

## Lesson 5

### THE BIBLE

#### HOW THE OLD TESTAMENT CAME TO BE

##### INTRODUCTION:

The Old Testament has been much neglected as far as our understanding of it is concerned. However, the apostle Paul emphasizes the importance and profitability of the Old Testament in two passages:

*“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”* Rom 15:4

*“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.”*  
1 Cor 10:11

But we must ask the question, “How do we know that the books which are contained in our Old Testament Canon are the same books which the Jews acknowledged as being from God?” In other words, do we have the same Old Testament they had?

Before we answer that question I believe it will be helpful for us to briefly review the history of the Israelites, since the Old Testament is essentially a record of God’s dealings with them.

#### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ME TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE OLD TESTAMENT CAME TO BE?

1. I need to know if we have the same books God gave to the Israelites or if other books should be included with the thirty-nine books we have today.
2. It is important for me to know if these books were inspired of God and how they relate to the New Testament.
3. I need to have respect for the Old Testament since it is supposed to be profitable for me today.

#### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITE PEOPLE

The Israelites (whose physical descendants are now called Jews) trace their origin to a man named Abraham. God called Abraham’s family to leave their polytheistic homeland in Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) and follow the Lord. In return, the Lord promised to bless Abraham, making him into a great nation (the Israelites). Through Abraham and his descendants the Lord also promised to bless the whole world through his seed (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-8).

Abraham obeyed God’s call to follow Him, as did his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob (later renamed Israel). God established a covenant with Abraham and his descendants, making

them His chosen people, and He instructed them to circumcise all Israelite males as a sign of this covenant. God also promised to give Abraham's descendants the land of Canaan. Before this would happen, however, they would endure a time of slavery in Egypt.

The Israelites had originally entered Egypt as welcomed guests (Genesis 45) under the protection of Pharaoh, but later they became enslaved by the Egyptians (Exodus 1). When the time came for the Israelites to leave Egypt and claim their Promised Land, Canaan, God raised up a man named Moses, along with his brother, Aaron, to lead the way. At the Lord's direction, Moses confronted Pharaoh and told him to let God's people go. Pharaoh refused, bringing upon Egypt ten plagues from the Lord. After the tenth plague, which resulted in the death of all the firstborn males of Egypt (including Pharaoh's own son), Pharaoh released the Israelites. This event, along with all that accompanied it (including the parting of the Red Sea) would later become the hallmark of the Lord's relationship with the Israelites (Exodus chapters 1 through 14). This was a major battle between the Living God and the idols of Egypt resulting in tremendous respect for Jehovah. This is evidenced in the preamble to the Ten Commandments, which the Lord gave to the Israelites shortly after their release from Egypt: "***I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from slavery in Egypt***" (Exodus 20:2). The Ten Commandments, along with a long list of other requirements, were the code by which the Israelites were to live, and these were based upon the character of God Himself.

As the Israelites neared the Promised Land, Moses sent twelve spies to investigate the new land (Numbers chapters 13 & 14). Ten of the spies returned with a fearful report, and the Israelites opted not to enter the land. The Lord was angry with His people for their lack of faith, so he caused them to wander in the wilderness for forty years before finally entering the Promised Land. Moses died just before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, and Joshua became their new leader (Deuteronomy 34 and Joshua 1).

Once the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they began the long process of conquering the many peoples who already lived there. Some of the people were never completely eliminated and their pagan ways continued to exert influence among the Israelites throughout the nation's history. The Old Testament writers credited such paganism as the primary reason for the Exile.

From the first few hundred years after the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they functioned essentially as a confederation of twelve tribes rather than as a unified nation. Local rulers, called Judges, rose up from time to time to deliver the people from various oppressions and to lead them back to the Lord (the book of Judges). Under Saul, the first king, all the tribes came under the rule of a single king. Due to his sinful actions, Saul was not allowed to pass on the kingdom to his children, and David became the new king (I Samuel) The Lord established a covenant with David, promising to establish his family as the heirs to the throne. David was a very successful military leader and he vastly expanded Israel's domain. He also moved the capital to Jerusalem. After David, Solomon reigned as king, and God blessed him with incredible wisdom. Great wealth and influence throughout the world (I Kings) marked his reign. His greatest achievement was the construction of a magnificent temple for the Lord, (I Kings 6).

After Solomon died, the nation split into two kingdoms because of Solomon's son Rehoboam (I Kings 12). The people were then known as the Northern Kingdom and the Southern kingdom. David's descendants continued to reign over the Southern kingdom. Great sin and idolatry throughout the remainder of their history marked these two kingdoms—especially the Northern Kingdom. Occasionally the Southern kingdom would experience revival and would return to the worship of the Lord, but the Northern Kingdom appears to have been

much more corrupt. Their first king even formally instituted the worship of idols in the towns of Dan and Bethel (I Kings 12).

Eventually the sins of both kingdoms caught up with them (2 Kings 17). The Northern Kingdom was captured by the Assyrians in 722 BC, and the people were exiled. The Southern Kingdom held on until around 586 BC, when the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar captured them. The Babylonians exiled many people to Babylon, and the Temple was destroyed.

Several decades later, the Persians conquered the Babylonians and issued a decree that all exiles could return to their native lands. So many Israelites (who were beginning to be called Jews) returned to their homeland. Others, however, continued to live in Babylon. The Jews who returned soon rebuilt the Temple, and worship was restored. About sixty years later, a man named Ezra returned to Judah along with many other exiles, and he initiated a time of repentance and a renewed study of the Scriptures. Another man, Nehemiah, also returned and rebuilt the walls around Jerusalem (the books of Ezra and Nehemiah).

Beginning with Moses, God began to reveal the Old Testament Scriptures, and they continued to be revealed during the rest of the period covered from Moses to the rebuilding of the temple after the captivity and return to Jerusalem. God could have given Moses the first five books of the Bible, and one of the prophets might have received the rest of the Old Testament. But we didn't get the Old Testament that way. Many different men wrote the Bible over a long period of time (approximately 1500 years) in different countries and touching on many different subjects. Since the Old Testament did not come to us in a completed package as we now have it, how did we get it? How did we get what is called the "canon?" Therefore, the question is how was it determined what books were accepted as Scripture and included in the Old Testament?

### THE TERM "CANON"

The term "*canon*" is borrowed from Greek, in which *kanon* means a rule—a standard for measurement. This word in the Greek (*kanon*) occurs in 2 Cor. 10:13, 15; Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:16 in the KJV and is defined by Thayer:

1. "*A definitely bounded or fixed space within the limits of which one's power or influence is confined; the province assigned one; one's sphere of activity: 2 Cor. 10:13, 15.*"
2. "*Any rule or standard, a principle of law of investigation, judging, living, acting...*"

With respect to the Bible, it speaks of those books that met the standard and therefore were worthy of inclusion. Since the fourth century, *canon* has been used by Christians to denote an authoritative list of the books belonging to the Old Testament or New Testament. What then makes a book canonical? There are **five tests** that will help us to determine or ascertain the canonicity of the Old Testament books:

1. Inspiration: Did God make the revelation or did the book spring from human will?
2. Was it written or endorsed by a spokesman of God? Any writing that was not written by God's spokesman could not truly lay claim to being inspired.
3. Can it be proved to be genuine? Is it possible for us to find out who

- wrote it or, if not the author, can we determine that it contains the same matter that it did when it was first written?
4. Is it an authentic book? Authenticity merely means the factualness of a matter. If a book is authentic, that means that it presents the facts as they were.
  5. Does the testimony of those who lived in or close to the time of writing favor the Canonicity of the book? Do those who lived when the book was written, or at least in the same age that the book was written, testify to its divinity? (Charles Pledge, *Getting Acquainted with the Old Testament* Vol. 1; 1970; pp. 83-84)

## THE FIRST EMERGENCE OF THE CANON

The doctrine of Biblical inspiration is fully developed only in the pages of the New Testament. But far back in Israel's history we already find certain writings being recognized as having divine authority, and serving as a written rule of faith and practice for God's people. This is seen in the people's response when Moses reads to them the book of the covenant (Exodus 24:7), or when the Book of the Law found by Hilkiah is read, first to the king and then to the congregation (2 Kings 22-23; 2 Chron. 34), or when the Book of the Law is read to the people by Ezra (Neh. 8:9, 14-17; 10:28-39; 13:1-3).

The Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) presents itself to us as basically the work of Moses, one of the earliest and certainly the greatest of the Old Testament prophets (Num. 12:6-8; Deut. 34:10-12). God often spoke through Moses orally, as He did through later prophets too, but Moses' activity as a writer was also frequently mentioned (Ex. 17:14; 24:4, 7; 34:27; Num. 33:2; Deut. 28:58, 61; 29:20-27; 30:10; 31:9-13, 19, 22, 24-26). There were other prophets in Moses' lifetime and more were expected to follow (Ex. 15:20; Num. 12:6; Deut. 18:15-22; 34:10), as they did (Judg. 4:4; 6:8), though the great outburst of prophetic activity began with Samuel. The literary work of these prophets started, as far as we know, with Samuel (I Sam. 10:25; I Chron. 29:29). The earliest kind of writing in which they seem to have engaged extensively was history. Afterwards they became the basis of the books of Chronicles (I Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 26:22; 32:32; 33:18ff) and probably of Samuel and Kings too, which have so much material in common with Chronicles. Whether Joshua and Judges likewise were based on prophetic histories of this kind we do not know, but it is quite possible. That the prophets on occasion wrote oracles also is clear from Isaiah 30:8; Jer. 25:13; 29:1; 30:2; 36:1-32; 51:60-64; Ezek. 43:11; Habakkuk 2:2; Dan. 7:1; 2 Chron. 21:12.

The reason why Moses and the prophets wrote God's message and did not content themselves with delivering it orally was sometimes to send it to another place (Jer. 29:1; 36:1-8; 51:60ff; 2 Chron. 21:12), but quite as often to preserve it for the future as a memorial (Ex. 17:14) or a witness (Deut. 31:24-26), that it might be there for the time to come (Isa. 30:8). The unreliability of oral tradition was well known to the Old Testament writers. An object lesson here was the loss of the Book of the Law during the wicked reigns of Manasseh and Amon. When it was rediscovered by Hilkiah, its teaching came as a great shock, for it had been forgotten (2 Kings 22-23; 2 Chron. 34). The permanent and abiding form of God's message was therefore not its spoken but its written form, and this explains the rise of the Old Testament canon.

## EVIDENCE FOR THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

By the beginning of the Christian era the identity of all the canonical books was well known and generally accepted. We will note two sources to establish this fact:

1. Jesus Christ and His apostles recognized the fact that the Old Testament Scriptures were divided into three sections:

Luke 24:44-45 He said to them, ***"This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."***  
(Psalms was part of the Hagiographa, the sacred writings, see below)

The traditional number of the canonical books is twenty-four or twenty-two (with Ruth being in that case appended to Judges, and Lamentations to Jeremiah, in order to conform the count to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet):

The five books of the Law (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)

The eight books of the Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Twelve {the Minor Prophets})

The eleven books of the Hagiographa (sacred writings) Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs (Solomon), and Lamentations, and the historical books Daniel, Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Ruth is prefaced to Psalms, as ending with the genealogy of the Psalmist David.

The traditional order has Chronicles as the last of the Hagiographa or Writings. This position for Chronicles can be traced back to the first century AD, since it is reflected in a saying of Christ's in Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51, where the phrase ***"from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah."*** This probably means all the martyred prophets from one end of the canon to the other, from Genesis 4:3-15 to 2 Chronicles 24:19-22.

2. The famous Jewish historian Josephus likewise recognized that the Old Testament was divided into three parts. He also mentions that no Jew even dared to doubt the authenticity of the books in the Old Testament Canon.

"For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have), but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; and of them, five belong to Moses, which contain his laws, and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; but as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes King of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct

of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes, very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to those books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them or take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it becomes natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem those books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them..." (William Whiston, A.M., The Works of Josephus)

Josephus said:

1. They were in harmony with one another. They did not contradict one another.
2. They contained records, which they believed, were of divine origin.
3. Five of the books were considered the Law of Moses.
4. The five books recorded the origin of the universe till Moses' death.
5. This time period covered a little less than three thousand years.
6. The prophets were after Moses.
7. The remaining four were hymns to God
8. No one bold enough to add to or take away or change anything that was found therein.
9. The Jews were taught from birth to esteem these books and to die for them if the need ever arose.

### **OLD TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS**

Not one of the original writings (called the "autographs") of any book in the Old Testament still exists today. Fortunately, Jewish scribes throughout the ages have made copies of God's Word. There have been those who have worried about the accuracy of those who copied the Old Testament Scriptures. However, Jewish scribes took meticulous care in producing copies of the Scripture because they regarded the text as being God-given and God-inspired down to the very letter. Jesus had the same regard for the Old Testament text; on several occasions He affirmed the immutability of every word of the text (Matt. 5:17-18; Jno. 10:34-35). The Jews had 17 rules they followed in order to copy the Scriptures accurately:

1. A Synagogue roll must be written on the skins of clean animals.
2. Prepared for the particular use of the synagogue by a Jew.
3. These must be fastened together with strings taken from clean animals.
4. Every skin must contain a certain number of columns, equal throughout the entire codex.
5. The length of each column must not extend less than 48 nor more than 60 lines and the breadth must consist of thirty letters.
6. The whole copy must be first-lined; and if three words should be written without a line, it is worthless.
7. The ink should be black, neither red, green, nor any other color, and be prepared according to a definite recipe.
8. An authentic copy must be the exemplar, from which the transcriber ought not in the least deviate.

9. No word or letter, not even a yod, must be written from memory, the scribe not having looked at the codex before him.
10. Between every consonant the space of a hair or thread must intervene;
11. Between every new parashah, or section, the breadth of nine consonants;
12. Between every book, three lines.
13. The fifth book of Moses must terminate exactly with a line; but the rest need not do so.
14. Besides this, the copyist must sit in full Jewish dress.
15. Wash his whole body.
16. Not begin to write the name of God with a pen newly dipped in ink.
17. And should a King address him while writing that name he must take no notice of him.

(Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction To The Bible*, pp.348-349)

It is evident that the Jews took great care in copying the Old Testament Scriptures. With these 17 rules, the Scriptures could be copied in their completeness and with virtual “perfection.” It is known that scribes would count the number of letters on the new copy and compare it with the exemplar in an attempt to find even one letter difference between the two. If the copy were in error, it would be corrected or destroyed. This practice continued generation after generation, century after century. With the evidence that is available concerning the copying of the Old Testament Scriptures, we can feel confident that we have the same Old Testament the Jew had in Old Testament times and also the Jews of Jesus’ day. The Jews believed strongly that the Old Testament Scriptures were something to be revered, for we noticed above in the quote taken from the writings of Josephus that if the situation ever arose the Jewish people would, “...be, willing to die for them....”

We also find a statement by Robert Dick Wilson (1856-1930) to be very encouraging when we consider the topic of Old Testament textual criticism. He was a well-studied man in the Old Testament. In 15 years of studying the languages of the Old Testament plus 15 years of studying the text itself he makes this statement:

“The result of those thirty years’ study I have given to the text has been this: I can affirm that there is not a page of the Old Testament concerning which we need have any doubt. We can be absolutely certain that substantially we have the text of the Old Testament that Christ and the Apostles had, and which was in existence from the beginning.”  
(David Otis Fuller, D.D., *Which Bible?* pp 44, 45).

The books we now have in our English Old Testaments are the same books or writings to which the Jews had access. There are many today, though, who teach that when the books of the Bible were written, they became authoritative but not canonical. However, the Bible teaches us something entirely different because God intended these books to become canonical the moment they were written and not for them to wait for some Church Council to do it. These books were received as the Word of God the moment they were preached or written. There are also some that allege that the authors of these books used “other” sources in writing their books. If this were true then why did Peter say:

***“Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had***

*its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Pet 1:20-21*

This passage does not say that the Old Testament writers received their information from “other” sources. This is what the skeptics would like for us to believe, but those writers received their information from the Holy Spirit of God. Paul said, **“All scripture is given by inspiration of God”** (2 Tim. 3:16), not by the opinions of men from “other” sources. Even the New Testament claimed this same type of inspiration.

*“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.” 1Thes 2:13*

The New Testament plainly teaches that the apostles were guided into all the truth by means of the Holy Spirit (Jno. 14:26; 15:26; 16:13). And this is also the same manner in which the Holy Spirit guided the Old Testament writers, (2 Pet. 1:20-21). So, to teach that these writers of God’s Holy Word received their information from “other” sources is to invent a doctrine that the Bible does not teach.

### **OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS QUOTED OR REFERRED TO IN NEW TESTAMENT**

Another thing one should consider is how many of the Old Testament books are referred to or quoted so as to acknowledge their authenticity, historicity, and authoritative qualities, which would of course point to their divine origin.

<u>OLD TESTAMENT</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>NEW TESTAMENT</u>
1. Gen 1:1,2 Gen. 1:26, 27	Creation Creation of man	John 1:1-3 Mk 10:6
2. Ex. 32	Golden Calf	Acts 7:40-42
3. Lev. 23:1-8	The Passover	Mat. 26:2; Mk 14:1; Lk. 22:1; John 13:1, 2
4. Num. 20:7-11	Water from the Rock	I Cor. 10:4
5. Deut. 4:12-24	Images of the God- Head Forbidden	Acts 17:29, 30; Rom. 1:22, 23
6. Joshua 6:1-20	The Fall of Jericho	Heb. 11:30
7. Judges 2:16	The Judges Raised Up	Acts 11:30
8. Ruth 4:18-22	The Generations of Pharez	Matt. 1:3-6; Lk. 3:32, 33
9. I Sam. 13:14	David, A Man After God’s Own Heart	Acts 13:22

10. 2 Sam. 7:12	The Promise of a Kingdom	Acts 13:22, 23
11. I Kings 19:18	The Faithful Seven Thousand	Rom. 11:4
12. 2 Kings 5:1-14	The Healing of Naaman	Lk. 4:27
13. I Chron. 17:11-15	God's Promise to David	Lk. 1:30-33
14. 2 Chron. 24:20, 21	Murder of Zechariah	Matt. 23:35
15. Ezra 2:1, 2	Babylonian Captivity	Matt. 1:11-13
16. Neh. 9:1-25	Israel's Wilderness Wanderings	Acts 7:35, 36
17. Ester 2:5, 6 (cf. Jer. 22:24-30)	Babylonian Captivity	Matt. 1:11, 12; Acts 7:43
18. Job 1:20-22	The Patience of Job	I Tim. 6:7; Jas. 5:10, 11
19. Psa. 8:4-6	The Son of Man	Heb. 2:6-9
20. Prov. 3:11, 12	Father Disciplines His Children	Heb. 12:5, 6
21. Eccl. 12:13, 14	The Judgment	Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10
22. Song of Sol. 4:7	Purity of Christ's Church	Eph. 5:27; Rev. 21:27
23. Isa. 2:1-5	Establishment of the Lord's Church	Acts 2: I Tim. 3:15
24. Jer. 31:31-34	God Promises a New Covenant	Heb. 8:7-13
25. Lam. 1:15	The Lord Destroys Jerusalem Because of Her Sin	Matt. 23:34-39 Rev. 14:16-20 Rev. 19:13-16
26. Ezek. 1:10	The Four Beasts or Creatures	Rev. 4:7
27. Dan. 2:44	Kingdom of God Established	Mk. 9:1 Col. 1:13

28. Hosea 1:10; 23	God Calleth the Gentiles	Rom. 9:25, 26
29. Joel 2:28-32	God Pours Out His Spirit	Acts 2:16-21
30. Amos 5:25-27	Israel's Idolatry	Acts 7:42, 43
31. Obadiah 21	The Lord Is Ruler of All	Rev. 11:15; 14:1
32. Jonah 1:17	Jesus and Jonah	Matt. 12:39, 40
33. Micah 5:2	Jesus Born in Bethlehem	Lk. 2:4
34. Nahum 1:15	Preaching the Gospel of Peace	Rom. 10:15 (cf. Isa. 52:7)
35. Hab. 2:18-20	Dumb Idols	I Cor. 12:2
36. Zeph. 3:13	The Remnant Shall Do No Iniquity	Rev. 14:4, 5
37. Haggai 2:6	God Shook Heaven and Earth	Heb. 12:26
38. Zech. 2:1-5	The Glory of Christ and His Church (New Jerusalem)	Rev. 21:15-17, 23
39. Mal. 3:1	John the Baptist is Sent	Mk. 1:2

We should be able to see by now that either direct quotations or references to each of the Old Testament books may be found in the New Testament. God's people accepted these books as canon and as being from God as soon as they were written. It has not been until recent centuries that the skeptics of this world have launched an all-out attack on the authenticity of these writings.

If these books of the Old Testament are not authentic documents then Jesus, the apostles, and the rest of the New Testament writers not only believed a lie, but they lied to us. This would make null and void the whole Bible. If this is the case then there is no God, for the Bible says that God cannot lie (Num 23:19; Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18). And if this were the case then when our life is over we would pass away into peaceful non-existence. What a waste of life!

### **WHAT IF I DON'T BELIEVE THE OLD TESTAMENT?**

If I don't believe this information, I will have little confidence in or respect for the Bible. I will consider the Bible only a work of humans, and I am not likely to use it to guide me in all of my life's decisions. I will probably not understand the Bible well, because I probably will not study it diligently. I will not respect the church, since the church is founded on the Scriptures. My ability to fellowship with Christians who do believe this information will also be limited.

## Questions

1. Why is the Old Testament important?

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2. Why is it important for me to understand how the Old Testament came to be?

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3. Who were the Israelites and how did they come into existence?

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4. After God brought Israel out of Egypt how did God govern them?

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5. List other ways God governed them?

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6. What happened to the kingdom of Israel after Solomon?

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7. With whom did God begin to reveal the Old Testament Scriptures?

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8. How long did God continue to reveal the Old Testament Scriptures?

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9. What does the term “canon” mean?

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10. With respect to the Bible, of what does it speak?

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11. What are the five tests which will help us to determine the canonicity of the O. T.?

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12. Why did Moses and the prophets write God's message and not content themselves with delivering it orally?

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13. Discuss how Christ and His apostles recognized the fact that the O. T. Scriptures were divided into three sections.

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14. Who was the famous Jewish historian who also recognized that the O. T. was divided into three parts?

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15. Do we have any of the original manuscripts today?

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16. How careful were the Jewish scribes to make copies?

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17. What if I don't believe the Old Testament Scriptures?

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