



MINISTÈRE DU PASTEUR CLÉMENT SALOMON · BIBLE STUDY #8

Can We Really Trust the Bible?

The question deserves an honest answer — and God is not afraid of it

A young man is riding home at the end of a long day, a small worn Bible on his lap — the one his grandmother pressed into his hands years ago. The man beside him glances down and laughs, kindly enough. "That book? Men wrote that. It's been changed a hundred times. Nobody even knows what it said at the beginning." Then the man gets off at his stop, and the conversation is over. But the sentence isn't. It rides all the way home.

That night the young man puts the Bible on the table and just looks at it. And he asks the honest question, the one almost everybody asks sooner or later: *is this true, or have I been holding on to something that isn't?*

If you have ever asked that — out loud or quietly — please keep reading. Because here is the first surprise: **God never asks you to switch off your mind.** He invites the question. In one city, people listened to the apostle Paul preach and then went home to fact-check him — and the Bible calls those people *noble*:

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Acts 17:11 (KJV)

They did not clap and go home. They dug. And Scripture praises them for it. So let's dig — four honest reasons, and then a way for you to test it yourself this week.

First: what the Book claims about itself

Every case begins with what the witness actually says. The Bible does not claim to be a collection of wise human thoughts about God. It claims something far bigger:

"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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV)

The word translated *inspiration* literally means **God-breathed**. And notice how that breathing worked — not like dictating a letter to a secretary:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

2 Peter 1:21 (KJV)

Moved. Like wind on a sail. God moved the writer; the writer still wrote in his own words, out of his own life. That is why Moses sounds like a shepherd, David sounds like a poet, Luke sounds like a doctor, and Amos sounds like a farmer — and yet they tell one single story. God gave the message. The men gave the voice.

Of course, a book saying it is from God is not proof by itself — anyone can write that on a first page. That is exactly why the Bible does not stop there. It puts evidence on the table. Here is the evidence.

Evidence 1 — One story, told by people who never met

The Bible is not one book. It is a library of sixty-six, written by about forty different people over roughly fifteen centuries — kings and prisoners, fishermen and scholars, on three continents, in three languages. Most of them never met each other. Many were separated by hundreds of years.

Try that experiment today. Take forty strangers from different countries and centuries, let them each write about God, life, death and hope — and see what you get. You would get forty arguments.

Instead you get one thread running from the first page to the last, and Jesus said out loud what that thread is. Walking with two heartbroken men on a dusty road, He gave them a Bible study:

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

Luke 24:27 (KJV)

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

John 5:39 (KJV)

Forty writers, fifteen centuries, one Person. That is not the fingerprint of a committee. That is the fingerprint of a single Author working through many hands.

Evidence 2 — It survived what should have destroyed it

Books die. They go out of print, out of language, out of memory. This one has been banned, burned, outlawed and mocked in nearly every century — and it is still the most translated, most printed, most read book on earth. It said it would be:

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

Isaiah 40:8 (KJV)

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Matthew 24:35 (KJV)

"But it was copied by hand for centuries," someone objects. "It must have drifted." That was a fair worry — until 1947, when a shepherd boy throwing a stone into a cave near the Dead Sea heard pottery break. Inside were ancient scrolls, including a nearly complete scroll of Isaiah written well over a century before Jesus was born.

Until that morning, the oldest complete Hebrew copies of Isaiah anyone had were roughly a thousand years newer. Now scholars could lay a thousand years side by side. Small differences in spelling and wording showed up, as copying by hand always produces — but the book was

the same book, and the message was the same message. You can look at the scroll yourself online today; the link is in the Sources page at the back.

That is worth sitting with. The Bible you hold in your language, on your phone, in your house, is carrying the same message that was already old when Jesus of Nazareth walked into a synagogue and read from Isaiah out loud (Luke 4:16-21).

Evidence 3 — It told the future in advance

Here is the test God Himself proposes. He points to prophecy and says: no one else can do this.

"I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done."

Isaiah 46:9-10 (KJV)

The Old Testament was finished centuries before Jesus was born, and copies of it existed long before His birth. Yet it describes Him in detail. A few examples you can check with your own finger, one page against the other:

- **Born in a small town** — "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel" (Micah 5:2). Compare Matthew 2:1-6.
- **Rejected and wounded for us** — "He is despised and rejected of men... he was wounded for our transgressions... with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:3-5). Compare Matthew 27.
- **Betrayed for thirty pieces of silver** — "So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver" (Zechariah 11:12). Compare Matthew 26:14-15.
- **His words on the cross, His pierced hands, His clothing gambled away** — "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?... they pierced my hands and my feet... they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (Psalm 22:1, 16, 18). Compare Matthew 27:35, 46.

Psalms 22 was written centuries before crucifixion was even used as a form of execution by the Romans. Read it slowly some evening and ask yourself who is speaking.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

2 Peter 1:19 (KJV)

A lamp in a dark place. That is what fulfilled prophecy is for — not to impress you, but to let you walk forward with your eyes open.

Evidence 4 — The evidence that walks around on two legs

The last proof is one no archaeologist can dig up, and it may be the one you can verify fastest: this Book changes people. Not by making them religious. By making them new.

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12 (KJV)

Quick is old English for **alive**. That is why you can read a passage you have read twenty times and suddenly it reads *you* instead. Paul saw it happen in an entire city:

"Ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

1 Thessalonians 2:13 (KJV)

Look around your own neighborhood. The father who put down the bottle. The woman who forgave the unforgivable and finally slept. The angry young man who became gentle. Ask them what happened. Many will tell you it started with a Book and a prayer. That is evidence you can shake hands with.

"But there are parts I don't understand"

Good. That is not a warning sign; it is normal. Even Peter admitted some of Paul's letters were "hard to be understood" (2 Peter 3:16). Here is how honest people handle it:

- **Pray before you read.** The Author is available. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17) — ask Him for that truth before your eyes hit the page.
- **Let the Bible explain the Bible.** "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20). Never build a belief on one verse standing alone — compare verse with verse.
- **Test everything by the Book itself.** "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). That includes testing your pastor, your church, and this study.
- **Start where it is clear.** Begin with the Gospel of John or the Gospel of Mark. Meet Jesus first; the harder passages get easier once you know the main Character.
- **Expect light for the next step, not the whole road.** "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). A lamp at your feet shows you the next step — that is exactly how God gives it.

And you do not need a diploma to begin:

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Psalm 119:130 (KJV)

What this Book is actually for

Now the most important paragraph in this study. It is possible to read the Bible your whole life and still miss the point. Jesus said so, to very religious people:

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life... And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

John 5:39-40 (KJV)

The Bible is not the destination. It is the road, and it goes to a Person. John says it plainly at the end of his Gospel:

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

John 20:31 (KJV)

So trusting the Bible is not finally about defending an old book in an argument on a bus. It is about this: **if the Book is true, then the promises in it are yours.** The forgiveness is real. The resurrection morning is real. The Father who runs to meet the child coming home is real. And the One who said "I will come again" (John 14:3) keeps His word — because His word is the one thing in this world that has never yet failed.

The young man on the bus had it backwards, and so do most of us. The question is not only "can I trust this Book?" It is also: *"the God of this Book has never broken a promise — will I trust Him?"*

Before you close this — try it for seven days

Here is an honest test anyone can run. For the next seven mornings, before anything else, pray one sentence — *"God, if You are there, speak to me through this"* — and read one chapter of the Gospel of John. Seven mornings. Then judge for yourself.

Would you like to know more about Jesus, study the Bible, or go deeper on this topic? We will gladly study with you — free, in your language, at your pace, by phone or in person. Bring your hardest question; it is welcome here.

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Or leave a comment, send us a direct message, and **subscribe + follow + share** on YouTube and Facebook.

Don't miss what's next. Once you believe the Book, one question always follows: what do I *do* about it? That is exactly where we are going — our next study is *"Baptism: A Brand-New Beginning."* Subscribe now so it reaches you the day it comes out; if you wait, you will have to go looking for it. 🛎

SHARE THIS WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN TOLD THE BIBLE WAS CHANGED

Viewer Handout

Can We Really Trust the Bible? — pocket version

5 truths to remember

1. The Bible is God-breathed — God moved the writers; they wrote in their own words (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).
2. About forty writers over roughly fifteen centuries tell one story, and it is about Jesus (Luke 24:27; John 5:39).
3. God's word survives every attempt to erase it — and the ancient copies confirm the message we have (Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35).
4. Fulfilled prophecy is God's own evidence: He declares "the end from the beginning" (Isaiah 46:9-10; 2 Peter 1:19).
5. It is alive — it changes people who believe it (Hebrews 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:13).

Memory verse

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Psalm 119:105 (KJV)

Think & pray about it

- What is the one question about the Bible I have never dared to ask out loud?
- If this Book is true, which promise in it do I most need to claim this week?
- When will I read my chapter each day — and what will I move to make room for it?

Presenter Bullet Sheet

- **Open with the story** (the young man on the bus, the Bible from his grandmother) — ask: "Has anyone ever told you this Book was changed? What did you answer?" Let the room be honest.
- **Set the tone — questions are welcome:** Acts 17:11. The Bereans fact-checked an apostle and Scripture calls them noble. God is not afraid of investigation.
- **Point 1 — What it claims:** 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21. "God-breathed"; "moved" like wind on a sail. God gave the message, men gave the voice — that explains the different styles.
- **Point 2 — One story:** about 40 writers, ~15 centuries, 3 continents, one theme — Jesus (Luke 24:27; John 5:39).
- **Point 3 — Preserved:** Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35. Tell the 1947 Dead Sea Scrolls discovery and the Isaiah scroll; a thousand-year gap, the same message.
- **Point 4 — Prophecy:** Isaiah 46:9-10; 2 Peter 1:19. Walk through Micah 5:2 / Matthew 2; Isaiah 53; Zechariah 11:12 / Matthew 26:15; Psalm 22 / Matthew 27. Have the group read both texts aloud, side by side.
- **Point 5 — Changed lives:** Hebrews 4:12 ("quick" = alive); 1 Thessalonians 2:13. Invite one short, true testimony from the group — no exaggeration, no promises of outcomes.
- **Point 6 — Handling hard passages:** pray first (John 17:17); Scripture explains Scripture (2 Peter 1:20); test everything (Isaiah 8:20); start in John; a lamp shows the next step (Psalm 119:105, 130).
- **Point 7 — The purpose:** John 5:39-40 and John 20:31. The Book is the road; Jesus is the destination. Never let a Bible study end in information only.
- **Appeal:** Invite each person to the seven-day test — one prayer, one chapter of John, seven mornings — and to say yes to the Jesus they meet there. Offer free personal Bible study and prayer.
- **Close:** Memory verse (Psalm 119:105) + tease the next study ("Baptism: A Brand-New Beginning").

10 Myths vs. Facts

Myth	Fact (with Bible)
1. The Bible is just a book written by men.	Men held the pen, but "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21), and "all scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16).
2. It has been changed so many times nobody knows what it first said.	God promised His word would stand (Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35). The Dead Sea Scrolls — including an Isaiah scroll from before Christ — match the message of copies a thousand years newer.
3. It's full of contradictions no one can explain.	It has one theme from beginning to end — Christ (Luke 24:27; John 5:39). Difficulties are answered by comparing Scripture with Scripture, not by isolating one verse (2 Peter 1:20).
4. Only trained scholars can understand it.	"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psalm 119:130). Ordinary people in Berea searched it for themselves (Acts 17:11).
5. It's outdated and has nothing to say to my life today.	"The word of God is quick [alive], and powerful" and reaches "the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12); "the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Peter 1:25).
6. Faith means believing without asking questions.	The Bereans were called noble <i>because</i> they checked the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11), and believers are told, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).
7. The prophecies about Jesus were written after He lived.	God stakes His identity on foretelling "the end from the beginning" (Isaiah 46:9-10). Copies of Isaiah, Micah and the Psalms existed before Jesus' birth (Micah 5:2; Isaiah 53; Psalm 22).
8. Only the New Testament matters now.	The Scriptures Timothy knew "from a child" were the Old Testament, and Paul calls them able to make him "wise unto salvation" (2 Timothy 3:15-16). "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4).

9. The Bible is mainly a rulebook for condemning people.	It was written "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ... and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). God sent His Son "not to condemn the world" (John 3:17).
10. Reading it won't actually change anything in my life.	It "effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13), guards the heart (Psalm 119:11), and God uses it to make us holy: "thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

Where this comes from (Sources)

This study is built on the Bible and reflects the published beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Verify everything for yourself:

- The Bible — passages on Scripture and its trustworthiness: Psalm 22; 119:11, 105, 130; Isaiah 8:20; 40:8; 46:9-10; 53; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 2:1-6; 24:35; 26:14-15; 27:35, 46; Luke 4:16-21; 24:27; John 5:39-40; 17:17; 20:31; Acts 17:11; Romans 15:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 5:21; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 3:16 (King James Version, public domain).
- Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #1, "The Holy Scriptures": <https://adventist.org/beliefs>
- 28 Fundamental Beliefs (2020 edition, PDF): <https://adventist.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ADV-28Beliefs2020.pdf>
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: <https://gc.adventist.org/>
- The Great Isaiah Scroll (Dead Sea Scrolls, copied before the birth of Christ) — view it page by page at the Israel Museum's digital project: <https://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah>
- Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (chapter "The Privilege of Prayer" and "What to Do With Doubt") and *The Great Controversy* (public domain) — on Scripture and honest doubt: <https://whiteestate.org/> / <https://m.egwwritings.org/>

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