye oure dayly breede. And forgeve vs oure treaspases, even as we forgeve oure trespassers. And leade vs not into temptacion: but delyver vs from evell. For thyne is the kyngedome and the power, and the glorye for ever. Amen." (*The English Bible* by F. F. Bruce) So we see it would not do to keep the English the same as it was in the first English bibles. Language is always changing so we need to keep up with it so the average person can understand the Bible. This does not mean that the text changes, we still have the same as it was given, but in words that we can understand.

The reason so many of the other translations have done so well is because they were written in the everyday language of the average person. Many of these translations were done before the King James Bible was revised into the up to date English as it is now in the New King James Version. I believe this version is growing in popularity, and will continue to grow in popularity **as long as other versions leave out part of the Holy Scriptures**. I know some Christians hold to the old King James Bible only. Some will not even consider reading the New King James Version, but in doing so they hinder many of the young readers from understanding the Bible, and defeat their purpose. **Language is always changing and so revisions have to be made, but God's Word remains!**

You say, "Why say anything then, if you believe God can still use versions that have omissions in them?" The reason it is still an issue is because both the Alexandrian text and the Byzantine text cannot both be correct when they have many differences. I have only shown the longer passages that have been left out by the Alexandrian text, but **there are also more than 200 other verses or parts of verses that have been left out**.

If you want the whole Bible, then you need to purchase the King James Version, or the New King James Version of the Bible! That being said, God does use modern English versions, but

people need to be taught that the verses and passages that were left out really do belong in the text. Here are examples of verses left out or changed in some English Versions: Matthew 1:25 (firstborn), 5:44 (bless them that curse you), 6:13 (kingdom, power, glory), 6:27 (stature), 6:33 (of God), 8:29 (Jesus), 9:13 (to repentance). This is just a few examples of omissions, there are over 200 of these in many of the versions that do not follow the Authorized Version, Textus Receptus or Received Text as it is variously called. You can find a full listing of these omissions on line, just look up King James Version of the Bible.

In the preface of the New King James Version it says of the **Old Testament**, "...For the New King James Version the text used was the 1967/1977 Stuttgart edition of the Biblia Hebraica, with frequent comparisons being made with the Bomberg edition of 1524-25. The Septuagint (Greek) Version of the Old Testament and the Latin Vulgate also were consulted.

In addition to referring to a variety of ancient versions of the Hebrew Scriptures, the **New King James Version** draws on the resources of relevant manuscripts from the Dead Sea caves. In the few places where the Hebrew was so obscure that the 1611 King James was compelled to follow one of the versions, but where information is now available to resolve the problems, the New King James Version follows the Hebrew text. Significant variations are recorded in the center reference column.

For the New Testament Text of the New King James Version: There is more manuscript support for the New Testament than for any other body of ancient literature. Over five thousand Greek, eight thousand Latin, and many more manuscripts in other languages attest the integrity of the New Testament. Minor variations in hand copying have appeared through the centuries, before mechanical printing began about A.D. 1450.

Some variations exist in the spelling of Greek words, in word order, and in similar details. These ordinarily do not show up in translation and do not affect the sense of the text in any way.

.Bible readers may be assured that the most important differences in English New Testaments of today are due, not to manuscript divergence, but to the way in which translators view the task of translation: How literally should the text be rendered? How does the translator view the matter of biblical inspiration? Does the translator adopt a paraphrase when a literal rendering would be quite clear and more to the point? The New King James Version follows the historic precedent of the Authorized Version in maintaining a literal approach to translation, except where the idiom of the original language cannot be translated directly into our tongue.

The King James New Testament was based on the traditional text of the Greek-speaking churches, first published in 1516, and later called the **Textus Receptus or Received Text**.

Although based on the relatively few available manuscripts, these were representative of many more which existed at the time but only became known later. **In the late nineteenth century, B. Westcott and F. Hort taught that this text had been officially edited by the fourth-century church, but a total lack of historical evidence for this even has forced a revision of the theory. It is now widely held that the Byzantine Text that largely supports the Textus Receptus has as much right as the Alexandrian or any other tradition to be weighed in**

determining the text of the New Testament. [I believe more so.]* (my comment, Gary T. Panell)

Those readings in the Textus Receptus which have weak support are indicated in the center reference column as being opposed by both Critical and Majority Texts. **Since the 1880s most contemporary translations of the New Testament have relied upon a relatively few manuscripts discovered chiefly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such translations depend primarily on two manuscripts, Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, because of their greater age. The Greek text obtained by using these sources and the related papyri (our most ancient manuscripts) is known as the Alexandrian Text. However, some scholars have grounds for doubting the faithfulness of Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, since they often disagree with one another, and Sinaiticus exhibits excessive omission.**" (Preface of the New King James Version)

(For more information on the textual basis and translation of the New King James version of the Holy Bible, Arthur L. Farstad, Executive Editor of the NKJV, has written an excellent book entitled [The New King James Version: In The Great Tradition.](#))

William Tyndale, a wonderful reformer, and Christian martyr, said of his part in the translation of the Bible into English: "I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, that I never altered one syllable of God's Word against my conscience, nor would do this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honor, pleasure, or riches, might be given me." (*Fox's Book of Martyrs*, by John Fox) Jesus said of the Bible in Matthew 24: 35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

So do I still believe that we have God's Word today, and that God is protecting it? Yes, God's Word is perfect in every way. Even if men try to destroy it or change it, God will not let all of the Bibles be destroyed, and He will always have some that have not omitted certain verses or added to it (in the case of Joseph Smith's writings, and that of other groups). This means we have to be careful with God's Word and cherish it! It means we have to study to see what the original text was. Oh, no, we will not all know the original languages or be history specialists, etc. However, we need to check for ourselves the credentials of those who claim one thing or another. Most of all, we need to be discerning, does this person claim to be born again, are they walking with the Lord, and do they believe in the infallibility of the Word of God? All this does take research on our part, but there are so many "Bible helps" today that you can do this.

I have mentioned study Bibles in the past, and there are so many good ones that you could purchase, but here are a few that I would recommend: New Spirit Filled Life Bible, The New Defender's Study Bible, The Open Bible, The Nelson Study Bible, New Scofield Reference Edition, to mention just a few. This does not mean that I agree with all the comments in these study Bibles nor will you, but you will find these very useful. Also, there may be others that are helpful, but there is no way for me to know about all of them.

Paraphrased Bibles are good for devotions sometimes, but you need to remember these are not a word for word translation, but a thought-for-thought translation and are not good as a study Bibles. One example of these is the New Living Translation (*One Year Bible*) by Tyndale House

Publishers, Inc. if you have not become familiar with your local Bible bookstore I would highly recommend that you do this. There are so many Bible helps out there today that are available, and we have no excuse for not doing our own research using these helps. God has gifted teachers in the Church to help us, even as He has gifted preachers.

Difficulties occur when there is a wrong concept of the Bible.

The Bible simply records what others say-what good men or women say and what bad men or women say. For example, Satan told Eve through the serpent, "You will not surely die." (Genesis 3:4) Yes, it was a lie that he told Eve, but it is God's Word that this is exactly what he said. So it is with many other passages of Scripture. That means we need to study Scripture to make sure we know who is speaking. Is this a false prophet speaking or is it a prophet of God? "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God" (2 Timothy 2:15)

How shall we deal with what we think are difficulties of the Bible?

We should deal with difficulties, honestly. Whenever we find something we don't understand we should frankly admit it. Realize the problem is with me and not with the Bible. Don't pretend it isn't there look it in the face. If someone has asked you a question and you don't have the answer, don't make something up. Tell the person you are talking to, you will look it up and get back to them.

Deal with the problem humbly, recognize your limitations, but don't think that there isn't an answer. Pray and look for the answer to give the person asking you for an answer. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15) "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." (James 1:5) Be determined to find answers for what you believe.

Face things you do not understand about the Bible fearlessly, millions of Christians before you have faced just such difficulties and still the old Book still stands. "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation-as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen. (2 Peter 3:14-18)

Be patient, don't be discouraged if you can't solve the problem right away, put it on the back burner, as we say, this means to wait and think and pray about it more. Until you know, that you know, that you know you have the answer!

You will need to solve the question by looking at other Scripture verses that have to do with the same subject, "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Corinthians 2:13) Look at the context, by that I mean the passage before or after the part in question. This also means don't build a doctrine on one verse, if it is a true doctrine there will be two or three verses, if not many, that say basically the same thing. Someone has said, "God says it, I believe it that settles it!"

You want to pray about finding the answer, Satan wants you to get discouraged and give up. But Jesus used the 'rhema,' (hray-mah) the specific verse that would make Satan leave; He used the Bible like a sword because it is a sword as we saw in Hebrews 4:12. Also remember the sword is an offensive weapon. "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." (Ephesians 6:17, 18) (You might want to look at our Ephesians study on this passage, it is [Ephesians Part 5](#).)

I would say also to meditate on the Word of God and put it into practice in order to be successful in our Christian life: "You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days." (Deuteronomy 4:40a)

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deuteronomy 6:5-9). "**This great book is the best gift God has given to man.**" (Abraham Lincoln)

Jan. 15 - I've been resting quietly for a week. The first few nights after New Year's Day my owner

Read me regularly. But now I guess I've been forgotten.

Feb. 2 - Clean-up day! I was dusted along with some other things--but was put back on the shelf.

Feb. 24 - Owner used me for a short time after dinner. Looked up a few verses. Went to Sunday School.

April 10 - I was dusted today and put on the center table in the sitting room. Special company was here, but now I'm back on the shelf again.

May 12 - Busy day. My owner had to lead a devotional lesson and had to look up some references. Had

quite a time finding me, and then hunted and hunted to find those references.

June 5 - I'm here in grandma's lap. She's here on a visit. She let a tear fall on Colossians 2:5-7.

June 6 - In grandma's lap again. She has spent most of her time reading 1 Corinthians 13 and the last four verses on the 15th chapter.

June 7, 8, 9 - I've been in grandma's lap each afternoon. It is such a comfort to be appreciated and loved. She reads me part of the time, and then just sits and talks to me.

June 10 - Grandma is gone and I'm back in the same old place. She kissed me before she left.

June 4 - Had a couple of four-leaf clovers stuck in me today.

Aug. 1 - Packed in a suitcase with clothes. Off on a vacation, I guess.

Aug. 7 - Still in the suitcase.

Aug. 12 - Still in the suitcase although everything else has been in and out many times. Other things first I guess.

Aug. 15 - Home again and on the shelf. Quite a journey. Can't see why I went.

Sept. 3 - Rather stuffy and now two magazines, a novel, and an old hat are on top of me.

Oct. 18 - Used by Mary a few minutes today.

Nov. 10 - Was carried to church today and held up to be counted.

Dec. 16 - Dusted again. I'm lonesome. Wish grandma would come and visit again.

Dec. 31 - Tomorrow I expect to have a knife run into me by each member of the family blindfolded in

turn and then a finger placed on a "good-luck" verse. (Suppose a finger rests on John 5:39 or Matthew 4:4? Or Hosea 4:6!) (*From the Diary of a Bible, Silent Evangelist - Faith Prayer and Tract*

League)

"This Book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." (Joshua 1:8)

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3)

"Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." (Psalm 119:11)

"Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day." (Psalm 105:97)

"How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way." (Psalm 105:103-104)

"I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; for You have magnified Your word above all Your name." (Psalm 138:2) ([Two Year Bible Meditation Chart](#))

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