

The Bible – Lessons 2 & 3 Reading

THE AUTHORS OF THE BIBLE

Therefore, there were at least thirty-two authors of the Old Testament from Moses to Malachi...Among these authors of the Old Testament, there were people of various levels and backgrounds. There were scholars, religious persons, politicians, military leaders, kings, priests, prophets, common people, shepherds, and farmers. Some were highly educated, and some, without much education. Some were persecuted and oppressed, and some enjoyed glory and honor. Some were living in Israel, and some were in the land of the Gentiles in captivity.

...There were eight authors of the New Testament. Among them, Paul was a Jewish scholar, and Luke was a Gentile physician. They were the only two who had received a high education. The rest were all common people and without much education.

The number of authors of the whole Bible was more than forty, and most of them were Jews. Luke was one who was a Gentile. This indicates that among the authors there were Jews and Gentiles, kings and common people, scribes and soldiers, scholars and uneducated ones. Some were in high places, and some were very lowly; some were rich, and some were poor. There were all kinds of people. As to the places where the books were written, some were written in the wilderness; some, in a palace; some, on an island; and some, in jail.

THE TIMES WHEN THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

The first few books in the Old Testament, the Pentateuch of Moses, were written about 1500 B.C. The last book, Malachi, was written about 400 B.C. Therefore, all thirty-nine books in the Old Testament were completed within eleven hundred years.

Matthew, the first book in the New Testament, was written between A.D. 37 and 40. Revelation, the last book, was written between A.D. 94 and 96. Therefore, the whole New Testament was finished within fifty or so years. Hence, the whole Bible spans about 1500 to 1600 years from beginning to end, from Genesis to Revelation.

THE SUBJECT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The subject of the Old Testament is that God created, Satan damaged, man fell, and God promised the coming of Christ for redemption. Although there are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, it mainly shows us that God created the universe, Satan came in to damage God's creation, man fell, and God promised the coming of Christ for the accomplishment of redemption. Hence, the Christ in the Old Testament was only a hope for man, because He was only promised by God to the fallen man as a Redeemer.

THE SUBJECT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The subject of the New Testament is Christ coming to redeem sinners and to build up the church according to God's plan. In the Old Testament, we see how God created, Satan damaged, man fell, and

God promised the coming of Christ to redeem man according to God's plan and promise. In the New Testament, we see how Christ redeemed the lost sinners according to God's plan and promise and how He builds up His glorious church as His mystical Body for God to have a corporate vessel to express Himself. When we put the subjects of the Old and New Testaments together, we have the subject of the whole Bible as presented earlier.

THE CENTRAL THOUGHT OF THE BIBLE

In Christianity there are many books of Bible exposition. Most of them say that the central thought of the Bible is Christ. But today, according to the light we have received through His mercy, we feel it is insufficient merely to say that Christ is the central thought of the Bible. We should remember the words the apostle Paul spoke: "This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:32). Hence, we must say that the central thought of the Bible is Christ and the church. The Bible not only reveals Christ Himself; it also reveals the bride and the Body of Christ, which is the church.

SUMMARY

The entire Bible is God's breath. Each book of the Bible is God's revelation with every line and word coming from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God used over forty men to write the Bible. Only the present 66 books are recognized as the word of God. These comprise the infallible word of God that we have today.

We treasure the Bible. We want to study and devour the contents of the Bible so that we will be filled with God. We want to inhale every line and eat every word so that we may become His corporate expression, having His authority to bring in His kingdom.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSONS #2 AND #3

1. What 3 languages were used in writing the Old and New Testaments?
2. What is the subject of the Bible in the Old Testament?
3. What is the subject of the Bible in the New Testament?
4. What is the central thought of the Bible?
5. Who wrote the books known as the Pentateuch?
6. Which New Testament author wrote the majority of the New Testament?