

THE SOUTHEAST SOWER

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Are There Books Missing From The Bible

Gene Frost

QUESTION: Recently I read where more Dead Sea scrolls had been found. Do you think there are books missing from the Bible; ones that would be essential to the salvation of a person's soul and ones that would shed more light on events mentioned only one time in the Bible books we now possess?

ANSWER: The Bible is "in truth, the word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13). It was given by divine inspiration to reveal unto man the mind of God. (2 Tim. 3:16-17, Eph. 3:3-5) Even the words of Scripture were selected by the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:13)

God revealed this will complete and final. It is referred to as the "perfect" law of liberty, signifying that which is finished, complete: the complete revelation of God. (James 1:25) This perfect law, constituting the faith of God's people, has already been given "once for all." (Jude 3) God, according to His divine power, has "given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (2 Pet. 1:3)

It is evident that God was careful in the revelation of His will: to give unto man the good news of salvation in Christ. (Rom. 1:16) Is it reasonable to suppose that God took great care in giving a complete and final revelation and then failed to provide for its preservation (so as to leave man without knowledge of the great salvation which is in Christ)? (Heb. 2:1-3)

Equally true with the fact that the Bible is the inspired revelation of God, complete and final, is the fact that it is eternal. Jesus promised, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:35) Man is to be born again by "the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever... But the word of the Lord endureth forever." (1 Pet. 1:23, 25)

To answer our question in view of the foregoing Bible teaching, there are no books missing from the Bible. God's divine wisdom gave it and His providential care has protected it. That we have the Bible intact may also be established by proofs external.

The canon of old testament scriptures was established before Jesus was born. (See Josephus, *Against Apion*, Book I, sec. 8) The 39 books, as we have them (22 as enumerated by the Jews) were acknowledged by Jesus and new testament writers under three divisions of "scriptures" as referred to by the Jews: the law, the prophets, and the psalms. (Luke 24:44-45, Matt. 21:42, 26:54, John 7:38, 41-42, 19:36-37, Rom. 4:3, 1 Cor. 15:3-4, 1 Tim. 5:18, James 2:23, et al.)

The canon of the new testament, consisting of 27 books, was established at the close of the first century with the assurance provided by inspired men with ability to discern. (1 Cor. 12:7-11) The books as we now know them were quoted as canonical by early writers such as Barnabas (circa 71 A.D.), Clemens Romanus (circa 96 A.D.), Ignatius (martyred 108 A.D.), et al. In fact, the quotations were so numerous that if the new testament was lost it could be restored from the writings in any century back to the first. This plus the early versions (such as the Syriac) attest to the fact that the new testament existed and was accepted as genuine and authentic in every century since the apostles.

Scrolls now being found are parts of the old testament scriptures and secular writings. Nothing more belonging to the inspired books will be found, God's word being true. We have, and will always have, the revelation of God—it is more than the world itself.

From: Bible Answers, Vol. I, pg 23-26

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Service Times:

Sunday: 10 am, 10:50am; 6:00pm

Wednesday: 7:30 pm

DAYS, LENGTH OF CREATION

E. G. Sewell

Question: Brother Sewell: Please answer the following question and oblige several of the brethren here: What was the length of days of creation as spoken of in Gen. 1?

ANSWER: The days of creation were the same length of our twenty-four-hour days at the present time, so far as we know. The language of the Bible, in giving the account of creation, after telling what was done in each period, says: "And the evening and the morning were the first day." And the length of all the days is expressed in the same way; the evening and the morning were the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth days. The word evening expressed the dark part of the twenty-four hours, while the word morning expressed the daylight part of the day. The seventh day is not divided into the dark and light parts, but is just called "the seventh day," which evidently included the same time as the other days in which the work of creation was done. Then, when the Sabbath law was given to man, we have this language: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Ex. 20:11.) These passages show clearly that the Bible count of days at the creation was just the same as we count time now. Some people imagine that a day in creation meant a long, indefinite period of time. But this is only guesswork. Our only way to be right is to simply take what the Bible says about it and let that settle the matter.

From: Questions Answered, By Lipscomb and Sewell, edited by Kurfees, pg. 158-159

FAITH, HOW "THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR"

E. G. Sewell

Question: Brethren Lipscomb and Sewell: In what respect could the apostle say that "faith is the substance of things hoped for?" (See Heb. 11:1.) Is the present rendering correct?

ANSWER: The word substance means, literally, that which stands under as a support, or stay, just as a pillar stands under and supports whatever is placed upon it. The things that Christians hope for are the blessings of eternal life, and no man can hope for eternal life that does not believe all that is said in the Bible regarding it. As well think of building a house in the air, without any pillar or foundation for it to rest upon, as to think of having hope of eternal life without faith. Nor is faith alone a sufficient foundation; it requires a faith perfected by obedience to be sufficient. When a man believes the gospel and obeys it and continues to live the Christian, that man has a faith that will do for a foundation for hope, and nothing short of that will. Hence, the verse might be correctly rendered something like the following: "Now faith is the foundation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." A living faith lays hold of the promises of eternal life as realities, and rejoices in them and patiently bears the toils and troubles of life, looking forward to a home where troubles and afflictions never come.

From: Questions Answered, By Lipscomb and Sewell, edited by Kurfees, pg. 222

Made To Be Used

Author unknow

An elderly rich woman kept her priceless string of pearls in a bank vault. She realized they must be worn occasionally to stay shiny and bright. So she made arrangements for one of the bank's secretaries to wear the pearls at least one day per week. This kept them beautiful and in good condition.

Just like these pearls, our faith must be used to be useful. Faith that is shared regularly with others is living, working faith.

From: "church bulletin bits" # 4, pg. 26