

The Nature and Reliability of Scripture

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[0 : 00] Session four in our study series, Understanding the Bible. Today's session is entitled The Nature and Reliability of Scripture.

! By way of a review and a recap, we've been through the history of God's revelation, and we've concluded that God's goal, or one of God's goal, is for humanity to know Him.

So all that He has done in terms of revealing Himself through creation and through the Word is for the purpose that we know Him, we can relate to Him. And we talked about what a blessing it is, what a blessing it is that we can have the Word of God in our hands.

Session two was looking at the history of Scripture itself, so we looked at how the books were written, we talked about what it means that the Scripture is inspired by God, or God-breathed, the actual words of God, and yet at the same time written in the style and using the gifts of the authors. We talked about that, we've talked about the languages, how God has preserved the text through the centuries, through the scribes. And then last week we looked at the manuscripts and how you take thousands of extant manuscripts and then compile one, this is the Bible in Hebrew, this is the New Testament in Greek, and then secondly, how you then take that, ancient languages, 2,000 plus years away from our culture today, and make it understandable in modern English or modern languages.

[1 : 32] So that was all last week, it's all on our shiny new podcast software if you want to catch up. Also I have uploaded all of the slides and all of my notes, and that will be the same today as well, so you can don't worry too much about getting everything written down today.

So the goals for today are these. These are the four goals, the four outlines, and we'll just see how we get on in terms of going through. So I want to talk to you, I guess overall what I want to show you is that we can show, we can prove that the scriptures are supernatural in origin.

That's my goal, I want to prove to you, so you're like, yep, agreed. We believe this on faith already, right, but I want to show you. So we'll talk about the canon of scripture.

The canon of scripture is how the, which books are written, which books are Bible. Well, we'll talk about the reliability of scripture, which is summed up in those two words, inerrancy and infallibility. So we'll talk about those, and then I'm going to show you, and I've touched on this already in the series, but I'll talk some more about how God anticipated human fallibility in the design by distributing key doctrines throughout the Bible, and I'll show you some good examples of that.

[2 : 52] And it avoids that whole hanging of theology on a single verse. We shouldn't do it, we don't need to do it, because God has distributed it throughout the book. And then finally, the fingerprints of God.

I pray in Jesus' name we get that far, because it's my favourite bit, and I did spend ages on it yesterday, and if I don't get to show you the slides today, I'll be disappointed. So, Father, I pray, Lord, that you would give me clarity of thought as we go through this.

I pray, Lord, that you'd help us to connect with what you're saying today. No one needs to hear my voice, my words, but we all, me included, we all need to hear your voice. So, Lord, I pray, by your Spirit, speak. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Alright, here we go. The canon of scripture. And if you only write down, and I only remember one thing, it needs to be this, that the canon of scripture was discerned, and it was not decided.

Hold on, I'm getting a little ahead of myself. Canon means, it is a Greek word that means literally, the measuring stick. And by connotation, then it means the standard.

[3 : 57] The standard by which things are judged. The canon of scripture. And for our purposes, it means the word of God. The canon is the word of God.

It is which books are scripture, and which ones are just interesting historical books. So, let's get into the Old Testament canon first.

And we've spoken about how the Old Testament was written over centuries. And what we've seen already is that as it was written, it was considered to be God's word immediately. Right? Moses wrote the Torah.

In fact, we began with God himself physically writing on the stone tablets. But then Moses wrote all the words down, and it was immediately Torah, law. Torah just means law, by the way.

So, it was immediately the Holy Scriptures for Israel. Now, I have already talked a bit about the documentary hypothesis, which, and hopefully you believe, Jesus, when he shows that it's false.

[4 : 55] But what that does do is it shows that there is some lack of certainty amongst scholars as to when the 39 books that we have today were finalized.

And I can't really say masses about that, because I don't know. But what I can do is quote this gentleman here. That's Flavius Josephus, who was a historian just about one generation or so after Jesus Christ.

And he said that quote there. So, speaking of the Scriptures, he said, For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing and contradicting one another, as the Greeks have.

Dig. But only 22 books, which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine. Divine, he says.

And he says 22 rather than 39, because several of the books would have been combined. The books of Samuel, the books of Kings. Chronicles was one. Lamentations was included as part of Jeremiah.

[5 : 59] I think, if memory serves, Ruth was an addendum to Judges. So, that's the reason for the discrepancy in the number. It was the same books. And he also says in his writings that the number of books was fixed by the time of Ezra.

That is the time of the regathering after the captivity. That's the word I was looking for. Captivity. And also, we can say for certainty that the Old Testament canon was complete by the time of Jesus.

Of course, he himself refers to the law, Torah, the prophets, Nevi'im, and then the Psalms or the writings in Luke 24, 44. You can check that out for yourself. But then we have this.

Hmm. Which, as the kids might say, is sus. Suspicious. This is the Apocrypha. And what the Apocrypha means, it is hidden or doubtful.

Or sus, as I said. Suspicious books. And it comprises several additional books that have been, and actually are, to this day, considered by some to be scripture.

[7 : 05] Also known as the Deuterocanonical books, which just means second canon. And you'll find it in your, any, I was going to say in your, I hope you don't have one. You'll find it in a Roman Catholic Bible, as well as you'll find it in some Septuagint Bibles, as well.

Which is interesting, because, you know, some would hang a lot on that and say, Aha, see, the Bible of the Apostles had the Septuagint [I meant Apocrypha, sorry!] We should read it. Also in the Latin Vulgate. But Josephus was like, ah, ah, ah, not part of the 22.

And what I think was quite illuminative, not a word, what I found useful to know was, in the Dead Sea Scrolls, you, we did find the Apocryphal books, some of the Apocryphal books at least.

But it turns out that they were actually on a different type of parchment. And a different type of script, which indicated that the books of the Tanakh, the Old Testament, had an elevated status.

They used the premium grade thickness paper. So it was clear, I think, that, I think in the end, the answer is simply this.

[8 : 15] They were considered to be interesting historical books, not scripture. And the reason that they were included in the Septuagint was, they were interesting historical books, not scripture.

And again, why did Jerome include them in the Vulgate? Well, actually, just because they were included in the Septuagint. And there's no other reason than that. And I think what they spoke to me about was the danger of putting the words of man alongside the words of God.

And you get confusion. And then over time, people started to accept them as scripture. You know, like a study Bible, for example. And I wouldn't, I'm not discouraging anybody from having a study Bible.

But where you have the scripture and then the words of man on the same page, you have to keep in mind, what does God say and what does man say about God's word? The commentary can be wrong.

Scripture cannot. Summary slide, then, for the Old Testament. It was immediately considered the word of God. Jesus affirmed it.

[9:14] I would say that the Dead Sea Scrolls and Josephus also confirm it. And the apocryphal writings have historical value. You can go ahead and read them. They aren't scripture. And, you know, I was, you know, reading some of them as preparation for this.

And it just doesn't feel like scripture. And I can't quite put my finger on why. But it's like this isn't, anyway. Moving on to the New Testament. So we've seen already that the New Testament was written in one lifetime.

And as with the Old Testament, the apostles considered it to be scripture immediately. And we saw what Peter said about Paul's writing in 2 Peter 3.16. The early church recognized and accepted the writings of the apostles as scripture.

As far as we can tell, immediately. Immediately. The words of Christ they had recorded. It's the words of Christ. Of course it's the word of God. And the teachings of the apostles about that were considered authoritative and they were distributed.

I think it's worth bringing this verse to mind. 1 Thessalonians 5.27. Paul says, I put you under oath by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters.

[10:28] Why would Paul put such heavy language here? Because he knew that this was authoritative. He was saying this about his own letters. And he was saying, this is authoritative and you need to read it.

And for your notes you would check Colossians 4.16, Revelation 1.3 as well. Where you see similar things. You better read these scriptures. You need to know it. But there were early challenges from the enemy that made it necessary for clarification.

Certainty. Marcion in the early 2nd century was an example of the challenges. He had a reduced canon. And he had a corrupt and heretical theology.

And he based it on an edited copy of Luke's gospel and a reduced canon. And then even as late as the Reformation, Martin Luther expressed doubt over some of the New Testament books.

Apparently he called James' letter the Epistle of Straw. Saying that it had nothing of the nature of the gospel about it in his preface to the New Testament in 1522.

[11:39] I'm like, hmm, okay. So, it wasn't unanimous. And there was a need to clearly define what is truly inspired scripture and what is not. So, Eusebius, early church historian, 323 AD.

He wrote Ecclesiastical History. And it's out of copyright now, so you can read that if you want. He said that there were three classifications.

According to his studies, there were three classifications. There were 22 books that are universally accepted. Nobody doubts it. Of the New Testament. Then there are five that are widely accepted but disputed by some.

And those five were James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Jude. And then there were a whole bunch of spurious books that there's no point talking about because they're rejected. Now, I do know that there was also been, there has been debate on Hebrews and Revelation as well.

Although Eusebius listed them as universally accepted, at least by 323 AD. Another letter for your notes was by Athanasius in 367, where he clearly listed out the 27 books that we hold today, saying these are the only Christian scriptures.

[12:56] And then there are a bunch of synods that I won't go through, but they're in the notes if you want to read them. These are the criteria for canonization.

What did they consider when they were assessing what books are scripture in the New Testament? First, apostolic origin. It had to have been either the work of an apostle or sourced from an apostle. So, for example, Luke's works, his gospel and Acts, they are from Paul. Mark's gospel, Mark wasn't an apostle. His work was from Peter.

So they had to be of apostolic origin. Secondly, it was required that the works had doctrinal consistency, which means that the work is consistent and harmonious with the rest of scripture, Old and New Testaments.

And then the third one was universal or continuous acceptance by the church, which means that the Lord has already shown the church this is scripture, and to the effect that churches are regularly

reading it, they are using it in their worship, it is bringing instruction and edification.

[14:08] So, for example, it means 2 Timothy 3.16 has been shown to be true. So, again, not a decision, but a discernment. And there's my slide yet.

So, New Testament summarized. It was also considered scripture. Immediately they were distributed as authoritative. There was challenge, and those are the debated books listed out there. Now we need to talk about inerrancy and infallibility.

So these are two words that describe biblical trustworthiness. Inerrancy means without error. It's fairly straightforward, I suppose.

We assert that the original biblical texts are entirely truthful and free from error in all that they affirm. Whether it is doctrine, whether it is ethics, whether it is matters of historical fact, or whether it is even scientific issues, it is correct and free of error.

That is what inerrancy means. But, again, it is true of the original text only. And, you know, I gave you that somewhat comical last week, the manuscript that had the house on the rock falling down because of an error.

[15:28] Of course there can be errors, and hence textual criticism is the process by which we seek that original inerrant word. A couple of quotes just to show you on this.

This one is from Clement of Rome around 95 AD. So super early, 95 AD. In his first letter, chapter 45, he said, Ye have searched the scriptures which are true, which were given through the Holy Ghost, and ye know that nothing unrighteous or counterfeit is written in them.

So very, very early on, this was known, accepted, believed. Oh, actually, I should have said that letter actually was found with and included in the Codex, Alexandrinus.

I can't read my own notes. Alexandrinus. And then you can read a similar quote from Irenaeus and Origen. This one is from Augustine. So a bit later, 405 AD, Augustine's letter 82.

He said this, And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the manuscript is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it.

[16:55] And I thought, yeah, that's about right. That is about right. So Augustine's position, I think, is spot on. The authors are inerrant, and if anything is amiss, there's those three possible explanations as to why.

And again, it's worth pointing out, that's not to say that the Bible contains all history. It's not a record of all history, but everything that's there is correct, necessarily.

The Bible doesn't contain everything we need to know about science or maths, but if there's anything in there, it is true. Okay? And I found some interesting examples of men who have used the details in the scripture to make scientific or archaeological discoveries.

Again, details in the notes, but Matthew Fontaine Mori, he was the father of oceanography, inspired by Psalm 8, verse 8, which speaks of the pathways of the sea. And on that basis, he discovered pathways in the sea.

Sir William Mitchell Ramsey used Acts to guide his archaeological work in Asia Minor, and that brought him from skepticism to faith. And then a more modern example, Bob Cornuke of baseinstitute.org.

[18:07] He's used biblical data in his projects to find Mount Sinai, to find Mount Ararat, and even the lost anchors of Paul Shipwreck as well.

And you can go and check out his website as well, baseinstitute.org. Interesting stuff. So infallibility, I haven't got masses to say about this, because really I couldn't discern much of a meaning there. Infallibility means that the word of God is not capable of being in error, and not capable of failing to bring to pass its purpose. And the Bible itself makes that claim.

In Psalm 19, verse 7, it says that the law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul. It's perfect. Can't fail. So, inerrant means without error, infallible means cannot fail.

Now, I need now to go through, I wanted to go through some caveats in some detail, because I know we've touched on some of them already, but I realise that there are some caveats, and some risks with this.

[19:07] First, again, it is true of the original word of God, the original autographer, as we say, the original work. So, what that means for us is that we should take note of those footnotes as we're reading our Bibles.

Secondly, it is true in the original language only. And again, and this is especially true if we are reading a thoughtful thought, or worse, a paraphrase, we are really compromising inerrancy. In our studies, we need to be, that chart I showed you last week, we need to be as far left as possible to get as close as we can to that original language. Now, this is where it gets a bit more interesting.

We have to be mindful of the original expectations of the culture. And I wanted to show you a couple of illustrations for this. My man, Jeff Benner, who I've mentioned a couple of times, he emailed me last week.

Of course he did. I felt like a personal email. But he gave me this great example of where expectations can go amiss. Consider these paragraphs.

[20 : 14] Okay, the first one says this. I got up and ate breakfast and read the newspaper. I then drove to work. While at work, I read yesterday's reports. At noon, I walked across the street for lunch. While there, I read a magazine.

Back at work, I read my emails. After work, I drove home and had dinner. So there's one. Now, the second one says this. I drove to work and walked across the street and drove home. I ate breakfast and I ate lunch and I ate dinner.

I read the newspaper and I read the reports. And I read a magazine and I read my emails. Now, those two paragraphs contain the exact same data. The only difference is the first one is in chronological order.

The second one is in logical order or block order. The events are grouped by action and purpose. Now, I think we probably tend to prefer the first one because we like to put things in chronological order.

And you would never be able to work out the chronology from the second one. But the second one is completely true. That is what happened. It's just not in order. Rather, it is not in chronological order.

[21 : 13] Biblical writers, they did not have that expectation that we do sometimes of having things in chronological order. They felt at liberty to order events as made best sense to them for the message that they were trying to convey.

And that's not just a Bible thing. That is true of all ancient writers. And then the second thing about expectations is this. *Ipsissima vox versus ipsissima verba*.

And Joe, you're going to have to explain that. Of course. Of course I will. This has to do with reported speech. In the ancient world, both the Jewish and the Greco-Roman cultures, it wasn't standard practice to quote verbatim.

What historians and authors were expected to do was to convey the essence and meaning of what somebody had said. And the technical phrase for that is *ipsissima vox*, which means the very voice, as opposed to *ipsissima verba*, which means the very words.

If you want to read more about that, there's a link in the notes. But the point is, it's not incorrect if two gospel writers record the same conversation differently, and where you go, ah, well, one of these is wrong.

[22 : 23] Then neither of them is wrong. There was no expectation of word-for-word accuracy. So if you consider the conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well, that isn't word-for-word how it went down, most likely.

But that is the essence of the conversation, the very voice. And then the final caveat that I have for you is this. You have to account for the author's intent.

And a very simple and obvious example of this would be that sometimes the Bible is just recording what somebody said. The whole book of Job is just a recording of what people said.

We're going to see an example in a couple of weeks, actually, of an account of the death of Saul and Jonathan, and then a spoken account of the death of Saul and Jonathan, and the spoken account differs.

Well, therefore, the spoken account is wrong. It doesn't have anything to do with the inerrancy of Scripture. It just means that the bloke was wrong. And I'm sure that Tony will take us through that when we look at it.

[23 : 23] But that's an example where the intent of the author was just to show us what was said. And then the second aspect of this that I wanted to draw out was considering genre. When David wrote Psalm 1, he wasn't suggesting that we are literally like trees.

That's not what he meant. It is poetry. When Jesus was teaching in his parables about seeds and sowers and vineyards, he wasn't making agricultural points. And we understand this, of course, and I'm being a little bit facetious, but we understand that.

Sometimes it is allegory. But the opposite error would be to allegorize text that the author did not mean to be allegorized. The common example is to allegorize Genesis 1-11.

What was Moses' intention with those chapters? He's clearly presenting history. He's clearly presenting history. So allegorizing Genesis 1-11 is to fail to take into account the author's intent. The fact that it is poetry does not reduce or do anything to diminish Moses' intention to record history. It's obvious from the context. The distribution of doctrine.

[24 : 34] How do we deal with problems? We assert that the original texts are inerrant. We have textual criticism to try to seek those original texts from the wealth that God has preserved for us, miraculously.

Now, God knew that there would be places here and there where the precise original text would be in doubt. Funny that. He knows everything. He knew, of course, that the enemy would try and corrupt Scripture to cast doubt.

Did God really say? Et cetera, et cetera. So, what has he done? Well, he has distributed the core doctrines throughout the whole of the Bible.

And this is in keeping with the principle that you'll find in, for example, Deuteronomy 19.15, where it says that on the testimony of two or three witnesses, a matter shall be confirmed. And, you know, I wouldn't go as far as to say if you only find it written in the Bible once, we should doubt it.

Because if God said it is true, however, God in his wisdom has recorded things time and again. And I want to show you four. Four.

[25 : 46] Four. First thing, creation. If I asked you to turn to the chapter in the Bible on creation, you would probably go to Genesis 1, of course. But actually, you could turn to any of dozens.

And they're on the slide there. Any one of those passages there, Psalm, Isaiah, Colossians, and Hebrews and Revelation, so Old and New Testament, will all affirm the doctrine of creation.

And by that I mean young earth creation. You can disbelieve Moses if you want to. You shouldn't, but you could. But if you're really going to cling to an old earth, you also have to deny John, Paul, Isaiah, because all of them say, from the beginning, from the beginning, God created male and female, for example.

Not long ages. Consistent truth. And Jesus himself said it as well, actually. So, next. The resurrection. The fact that there will be a resurrection.

Where is that written? All through the book. Obviously, you've got the New Testament references in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. You've got 1 Corinthians 15. What about the Old Testament?

[26 : 56] Sure. Have a look at Job 19. For I know my Redeemer lives, and in the end he will stand on the earth, and in my flesh, with my eyes I will see God. Daniel 12 speaks of the resurrection.

Those who are sleeping in the ground will awaken. We could look at other plain texts. Isaiah 26, 19, Ezekiel 37. And then Jesus was challenged by the Sadducees.

You may remember. They were like, you find me a resurrection passage in the Torah. And Jesus was like, challenge accepted. Go take a look at Exodus chapter 3. Where it says, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

He's not the God of the dead, but the living. I'm like, ah, amazing. The resurrection, all through the Bible. Torah to Revelation. Next.

The deity of Christ. Is Christ God? Is there a triune God? And we talked last time, I think, about that. Yeah, I think it was last week. John 1, 18. Is it only begotten God? Or only begotten Son?

[27 : 57] Hmm. If we only had that verse, hmm. But we don't. Well, we have obviously John 1, 1. We have John 20, 28. We have 1 John 5, 20. And then some more passages as well.

Colossians says that in Jesus Christ, all the fullness of deity dwells. Titus 2, 13 is possibly one of the strongest. Where he just plainly says, of Jesus Christ, he is our great God and saviour.

Okay, cool. But what about the Old Testament? Again, challenge accepted. Genesis 1, 26. Where God says, let us make man in our image. What do you mean us? The triune God.

You can have a look at Psalm 45, where the sons of Korah are speaking about this majestic warrior king, the Messiah. Clearly a man. And then, your throne God is forever and ever, which the book of Hebrews, chapter 1, draws out for us.

Isaiah 9, 6. There's a son to be born, and he will be called Mighty God. And God with us. Emmanuel. And Micah 5, 2 as well. All those beautiful Christmas verses.

[29 : 01] One more. Salvation by grace through faith. Ah, this is a New Testament idea. You won't find that in the Old Testament. But wait.

Of course we will. The New Testament is clear from Ephesians 2, 8 and 9. One of the clearest. Romans 3, 28. Galatians 2, 16. Those are all from Paul, of course.

So we can look to Luke as a second witness in Acts 15, 11. Where he records Peter saying that we believe, that we Jews are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way as they, the Gentiles, are.

How are Jews saved? By grace. Two witnesses. And again, Old Testament. Paul actually hangs a lot of his arguments on Genesis 15, verse 6.

Where it says simply that Abraham believed faith in the Lord and it was credited to him as righteousness. Isaiah 55, verses 1 to 3 extends this amazing invitation.

[30 : 02] Anyone who thirsts to come to God's table, come to God's table, it's freely available. Come, listen to believe and receive. And God will make an everlasting covenant with you.

New Testament. Habakkuk 2, 4. Again, another verse that Paul hangs on. The righteous one shall live by his faith. And then Joel 2, verse 32 is the one that Peter uses in Acts 2 to describe what's happening at Pentecost, the birth of the church.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. It's there. All through the Bible. You can't escape it. So, those are four.

All of these key doctrines and many more besides, God has wisely distributed throughout the whole of the Bible so that there can be no doubt.

Ah, exciting times. The fingerprints of God. I'm so glad we're going to do this. I am going to prove to you in this section that this is a divine book that is from outside of time.

[31 : 08] There can be no doubt. And we could start, of course, by looking at prophecy. And we should talk about this. And I want to... But this is a whole separate study. And actually, we've spent quite a bit of time on this.

You only have to go back to the Christmas studies that Ray did on Jesus, the expected one, to look at the incredible prophecies concerning Christ. And there are other examples of prophecy that we could look to.

God naming King Cyrus in advance in Isaiah 45. Isaiah 45 was written around 700 BC. and in it, God says, Cyrus, I'm calling you by name to accomplish my purposes.

And then about 150 years later or so, he shows up. If memory serves, it's Jeremiah. He says, hey, have you seen this letter? It's addressed to you written 150 years ago. He's like, what?

And he fulfills it. Amazing. We could talk about the Jewish feasts, which I think we're doing in a little while. We're going to have a study on the Jewish feasts, all of which are prophetic. So, amazing.

[32 : 09] Amazing, amazing, amazing. But I'm not going to get into that too much today. We're going to move on to this. Because I wanted to talk a little bit about contemporary prophecies that show divine foreknowledge.

Divine foreknowledge. And there's three there on the screen. The rebirth of Israel. The rebirth of Israel. Israel. I'm sure you know this already, but Israel as a nation was defeated and really removed in 70 AD by the Roman army.

They destroyed Jerusalem. They destroyed the temple, just as Jesus has said would happen in the Gospels. And then what began was the diaspora, the distribution of Jews throughout the globe.

And the Jews have been persecuted just forever. And so they had every reason to hide their culture and their language. And yet, their peculiarity as a people has been maintained by God.

The language of Hebrew ceased to be regularly spoken somewhere around the 3rd to 5th century AD. Nobody had Hebrew as their modern tongue for over a thousand years.

[33 : 25] That's not to say it was completely forgotten. There were those scriptures and people used it sort of ceremonially. But it wasn't anyone's mother tongue anymore, native tongue. But God preserved them. God preserved the language.

God preserved the culture and that collective memory because as Luke 21, 24 says, Jerusalem will be trampled down underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

There will be an end. And 14th of May, 1948, almost exactly 77 years ago, nice number, was the Israeli Declaration of Independence when God supernaturally brought them back in.

What was the first thing that happened? All the Arab nations went to war and God preserved them. He protected them. And now what's happening? Well, I'll let you go to thirdtemple.org and see for yourself.

Amazing, amazing stuff. In fact, what I forgot to add in this is that the scriptures are clear that there needs to be a third temple. There needs to be a third temple in order for some of the end times events and scenarios to take place.

[34 : 32] And they are building it today. Or, they are planning to build it today. Secondly, the concept of cashlessness and a controlled economy. Revelation 13, 16 and 17 has this rather enigmatic prophecy.

But what is clear is that in the end times there is going to be preventions, restrictions on buying and selling unless one possesses this specific mark or charigma, character, or engraving.

What does that mean? What does that mean? Well, what it means is there's going to be a restriction on buying and selling. And when all buying and selling was done through trade or through cash, how on earth could that ever happen?

Whereas now, I go to the shop more often than not I'll beep my phone to buy something. We've become cashless. It's happened. And that is really the only way that this kind of thing could be fulfilled.

When all of the economy is done electronically, then the enemy is able to control it. Prophetic. Widespread deception. 2 Timothy 3, 13 says that evil people and imposters will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

[35 : 44] And this is happening now. I mean, really ever since post-modernism came along and started to erode the concept of true and false, we've seen people start to genuinely believe things that are obviously false.

And I think in these modern days, the most obvious and striking example is a male. Objectively true. Your body is male and then the soul within it is saying I am female.

You are denying reality. You are deceived. And you are being deceived. And there are charities and groups who will maintain the deception. This verse, 2 Timothy 3, 13, that is an example of exactly that.

Exactly that. And 2 Thessalonians 2 says this is going to be a hallmark of the days into which Antichrist comes. And you could look at other things. The rise of Christian sex, like JW's and Mormons, a whole bunch of those seem to spring up around the same time.

You could look at the rise of globalism. People much smarter than me have spent a whole bunch of time on this. So I'm going to leave it there. I only wanted to say that the Bible is timeless and it has prophetic relevance right the way up to today and beyond.

[37 : 00] And now, for something different. The names in Genesis 5. This is quite mind-blowing and you need to just pay attention to this.

You might have seen this before. I didn't want to show you anything today that I haven't personally been able to validate. So I spent a whole bunch of time yesterday on this and one of the other things I'll show you.

The other one I didn't have time for. Genesis chapter 5 contains a bunch of names. It also contains the Gospel. And this is the first of three structural wonders that I want to show you that prove that the Bible text is...

It cannot come from human. It cannot come from humans. When you look at the meaning of these names in Hebrew, you get a sentence.

They all have meanings and there's, again, a link in the notes if you want to check them out for yourself. You could also look at Chuck Missler's 1999 book, Cosmic Codes. His result is a little different to mine.

[38 : 04] Mainly that's to do with how one translates the verbs or the words because they are different. But the essence is the same. So Adam, it means man or mankind. Mankind. Easy enough.

The name Seth, it means set, which I always thought that's quite nice because the name is literally set, but set in place, put in place, or given. That's what the name means. I think a lot of time people translate it as appointed, but really it means God has given me, God has placed before me another. Mankind put. Enosh. It comes from the Hebrew word anash, which means incurable or desperately sick. It's the same word used in Jeremiah 17, verse 9, to describe the human heart.

Desperately sick or incurable. Enosh. Nice. Kenan. Kenan is related to a word that means lamentation or sorrowful dirge.

Can you, would you, I can't believe anyone would ever name their son that, but anyway, that's what his name means. And then we come to Mahalalel, which literally means praise, immediately the praise God or praised God.

[39 : 14] Praised God. Yared, or Jared. Jared is a verb that means to descend or to come down. Enoch or Hanoah, if you want to get close to the original.

That means dedicated. It means a few things. It means dedicated. It means to initiate as well, to begin. Methuselah.

Methuselah is a compound of mut, which means death, and shalach, which means to send or to let go. His death is going to send it. And of course, we know that because his death was the very year of the flood of Noah.

The death of Methuselah brought about the flood. So that was literally fulfilled. But that's what his name means. Lamech is a tricky one. I did have to scrobble around for a meaning on this one for a while.

But it means those brought low, those who are depressed, humiliated, or poor. The word lamed, or rather the letter lamed, I should say, means towards.

[40 : 18] L. So I think that you can rightly translate it as to the poor. To the poor. And then Noah, or Noah, comfort, rest, relief.

It's a sentence. And if you put them in order, it says this. Mankind is put desperately sick and sorrowful. The praised God descends, dedicating his death to send to the poor relief.

I was like, wow. Wow. And then just this week, I read this. 1 Chronicles 1, the very first four verses.

It's literally the sentence because it just says, Adam Seth, Enosh Kinan, Mahalal Yared.

And it literally is those names spelled out. So if you read Hebrew, if you've got a Hebrew Bible that literally translates it, 1 Chronicles 1, verses 1 through 4, then you would get mankind put desperately sick and sorrowful.

But the praised God descends, dedicating his death to send to the poor relief. I was like, what? And it's, you cannot, I mean, it would be impossible to conspire, to hide that.

[41 : 30] Not just because the whole book was written thousands of years before the Christian gospel. Why would the rabbis have done that anyway? It's amazing. It defies explanation.

And obviously, it would be impossible after the Septuagint was written as well. It is an incredible, incredible evidence of God and his hand on it. Next, Ivan Panin is a mathematician who wrote this little book on Bible numerics.

Again, you can read a bit about him in Mr. Cosmic Codes book. What he did was, he, well, so around 1890, he started to discover the mathematical design in the original languages of the Bible.

This was his publication in 1904, which you can read online. The link is in archive.org and it's in my notes. And there's also another book that he wrote that's on there as well, that's more extensive.

But what, I wanted to read this from his introduction, an introduction of this book, which you can read for yourself. He says, it is the purpose of these pages to show that notwithstanding these circumstances, the whole Bible is constructed on an elaborate mathematical design which must have been planned by one mind.

[42 : 50] And, incidentally, that it contains within itself the infallible means for deciding between disputed readings of the text, where certainty from the original sources is unavailable.

And wouldn't he know it, he uses John 1.18 as his example. And he shows how, so the kind of thing that he looks at, and I'll show you the kind of thing he does. I'll do that first and then I'll circle back if I remember.

What does he do? Well, he is looking at things like this. So this is the first verse of Genesis, the first verse of the Bible. And if you can read the Hebrew, it's there for you as well.

This happens to contain the following things that are true. Seven words total. Number seven. There are 28 letters in total, which is seven times four.

Incidentally, number 28 is the seventh triangular number. Interesting. The first three words have got seven times two letters. The last four have seven times two letters.

[43 : 54] There are three nouns and they have seven times two letters. And of course, seven times two letters remain in the others. You can go on. Pan in catalogs dozens and dozens of these.

He starts to look at the gamutria, the value of the numbers that Ray's been talking about. And you keep seeing seven and multiples of seven over and over and over and over again. And this is what is referred to as the heptatic structure that God seems to have built the whole of the Bible around the number seven.

This is just one example. The other one I wanted to show you is from Matthew. Matthew and the genealogy at the beginning of the book. So you remember the text.

The record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the Messiah. And you can go through the whole thing. My full disclosure is I have not verified this one. This is the one thing I did not have time to verify yesterday.

But apparently all these things are true of that genealogy. The number of words is divisible by seven. The number of letters divisible by seven. The number of vowels divisible by seven.

[44 : 57] The number of consonants divisible by seven. The number of words that begin with a vowel divisible by seven. The number of words beginning with a consonant divisible by seven. The number of words that occur only once divisible by seven.

The most frequent word appears a multiple of seven times and incidentally in seven different forms. the number of nouns divisible by 7, the number of non-nouns is exactly 7 dot dot dot because there are more and again you start so I make no other conclusion than this is evidence of a structure beyond what humans could do, if you were going to try and make up a genealogy and you had complete freedom over how you spell the names, this would still be impossible I think, virtually impossible to do, and these are historical names, amazing so that's the kind of thing that Payne and Deer said, what did he do with John 1.18, well what he did was he applied a similar thing how many different words are there how many letters are there, how many vowels and he found that if it is if it says only begotten son that is the only occurrence of the word son and it blows the count and suddenly you've got more different words and the number of letters doesn't work and I thought, wow so for him, he's like, mathematically only begotten God is correct

I thought, cool, I'm going to take your word for that one, I'll say, I didn't verify it okay, finally this one I did verify and I have taken the liberty of putting my little word document that I made in the notes so you can download and see it for yourself this is my last one hidden acrostics hidden acrostics in the Torah in the first five books of the Bible there is this amazing little I don't know I guess you could call it an Easter egg a little thing that God put in for us here's my this is my word document and yes, I spent a long time on that so you're welcome what I've highlighted there with the little orange boxes is that the word Torah Tav Vav Resh and He are in a line vertically at an interval of so there is seven times seven letters 49 letters in between and then you get a letter and it begins from the last letter of the word

Bereshit or the Tav there Torah Torah is spelled forwards in Genesis and Exodus at intervals of 49 letters or seven times seven and you can see it there let's say I did verify it it is for sure there and then if you go to Numbers and Deuteronomy you find the same thing it took me ages to find it in Deuteronomy I almost gave up looking for it but it is there you just have to start from verse 5 the word Torah is there but it is pointing backwards backwards wow okay amazing so they are pointing towards the book of Leviticus what do you find in the book of Leviticus well highlighted in blue there at intervals of seven letters you find Yod-Heh Vav-Heh the name of God the name of the Lord and what you have built into the design of the Hebrew is the Torah pointing to the Lord the Torah pointing to the Lord and you think wow amazing and if one letter is missing it all breaks it would all break if any one letter was missing from any one of those five books amazing amazing amazing Mishla goes through a whole bunch of these in the book of Esther as well I didn't take the time to verify I knew we wouldn't have time so with that we're done as I say you can have a look if you want they're all in the notes summary the Christian gospel was hidden in Genesis the Christian gospel was hidden in 1st Chronicles two different books two different authors both written in the Old Testament before Christ is there hidden away the Old and the New Testament both exhibit numerical structures that defy any chance or naturalistic explanation and the Bible contains hidden acrostic patterns and letter sequence that authenticate the text as miraculous amazing stuff and you can I think on the basis of those you can be confident certainly this is a miraculous book so next week is the final one in our series and what I want to do is bring it home I know that this has been quite academic and I wanted to bring it home and talk about okay how do I approach the Bible how do I read the Bible how do I get the value out of the Bible so we'll look at in a bit more detail at 2nd Timothy 3.16 where God says about the word and the things that it is useful for and I will talk about

how Jesus Christ who is the word of God is inseparable from the Bible the word of God that's going to be our project for next week but for now

[50 : 02] I think we're ready to pray praise you Lord for these things Lord your word is just miraculous we praise you Lord that we can have such confidence such certainty in your word it's just an amazing thing for us to stand back from and we just just say wow wow wow Lord we thank you for the things that we have seen today Lord I pray that you would just just stir up within us a renewed heart to study your word and to know your word we long to know it because through it we've got to know you and as we've seen that is your purpose and desire that we should know you praise your name thank you that your word is trustworthy thank you that it is reliable thank you that we can indeed place our very eternity on it hallelujah in Jesus name amen amen