

## A2 - The Bible

### Study 1 - Why believe the Bible?

#### BIBLE READING:

### 1 Peter 1: 22-25

#### KEY VERSE:

**“Sanctify them in the truth;  
Your Word is truth.”**

John 17: 17

As a Christian, you are likely to be asked, ‘Why do you believe the Bible?’ or, ‘How can you be sure that it’s true?’ It would be most helpful if we could answer these questions by providing proof that God is the author of the Bible, but that isn’t possible! God’s creation, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and God’s forgiveness of our sins are all matters that must be accepted by FAITH rather than by sight or scientific proof. FAITH is the response that God requires. **(Hebrews 11: 6)** We must accept by FAITH that the whole Bible is God’s Word.

Faith does not mean that you give up thinking intelligently. There are useful facts which enable us to explain why we believe the Bible is God’s Word.

#### 1) THE BIBLE MAKES UNIQUE CLAIMS FOR ITSELF.

In the previous studies, it was explained that in the Old Testament the phrase **“Thus says the Lord”** is frequently used. **(Amos 1: 3, 6, 9)** The Lord Jesus Himself, gave authority to the Old Testament by often quoting from it. **(Mark 7: 6, 7, 10)** A further testimony of the Lord Jesus is given in the Key Verse. Paul explained that his writings were given to him by the Lord. **(1 Thessalonians 4: 15)** Such claims help us to be sure of the truth of the Bible. Paul wrote **“God... never lies...”**. **(Titus 1: 2)** We know that God is true; therefore we have confidence that the Bible is His Word and is true!

#### 2) THE BIBLE CONTAINS MANY PROPHECIES WHICH HAVE COME TRUE.

We have already explored prophecies about the birth and death of the Lord Jesus from the Old Testament which proved to be completely accurate when they were fulfilled hundreds of years later. Jesus’ work on earth was also explained by Isaiah. **(Isaiah 61: 1, 2)** In particular, Matthew focuses on the fulfilment of prophecies and often finishes his account of an event by saying, **“All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet”**. **(Matthew 1: 22)** The Bible contains prophecies about the future **(Revelation 5: 1-6)** and we can be certain that these too will be fulfilled because the Bible is the Word of God!

#### 3) THE BIBLE HAS STOOD THE TEST OF TIME.

Peter wrote, **“The word of the LORD remains for ever”**. **(1 Peter 1: 25)** The Lord Jesus also said, **“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away”**. **(Matthew 24: 35)** At times in history, great efforts were made to completely destroy the Bible. For example, in 16th century England, when Tyndale produced one of the first English New Testaments, massive bonfires were lit to destroy it. In many other countries the Bible has been banned, burned or even buried. Today, there are many countries where the Bible cannot be sold or read publicly without the risk of imprisonment. Yet God has overruled and the Bible has survived. It is still the world’s best-seller!



Ruins at Jericho

#### 4) THE BIBLE IS CONFIRMED BY ARCHAEOLOGY.

A leading Christian archaeologist has said that you cannot prove the Bible by archaeological research, but archaeology confirms it. His remarks relate to archaeological digs in the Middle East where many artefacts fit in with the Bible but nothing significant contradicts it!

#### 5) THE BIBLE HAS IMPACT ON PEOPLE’S LIVES.

The above points are sound arguments which support the truth of the Bible. However, it is when people read and search out the truth of the message for themselves that they discover its reality. For example, the people of Berea tested out Paul’s teaching by comparing it with the Old Testament Scriptures. **(Read Acts 17: 10-12)**

Our personal experience of what Christ has done for us, and how His Word guides us each day, is proof of the reliability and the relevance of the Bible in a Christian’s life. A changed life is strong evidence that the Bible is living and powerful.

Peter writes about **“...always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you”**. **(1 Peter 3: 15)** If someone challenged you, would you be able and willing to defend the truth of the Bible?

## A2 - The Bible

### Study 2 - Why obey the Bible?

#### BIBLE READING:

James 1: 19-25

#### KEY VERSE:

**“Everyone then who hears these sayings of mine, and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”**

Matthew 7: 24

These studies have taught us the importance of reading and studying the Bible to help us in our Christian lives. However, it is not just a case of reading the Bible and knowing about it - its teaching has to be put into practice and affect the way we live. The book of James emphasises how our faith should be shown by our works. (**James 2: 14, 17**)



### THE BIBLE INFLUENCES US IN THE WAY WE LIVE.

In the Bible Reading, James teaches that it is important to read the Bible for the right reasons. We should not just read it out of curiosity, or for entertainment, but with a desire to know how we ought to live. It is so easy to think that because we read the Bible, pray, or go to church that our lives are alright. James says no! In **verse 19**, he speaks about the danger of getting angry, and in **verse 21**, the possibility of wickedness. James' answer is to humbly accept the Word planted in us. This happens through reading and meditation of the Bible. When we do these things, we develop strength to resist the evil influences of Satan, the world, and our own sinful flesh. No wonder Christians who neglect God's Word struggle to maintain holiness in their daily lives.



### THE BIBLE SHOWS US WHAT WE ARE.

James likens the Bible to a mirror. (**James 1: 23-25**) When we look at ourselves in a mirror and discover that we have a dirty mark on our face, we wash it off. We compare what we look like with what we ought to look like, and if anything is wrong, we do something about it. James is teaching that if we look carefully into the Scriptures and discover that we are not living in a way that pleases God, we should not ignore it, but we should take steps to correct it.

The Bible Reading contrasts two men. The first man takes a hasty and careless glance into the mirror. Instead of noting the marks on his face, he goes away, quickly forgetting what he has seen, and things remain as they were before. He is like a person who reads the Bible but does not practise what he learns.

The second man does not merely glance at God's Word but focuses his full attention on it. Unlike the first man, he does not forget what he reads. He does what it says! (**See Psalm 119: 9**)

### THE BIBLE BRINGS US INTO GOD'S BLESSING.

James calls God's Word "the perfect law, the law of liberty". It is His law, because it is given by the Supreme Ruler of the universe and carries the full force of a divine command. To the Christian, however, God's "**commandments are not burdensome**". (**1 John 5: 3**) To obey God's Word is to be free from the bondage or slavery of sin. The Bible describes people who are not Christians as being in slavery to sin. Jesus said, "**Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practises sin is a slave to sin**". (**John 8: 34-36**) When people live as they please, rather than as God requires, they give in to sin and Satan. Obedience to the Word of God always brings true liberty and freedom.

The Christian should not be a 'hearer who forgets but a doer who acts'. The person who only hears the Word of God and does not practise it, is all ears but has no hands or feet!

James tells us to persevere in the attentive reading and practising of God's Word. Jesus told the Jews who claimed to believe Him, "**If you abide in My Word, you are truly My Disciples, and you shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free**". (**John 8: 31-32**)

James concludes by reminding us that we are blessed (or happy) in 'doing' God's will. As Christians we find great pleasure in reading the Bible, but James emphasises that true happiness comes in obeying it.

This is the second of two units on The Bible.

# Answer Sheet

## A2 - The Bible

### Study 1 - Why believe the Bible?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Return address on back of answer sheet

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Write TRUE or FALSE after each of the following:

- a) It cannot be proved scientifically that the Bible is the Word of God. \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Christians need only believe parts of the Bible. \_\_\_\_\_
- c) The Lord Jesus stated that God's Word is truth. \_\_\_\_\_
- d) The Lord Jesus did not believe the Old Testament. \_\_\_\_\_
- e) God cannot lie, so the Bible is true! \_\_\_\_\_
- f) God requires Christians to accept His Word by faith. \_\_\_\_\_

/6

#### 2. Although men and governments in different countries and at different times, have done everything to destroy the Bible it has survived. How can you explain this?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

/3

#### 3. Matthew writes about what happened to Jesus and then comments each time that this was a fulfilment of what was said by the prophets. Match each Bible reference with each fact by drawing a line between them.

**Matthew 26: 54-56**

**Matthew 12: 17, 18**

**Matthew 21: 42**

**Matthew 2: 23**

**Matthew 4: 13-16**

Jesus grew up in Nazareth.

Jesus lived in Capernaum

Jesus was a rejected stone.

Jesus was the chosen servant.

Jesus was arrested in a certain way.

/5

#### 4. Read Acts 17: 10-12, and then answer the questions.

- a) Where did Paul and Silas go to in Berea? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) How did the people treat the message they received from Paul? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) What did they do each day? \_\_\_\_\_
- d) What impact did this have on them? \_\_\_\_\_
- e) What can we learn from this? \_\_\_\_\_

/5

#### 5. What have you learned which would help you to defend the Bible as the Word of God? Choose two of the five facts which this study has highlighted and summarise them in your own words.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

/6

**THINK:** Think about your personal journey in coming to believe the Bible. Are you like Timothy who "from childhood" had known the Scriptures? (**2 Timothy 3: 15**) Can you identify with the experience of the people in Berea? (**Acts 17: 10-12**)

TOTAL =  /25

# Answer Sheet

## A2 - The Bible

### Study 2 - Why obey the Bible?

1. **James 2: 20-26** mentions the names of two Old Testament characters who showed their faith by what they did. Who were they, and what did they do to show their faith?

Name of character

What did they do?

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

/4

2. Look at the Bible Reading and write three instructions about practical living that James gave to the Christians.

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/3

3. Match the words from the Bible Reading with their meaning by drawing a line between each pair.

a) the perfect law, the law of liberty

those who hear but forget God's Word

b) implanted

God's Word which brings freedom when obeyed

c) hearers

the Bible rooted in someone's life

/3

4. The Lord Jesus spoke about 'hearers' and 'doers' in a well-known parable. (*Matthew 7: 24-27*) Explain the meaning of the parable in your own words.

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5. Why is the illustration of using a mirror a suitable one to explain the importance of doing what the Bible says?

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6. The Lord Jesus explained that His disciples had to abide in Him, and let His words abide in them. (*John 15: 7*) Suggest ways in which we can do this each day, using what you have learned in this study.

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7. Read *Psalm 119: 9* and answer the questions:

a) What age-group of person does the question relate to? \_\_\_\_\_

b) What aspect of Christian living does the question address? \_\_\_\_\_

c) How is the person going to succeed in this area? \_\_\_\_\_

/3

**THINK:** Can you think of a time when you used the Bible as a mirror to correct something in your own life?

TOTAL = /25

# Answer Sheet

## A2 - The Bible

### Study 3 - What is the purpose of the Bible?

#### 1. LIGHT

a) In what ways is our world spiritually and morally dark?

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b) In what way is the Bible like a light?

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#### 2. WATER

a) Put a ✓ OR a ✗ beside each of these sentences:

When we believe that Jesus died for our sins, He washes us clean for ever. \_\_\_\_\_

After we have become Christians, we never sin. \_\_\_\_\_

We need to confess our sins daily. \_\_\_\_\_

It is essential for spiritual cleanliness to read the Bible. \_\_\_\_\_

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b) Describe in your own words why the Bible is like water?

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 /2

#### 3. SWORD

Read again **Matthew 4: 1-11** and explain what each temptation was and how Jesus overcame it.

**TEMPTATION**

**HOW JESUS OVERCAME IT**

1 _____	_____
2 _____	_____
3 _____	_____

 /6

#### 4. SEED

Fill in the information below, explaining the four responses to the sowing of the "seed", the Word of God.

The first one is done for you.

**TYPE OF SOIL**

**WHAT HAPPENED TO IT**

**MEANING**

Path

Birds ate the seeds up.

Satan snatches away the seed of God's Word.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

 /6

#### 5. HAMMER

a) Why was the word picture of a hammer especially suited to Jeremiah's situation?

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b) In what way is God's Word like a hammer?

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c) How could the daily reading and applying God's Word help in times of temptation?

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 /3

TOTAL =  /25



# Answer Sheet

## A2 - The Bible

### Study 4 - Who is the Word of God?

1. Look again at the Bible reading and write TRUE or FALSE beside each of these statements:

- a) Jesus became the Word when He came to this earth. \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Jesus was responsible for all creation. \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Jesus was, is, and always will be, God. \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Jesus was not mentioned by John. \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Jesus never became a real man. \_\_\_\_\_

□ /5

2. On a number of occasions, we are told that when Jesus spoke, people were astonished at His teaching. Why was this?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

□ /4

3. Look at *John 19: 28-30* and answer the following questions.

- a) What did Jesus know? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) What did Jesus want? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) What did they give Him? \_\_\_\_\_
- d) What were the final words of Jesus, recorded by John? \_\_\_\_\_
- e) What did these words mean? \_\_\_\_\_

□ /5

4. What claims did Jesus make for His words in:

a) *John 14: 24*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b) *John 17: 8*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

□ /4

5. Read *John 6: 35, 51*. What did Jesus mean when He said that those who came to Him would never hunger?

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

□ /4

6. How can we become spiritually strong as Christians?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

□ /3

## A2 - The Bible

### Study 3 - What is the purpose of the Bible?

**BIBLE READING:**  
**Mark 4: 1-20**

**KEY VERSE:**  
**“The unfolding of Your words gives light.”**

Psalm 119: 130

The Bible uses ‘word pictures’ to explain the meaning of certain truths. For example, Jesus said of Himself, **“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”** (John 10: 11) This word picture helps us to understand why Jesus died and for whom.

We have already seen in previous studies that the Bible likens itself to milk, (1 Peter 2: 2) and a mirror, (James 1: 23-25). In this study we are going to look at five more word pictures the Bible uses to describe itself. These word pictures show us how precious the Bible is and why it is important that we read it every day.

#### 1. LIGHT

We live in a world which is spiritually and morally dark. Even as Christians we can still struggle to know which way to go in our lives. In **Psalm 119: 105** we read: **“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”** In this verse God’s Word is described as a light; we need the Bible to find our way to God and to guide us in our lives. The Psalmist also says in **Psalm 119: 130**, **“The unfolding of Your words gives light”**. When we read the Bible, God reveals Himself to us and shows us how He wants us to live.

#### 2. WATER

When we became Christians we were cleansed from our sin. In God’s sight we are clean for ever. Yet we still have our sinful nature and each day we sin and need cleansing. John says, **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”**



The River Jordan

(1 John 1: 9) If we confess our sins daily, then each day He will forgive and cleanse us. How does this happen? Jesus gives us a clue in **John 15: 3**. **“You are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”** Just as water is necessary for washing our bodies, so God’s Word is essential for our spiritual cleanliness.

#### 3. SWORD

One of our greatest challenges as Christians is our battle with the Devil. Just as Jesus faced the attacks of Satan, so do we! Paul uses a helpful word picture to illustrate this in **Ephesians 6: 10–17**. He describes the Christian’s armour in six parts, and he concludes by saying **“take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”**. (verse 17) The Bible is the “sword” we use to defend ourselves from the attacks of the Evil One. Jesus victoriously overcame Satan by wielding the “sword of the Spirit”. (Matthew 4: 1-11) In His temptation, Jesus answered Satan’s attacks three times by saying, **“It is written”**. The more we get to know and understand the Bible, the more we will be able to use it to defend ourselves from the Devil’s attacks.



Maize

#### 4. SEED

In the ‘Parable of the Sower’, (Mark 4: 1-20), Jesus explained that the seed which the farmer scattered is a picture of the Word of God, **“The sower sows the word”**. (verse 14) The sower’s seed fell on four types of ground which represent the four responses to the preaching of God’s Word. The first three types of soil produced no fruit, but the fourth represented people who received and benefited from the Word of God. So it is when we read the Bible regularly, accept its message and apply it to our hearts. In so doing, we produce spiritual fruit in our lives for the glory of God.

#### 5. HAMMER

Jeremiah was a prophet who lived at a time when God’s people, the Israelites, did not listen to the Word of God which he brought to them. However, Jeremiah faithfully kept on bringing the same message time and time again. It is not surprising that he uses the word picture of a hammer because it was the steady, regular blows of the Word of God which eventually began to achieve some results. **“Is not My word like... a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?”** (Jeremiah 23: 29) Is the daily reading and application of the Word of God changing your heart and your life?



## A2 - The Bible

Study 4 - Who is the Word of God?

### BIBLE READING:

John 1: 1-14

### KEY VERSE:

**“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”**

John 1: 14

In these studies we have referred to the Bible as the ‘Living Word of God’. It is also important to know that we can also consider the Lord Jesus Christ as the Word of God. In **John 1: 1** we read: **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”** So the Word of God is BOTH the Bible AND the Person of Jesus.

### THE WORD (THE LORD JESUS) IS ETERNAL.

Some think of Jesus just as living about 33 years on this earth, but the Bible tells us that **“He was in the beginning with God.” (John 1: 2)** The Lord Jesus is eternal; He has no beginning and no end. In **Revelation 1: 18** Jesus says, **“I am... the living One. I died and behold I am alive for evermore.”**



Picture taken by ESA on the Hubble Space Telescope. Scientists sometimes describe the universe as having no beginning and no end.

### THE WORD (THE LORD JESUS) SPOKE ONLY GOD’S WORDS.

The Lord Jesus was God’s mouthpiece. This is seen in **John 3: 34**. **“For He whom God has sent utters the words of God.”** After Jesus had completed the teaching, which we refer to as the Sermon on the Mount, we are told, **“And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, for He was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes”.** (**Matthew 7: 28-29**) Every word that came from His lips came with the authority of God.



The Countryside in Israel. It may have been somewhere similar to this where Jesus delivered His Sermon on the Mount.

### THE WORD (THE LORD JESUS) FULFILLED ALL GOD’S WORDS.

We have already learned that Jesus often quoted from the Old Testament and showed that what He was doing was a fulfilment of the words of the prophets. For example, **“and He cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: ‘He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.’” (Matthew 8: 16-17)** Later when He died on the cross, it is recorded, **“Jesus, knowing that all things were now finished said, to fulfil the Scripture, ‘I thirst’”.** (**John 19: 28**) This was followed by, **“It is finished!”** In so saying, Jesus was announcing that everything God had said would happen, had happened. Nothing remained to be fulfilled!

### THE WORD (THE LORD JESUS) MEETS EVERYONE’S NEEDS.

We have seen that when Jesus was being tempted He quoted the words of the Old Testament. When tempted concerning His hunger, the challenge was, **“Command these stones to become loaves of bread”.** (**Matthew 4: 3**) His answer was to quote words from **Deuteronomy 8: 3**, **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God”.** In His reply to Satan, Jesus was making it clear that besides needing physical food to keep us alive, we also need spiritual food – the Word of God. In a similar way He showed that He Himself is the Bread who can spiritually feed those who believe and follow Him. **“I am the bread of life, whoever comes to Me shall not hunger”.** (**John 6: 35**) It is only as we daily read the Bible, and trust and follow Jesus that we shall be strong in our Christian lives.

This is the second of two units on The Bible.

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