

WELCOME!



THE REASON FOR HOPE

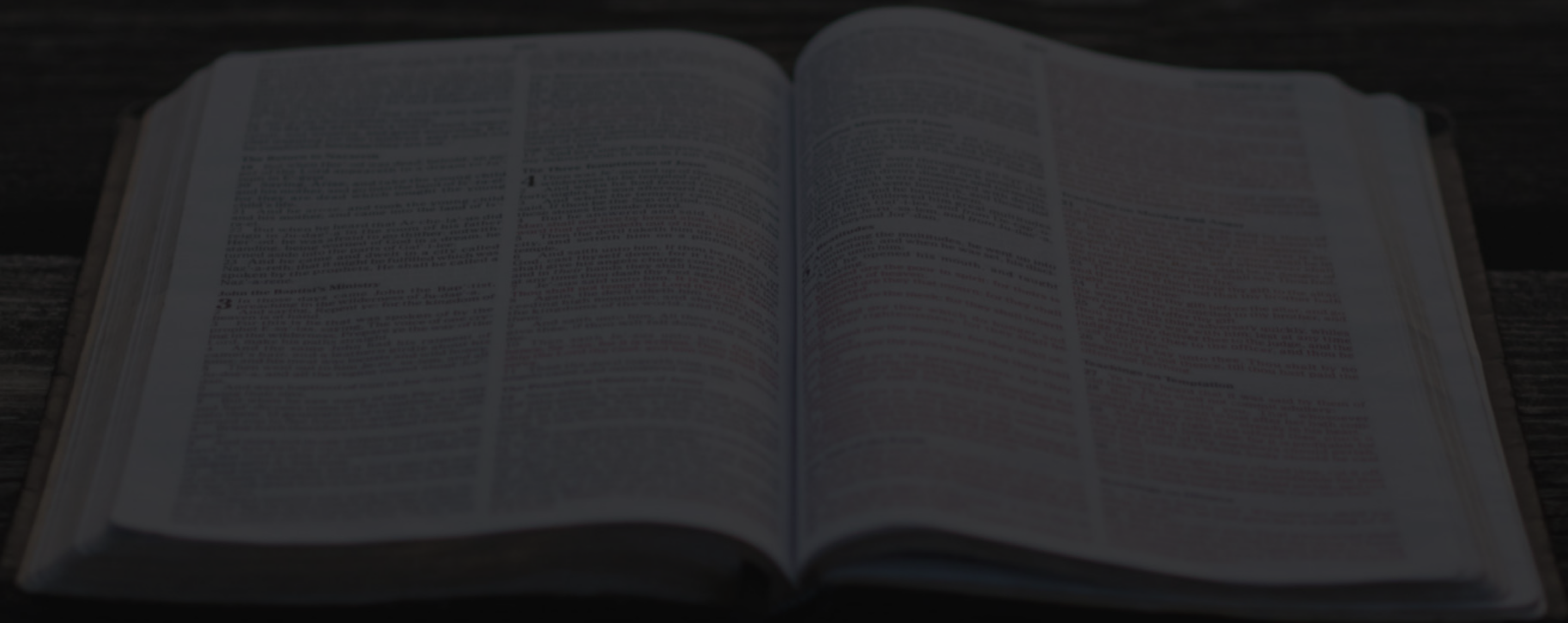
WHY TRUST THE BIBLE?

STARTING POINT

“...for ultimate authorities to be ultimate authorities, they have to be the standard for their own authentication. You cannot account for them without using them.” (Michael J. Kruger)

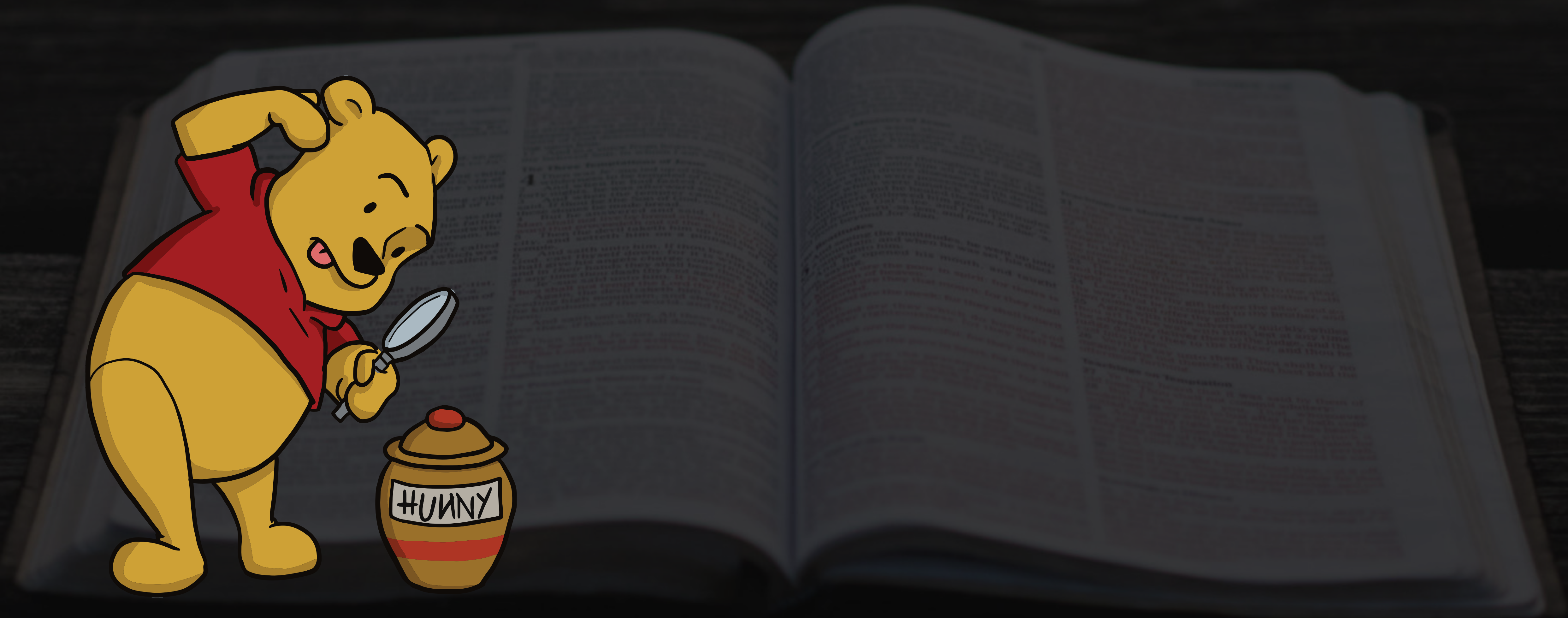
If the Bible is God's Word, then it is an ultimate **AUTHORITY**
and so it must be self-authenticating.

WORKSHOP OUTLINE



THE WINNIE THE POOH DEFENSE OF THE BIBLE









READ THE LABEL: *WHAT DOES THE BIBLE CLAIM TO BE?*



LOOK INSIDE: *DOES THE BIBLE MATCH ITS CLAIMS?*



TASTE & SEE: *EXPERIENCE ITS GOODNESS!*



1. READ THE LABEL: *WHAT DOES THE BIBLE CLAIM TO BE?*



LOOK AT THE LABEL ON THE POT

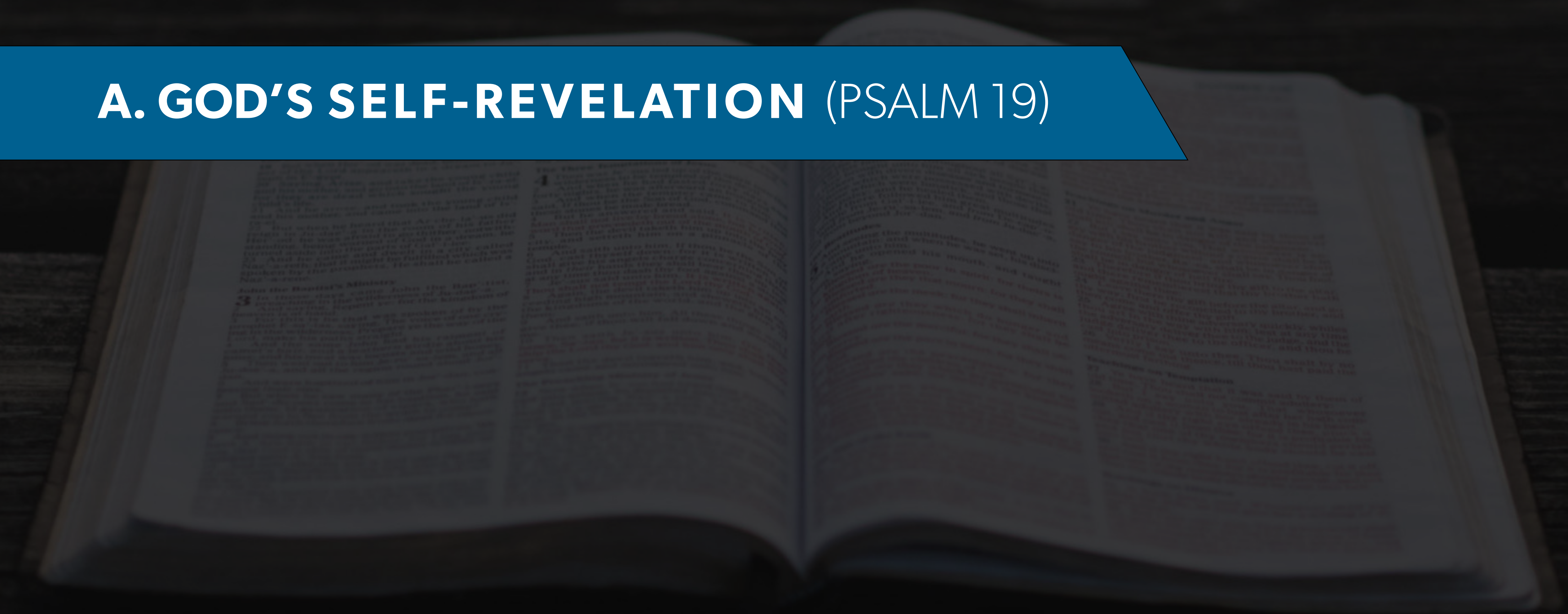
A BRIEF INTRO TO THE BIBLE

The Bible is divided into 2 sections: The Old Testament (39 documents written in Hebrew & Aramaic) and the New Testament (27 documents written mainly in Greek) - the oldest documents being written about **1500 BC** and the latest around **90 AD**.

The Bible may be thought of not as just one singular book, but as a **LIBRARY** of books.

READ THE LABEL: *WHAT DOES THE BIBLE CLAIM TO BE?*

A. GOD'S SELF-REVELATION (PSALM 19)



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I. CREATION - also called "General Revelation"

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I. CREATION - also called "General Revelation"

Verses 1-6

This is why the Bible doesn't try to prove God's existence as Creator. It assumes that is unmissable as the giant flaming fireball hanging over our heads in the sky every day (v.6)!

A. GOD'S SELF-REVELATION (PSALM 19)

I. SCRIPTURE - also called "Special Revelation"

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I. SCRIPTURE - also called "Special Revelation"

Verses 7-11:

From God - perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true, precious, desirable and able to instruct and warn.

Its effects - able to revive the soul, make wise, rejoice the heart, enlighten, endure, be sweeter than honey (enjoyable), and result in a great reward for the one who listens to it.



TAKE AWAY: The Bible is God's special self-revelation to us, revealing who He is by telling us in writing what He said, has done and promises to do.

READ THE LABEL: *WHAT DOES THE BIBLE CLAIM TO BE?*

...in the first five books of the Old Testament alone, you'll see phrases like "God said" about 700 times. There are nearly 4,000 such claims in the Old Testament as a whole.

(Barry Cooper)

B. GOD SPEAKING TO US (MATTHEW 22:29-32)

Matthew 22:31b - "have you not read what was said to you by God..."

B. GOD SPEAKING TO US (MATTHEW 22:29-32)

Matthew 22:31b - Jesus holds the Jewish leaders accountable to what was written in Exodus 3:6 as if God had personally spoke it directly to them.

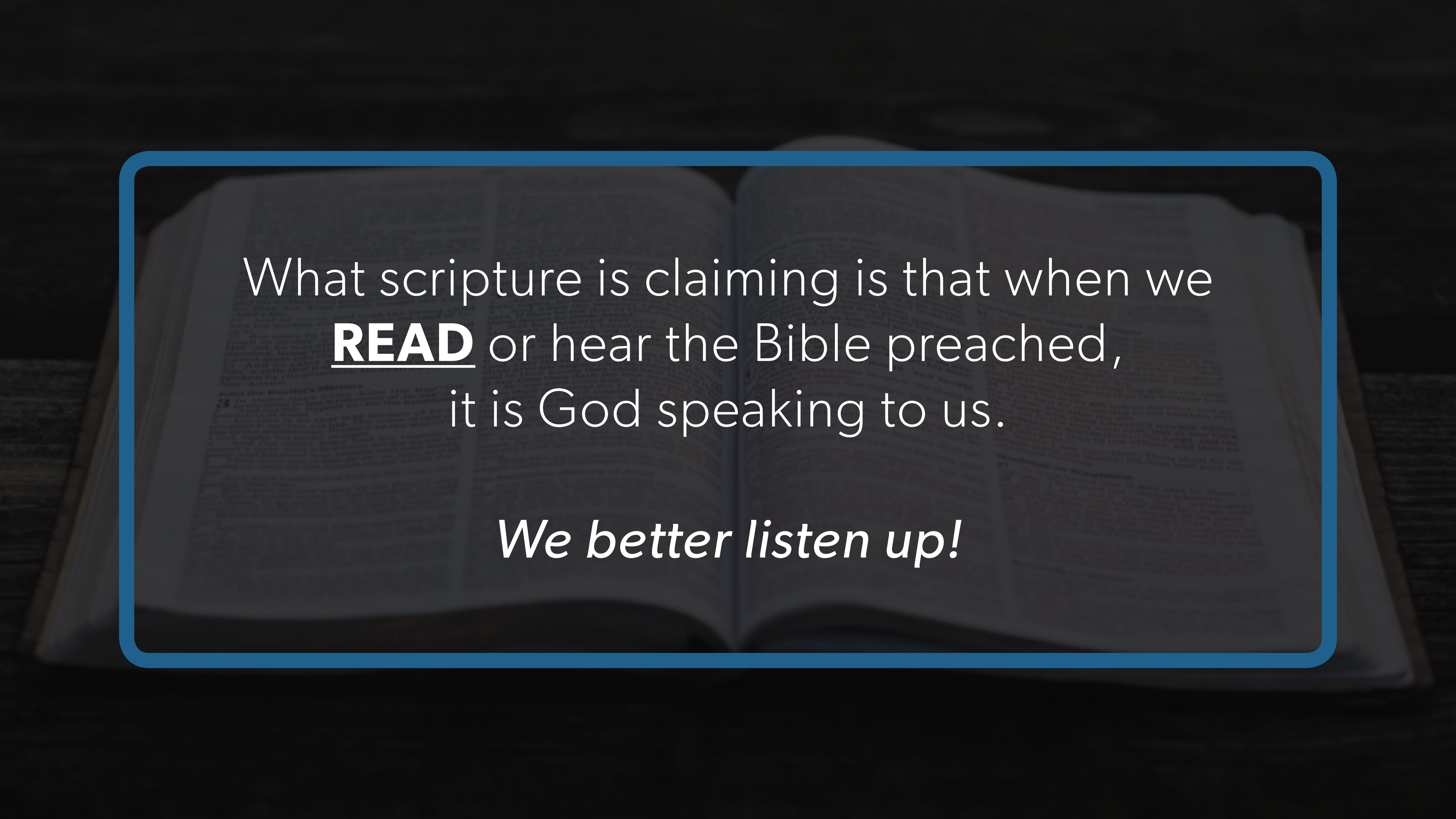
B. GOD SPEAKING TO US (MATTHEW 22:29-32)

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says that scripture is ultimately the product of **GOD** not man and they are **SUFFICIENT** to fully equip us for every good work.

B. GOD SPEAKING TO US (MATTHEW 22:29-32)

2 Peter 1:20-21 says that the meaning of scripture is *NOT* a matter of one's own *private interpretation*.

God meant to say something *specific* to us and intends for us to *rightly understand* His message.

An open Bible is shown in the background, with its pages slightly blurred. Overlaid on the Bible is a blue rounded rectangle containing white text. The text reads: "What scripture is claiming is that when we **READ** or hear the Bible preached, it is God speaking to us." The word "READ" is bolded and underlined.

What scripture is claiming is that when we **READ** or hear the Bible preached, it is God speaking to us.

We better listen up!



TAKE AWAY: The Bible is God speaking directly to us. Properly interpreted, its commands are binding on us, and it is sufficient for salvation and to equip us for every good work.



FURTHER RESOURCES

2. LOOK INSIDE:

DOES THE BIBLE MATCH ITS CLAIMS?



DOES THIS LOOK LIKE HONEY?

3 Self-Authenticating Qualities of Scripture:

A. INTERNAL CONSISTENCY

B. FULFILLED PROPHECY

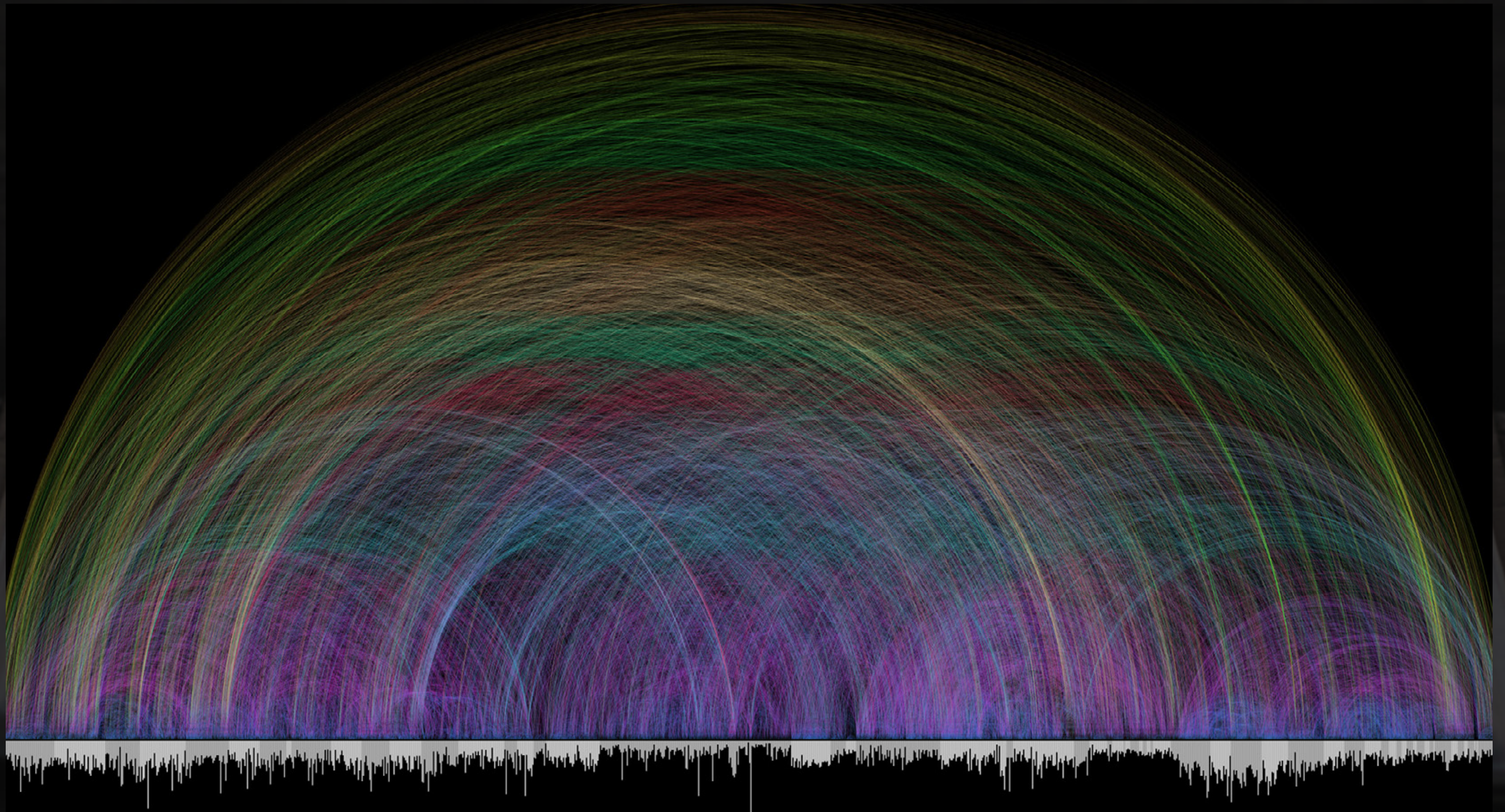
C. FAITHFUL PRESERVATION

A. INTERNAL CONSISTENCY (GENESIS - REVELATION)

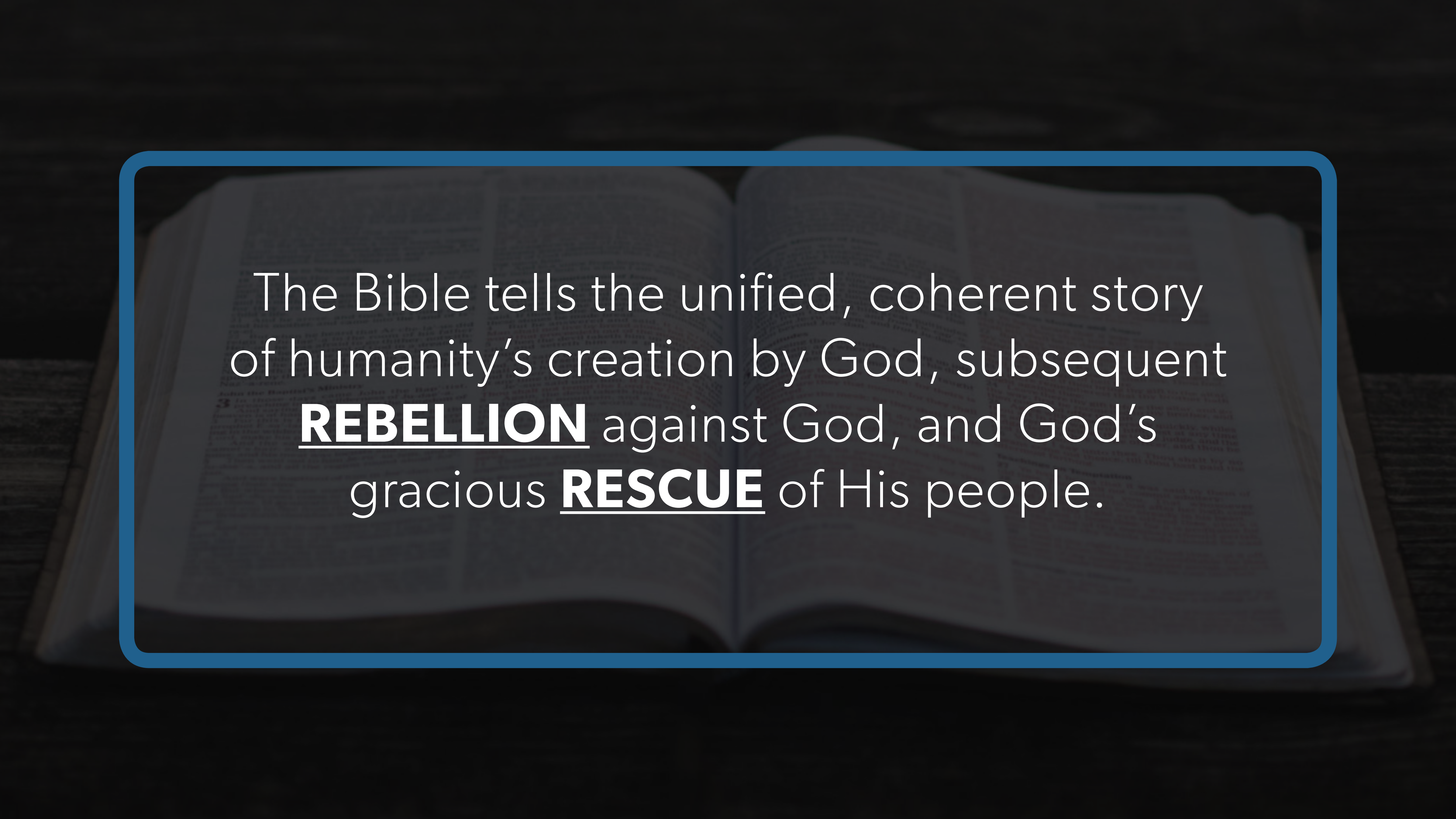
If the Bible is ultimately the product of One Divine Author, then its collective message should be consistent across all of its books.

A. INTERNAL CONSISTENCY (GENESIS - REVELATION)

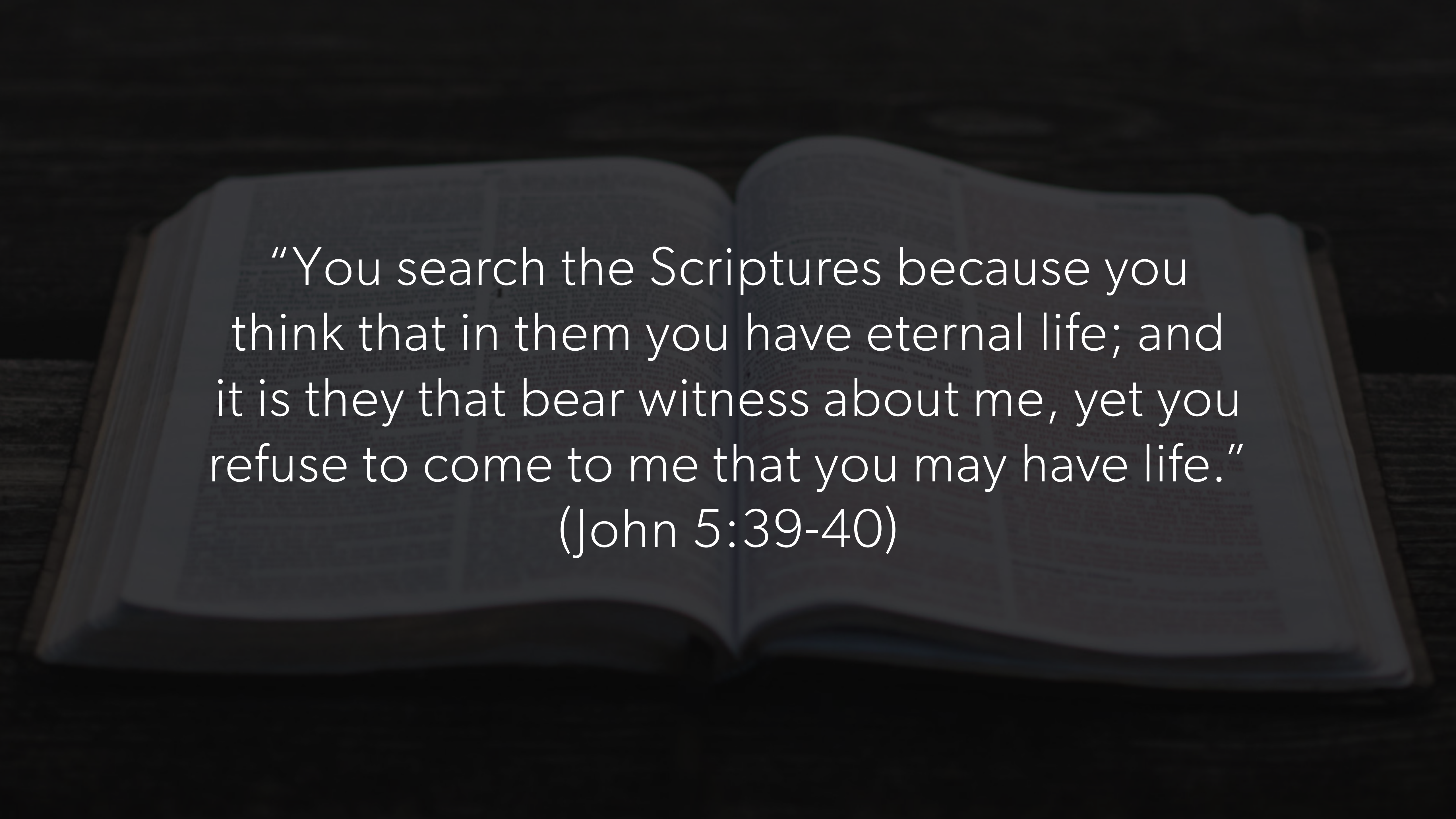




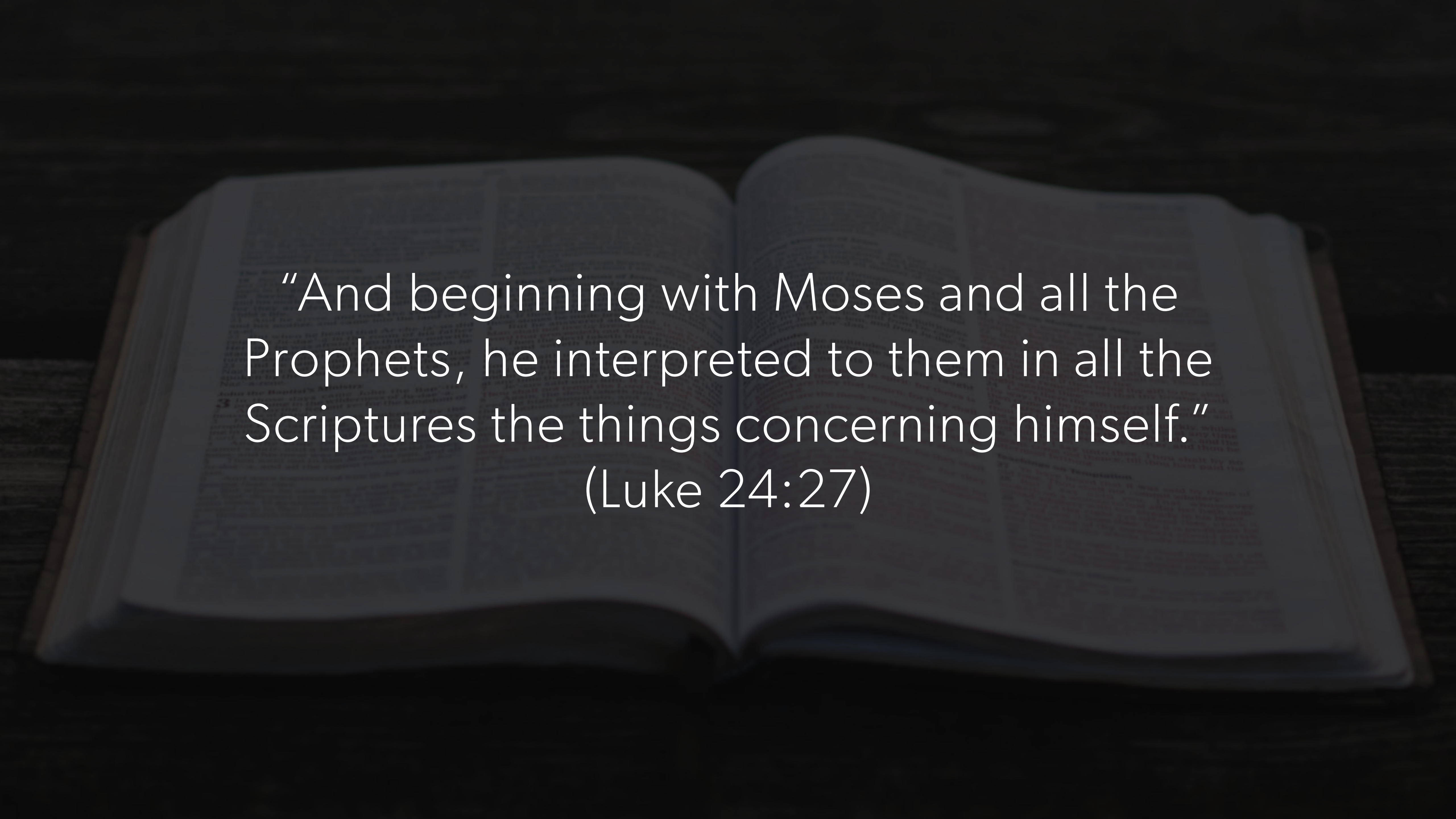
BIBLE VISUAL ARC (63,779 CROSS-REFERENCES)

An open Bible is shown in the background, slightly out of focus. The pages are filled with text, and the binding is visible in the center. A blue rounded rectangle is superimposed over the Bible, containing the main text.

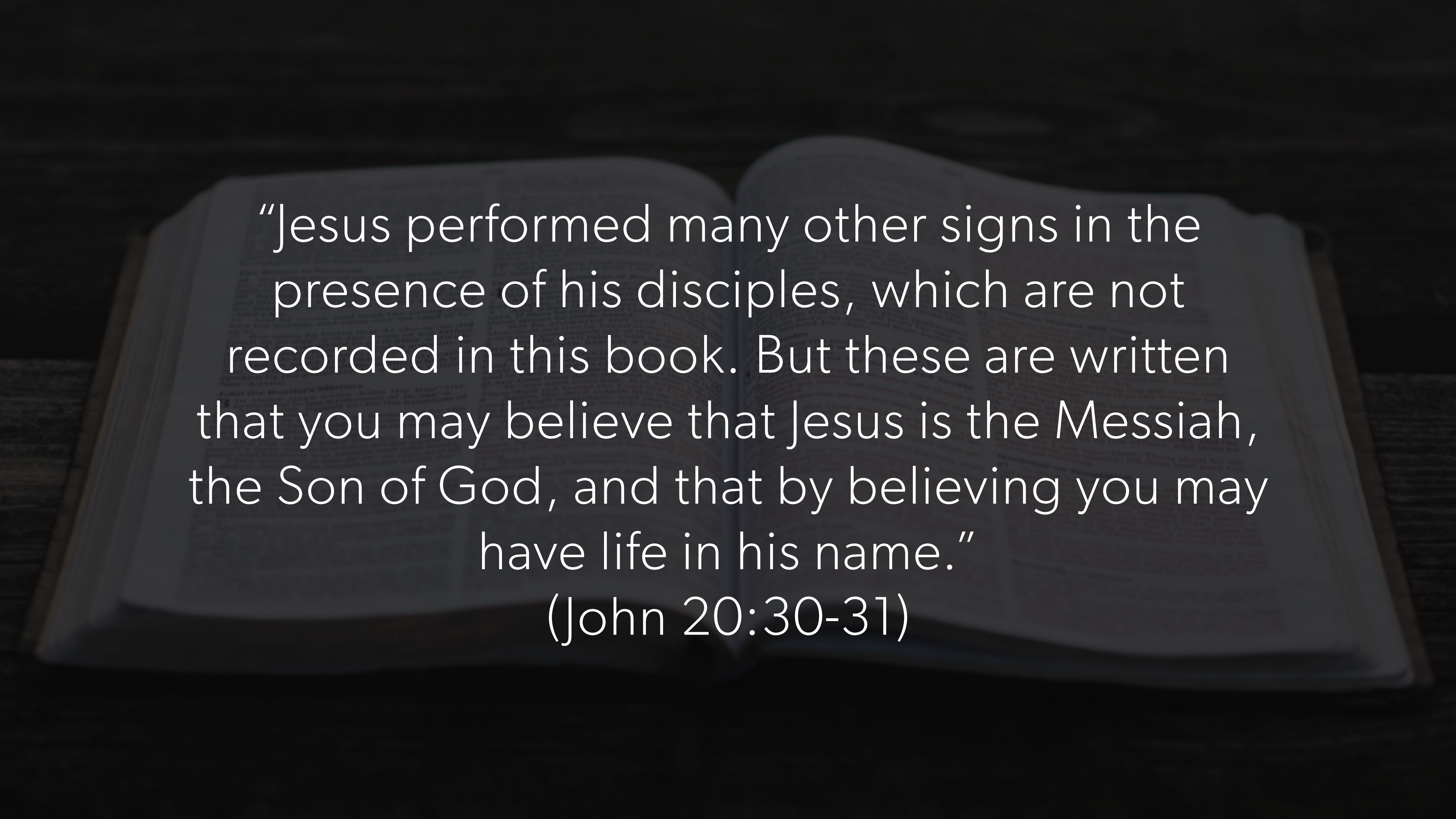
The Bible tells the unified, coherent story
of humanity's creation by God, subsequent
REBELLION against God, and God's
gracious **RESCUE** of His people.

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, lying flat. The pages are a light, aged cream color, and the dark binding is visible in the center. The background is a dark, textured surface. Overlaid on the open pages is a quote in white, sans-serif font. The quote is centered and spans across both the left and right pages. The text is: "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life." followed by "(John 5:39-40)" on a new line.

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life."
(John 5:39-40)

An open Bible is shown, lying flat. The pages are filled with text, but the text is faded and mostly illegible due to a dark overlay. The Bible is open to a section that appears to be the Gospel of Luke, specifically chapter 24. The text is centered on the pages.

“And beginning with Moses and all the
Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the
Scriptures the things concerning himself.”
(Luke 24:27)

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, lying flat. The pages are a light cream color, and the dark binding is visible in the center. The entire image is dimmed with a dark grey overlay. White text is superimposed on the pages. The text is a quote from the Bible, specifically John 20:30-31, which is displayed in a clean, white, sans-serif font. The quote is split across two lines on each page, with the first line on the left page and the second line on the right page. The text is centered horizontally across the spread of the book.

“Jesus performed many other signs in the
presence of his disciples, which are not
recorded in this book. But these are written
that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah,
the Son of God, and that by believing you may
have life in his name.”

(John 20:30-31)



TAKE AWAY: The Bible, as God's word, has One Ultimate Author telling ONE STORY of God's redemption. No other religious work has the same level of diversity of human authorship, yet consistency of a singular Divine message.



CHALLENGE: THE BIBLE IS FULL OF CONTRADICTIONS



Aside from the claim of contradictions, most objections to the Bible are not actually problems at all from a logical perspective. For example, suppose that someone claims, "The Bible can't be trusted because it contains accounts of miracles, and miracles are clearly impossible."

This argument is not rationally sound because it begs the question...

Clearly, an all-powerful God as described in the Bible would be capable of doing miracles.

Thus, by merely assuming that miracles are impossible, the critic has already dismissed the possibility that the Bible is true. His argument is circular. The critic is essentially arguing that the Bible is false because the Bible is false.

(Dr. Jason Lisle)

All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all (2 Pet. 3:16): yet those things which are *necessary to be known*, believed, and observed for salvation are *so clearly propounded*, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the *ordinary means*, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them (Psa. 119:105, 130).

(Westminster Confession of Faith 1.7)

3 TYPES OF FLAWED 'CONTRADICTIONS':

- **Flawed Theology**

EXAMPLE OF FLAWED THEOLOGY

Contradiction between Paul & James

Romans 4:2-3 - justified by faith alone not works.

James 2:21-24 - justified by works not faith alone.

EXAMPLE OF FLAWED THEOLOGY

Contradiction between Paul & James

Romans 4:2-3 - talking about being considered righteous before GOD.

James 2:21-24 - talking about being considered righteous before MEN.

3 TYPES OF FLAWED 'CONTRADICTIONS':

- **Flawed Theology**
- **Flawed Translation**

EXAMPLE OF FLAWED TRANSLATION

Leviticus 11:13-19 KJV

Calls a bat a “bird” - but bats are not birds, they are mammals.

EXAMPLE OF FLAWED TRANSLATION

Hebrew Word - *owph*

Means "fowl or a winged creature."

Of course bats are winged creatures.

EXAMPLE OF FLAWED TRANSLATION

Heretical Translation:

New World Translation (Jehovah's Witnesses)

This translation intentionally distorts the text of scripture to obscure and deny the deity of Christ.

3 TYPES OF FLAWED 'CONTRADICTIONS':

- Flawed Theology
- Flawed Translation
- Flawed Interpretation

EXAMPLE OF FLAWED INTERPRETATION

The Bible teaches the Earth does not move

Psalms 93:1, 96:10

The Earth orbits the Sun!

EXAMPLE OF FLAWED INTERPRETATION

The Psalms are POETIC

*The Psalmist also says, "I shall not be moved."
(Psalm 16:8).*

Clearly the author does not intend that he will be physically stationary!



READ SCRIPTURE WORKSHOP

HOW TO READ A NEW TESTAMENT LETTER

[HOPECHURCHTW.CA/LEARN](https://hopechurchtw.ca/learn)



TAKE AWAY: God's word is totally consistent. The perceived 'contradictions' in scripture are not actually contradictions when understood properly.

B. FULFILLED PROPHECY (OLD TO NEW TESTAMENT)

If the Bible is the God's word, we should expect it to evidence a supernatural quality about what it predicts.

B. FULFILLED PROPHECY (OLD TO NEW TESTAMENT)

I. MESSIANIC PROPHECY (Prophecies about Jesus)

I. MESSIANIC PROPHECY

By various estimates, Jesus Christ fulfilled over **300** specific prophecies about the Messiah in his birth, life, death and resurrection.

This is the whole point of the Bible: to point to Jesus Christ as the long awaited Saviour of the world!

THE MESSIAH WOULD:

- be born of a virgin
- have been the object of a murderous plot to kill him as a baby
- be a descendant of David
- be preceded by a messenger like Elijah
- be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver
- be forsaken and pierced but vindicated
- be resurrected

II. THE SUFFERING SERVANT (ISAIAH 52-53)

Clearly a prophecy pointing to Jesus.

Doubted for many years by critical scholars.

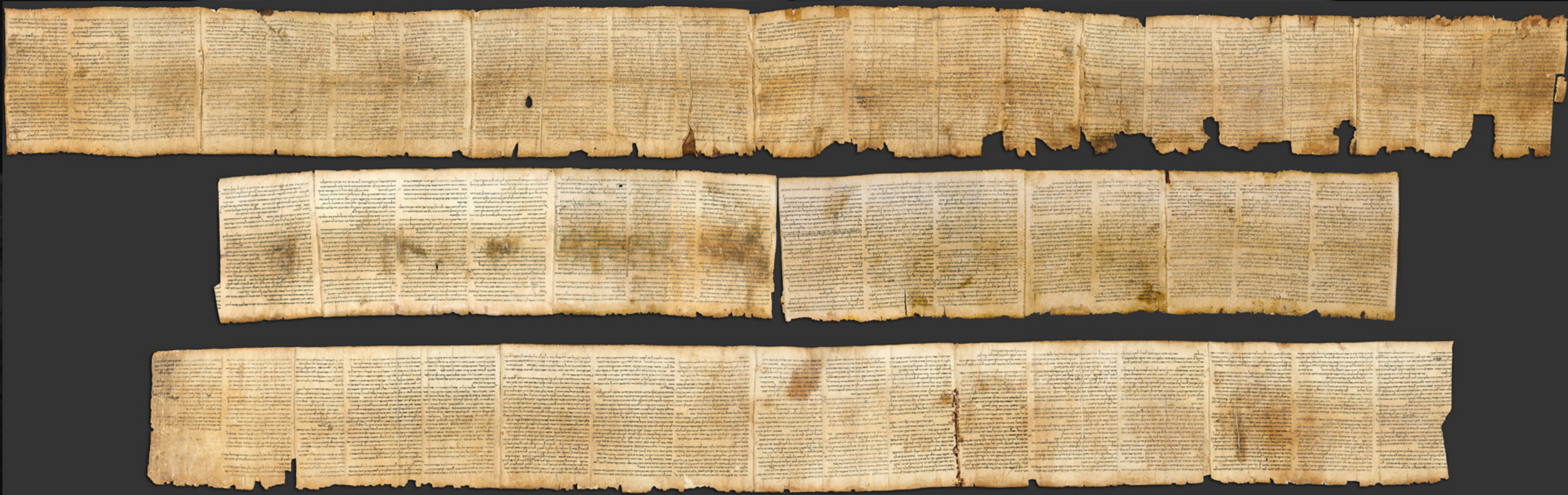
1947 - QUMRAN CAVES

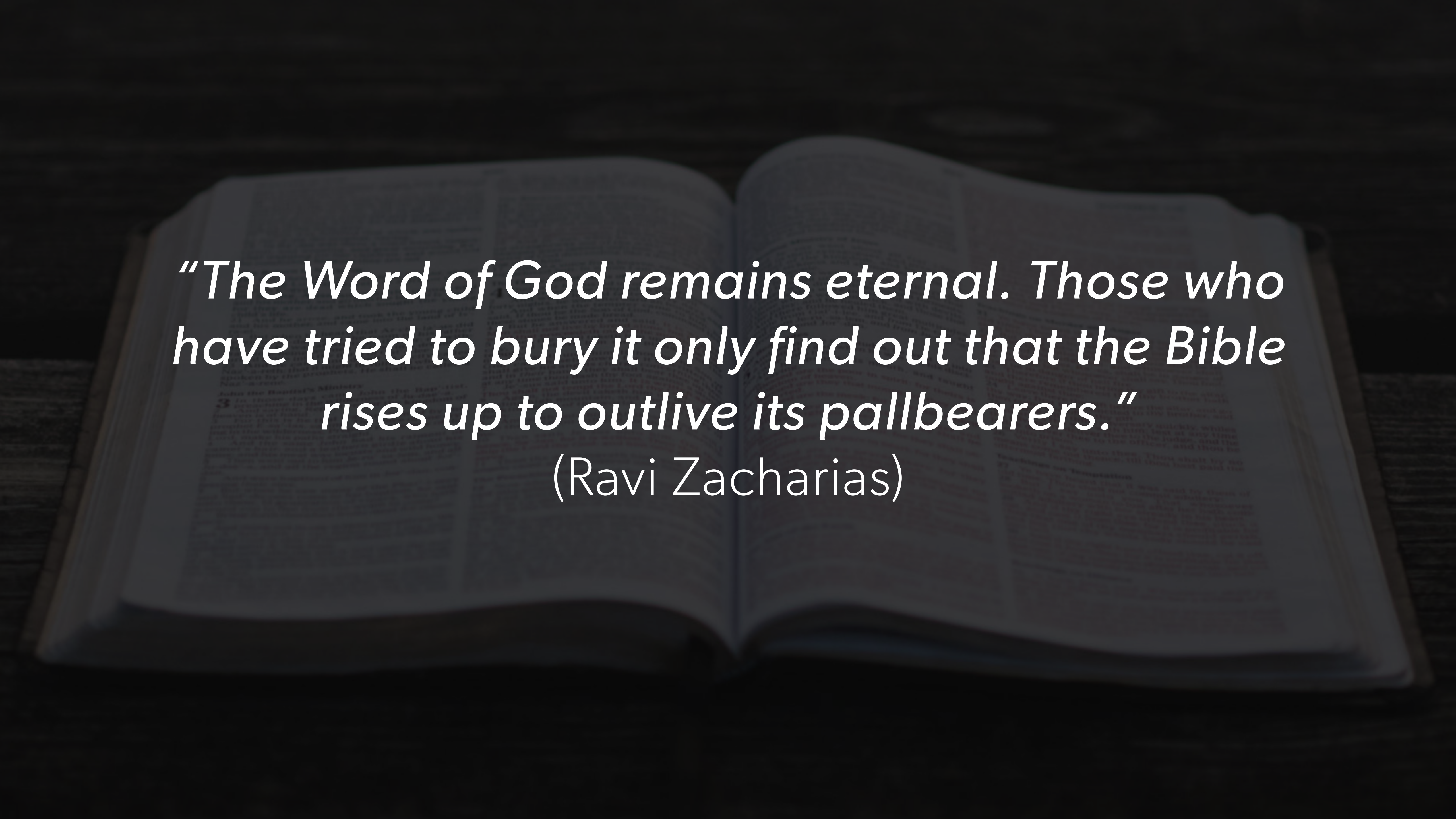


This was the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls



The Great Scroll of Isaiah (356 - 103 BC)



An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, lying flat. The pages are filled with small, illegible text, likely from a Bible. The lighting is soft, and the overall tone is dark and contemplative. Overlaid on the center of the open pages is a quote in white, italicized text.

“The Word of God remains eternal. Those who have tried to bury it only find out that the Bible rises up to outlive its pallbearers.”

(Ravi Zacharias)



TAKE AWAY: The Bible's prophetic claims are very accurately fulfilled. The many specific Messianic prophecies which are fulfilled in Jesus Christ are compelling evidences of its truth.

C. FAITHFUL PRESERVATION CANON & TRANSMISSION

If the Bible is God's word, He will preserve it for us so that we can be confident that what we have and read today is really what He meant for us to have.

I. THE BIBLICAL 'CANON'

How do we know what is supposed to be in the Bible?

The term 'canon' - from the Greek word κανών (kanón) - simply means "measuring rod or standard."

We're talking about the limits of the library.

3 Qualities we should expect of 'canonical' books:

1. Divine Qualities

2. Apostolic Origins

3. Widespread Reception

Q. 4. How does it appear that the Scriptures are of the Word of God?

The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God, by their **majesty** and **purity**; by the **consent of all the parts**, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God; by their light and **power** to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, *is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very word of God.*

- Their ***power to convert sinners*** and create a people of God who are 'zealous for good works' (Tit. 2:14).
- ***Their abilities to comfort, build up, rebuke and sanctify the believer*** (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- ***They bring wisdom*** (Ps. 119:98; 2 Tim. 3:16),
- ***give joy to the heart*** (Neh. 8:8–12; Ps. 119:111),
- ***expose sin and guilt*** (2 Kings 22:11–13; Acts 2:34–37; Heb. 4:12–13)
- ***give peace and comfort*** (Ps. 119:50)

Jesus said it this way:

**“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and
they follow me.”
(John 10:27)**

II. APOSTOLIC ORIGINS

The New Testament canon is not so much a collection of writings by apostles, but a collection of apostolic writings—writings that bear the authoritative message of the apostles and derive from the foundational apostolic era (even if not directly from their hands).

(Michael J. Kruger, *Canon Revisited*)

1 Clement (c.96AD) says:

“The Apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus the Christ was sent from God. The Christ therefore is from God and the Apostles from the Christ.”

(1 Clement 42:1-2)

Irenaeus (c.130-202 AD) says:

“We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith.”

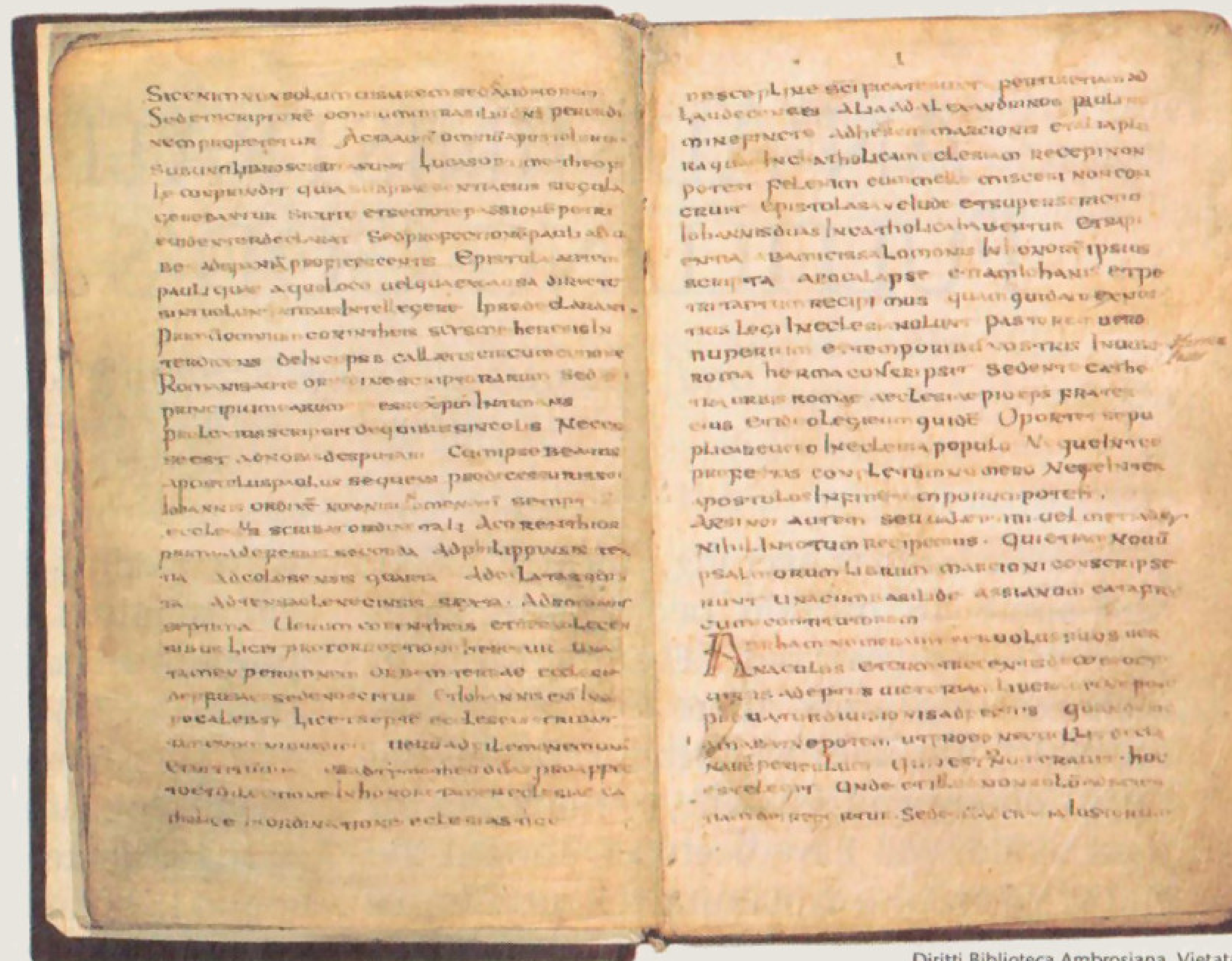
(Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.1.1)

III. WIDESPREAD RECEPTION

The church over time recognizes the voice of the Shepherd in the books of scripture through their divine qualities and apostolic origins.

Thus, the role of the church in recognizing the canon is more like a thermometer than a thermostat.

Muratorian Fragment (c. 180 AD)

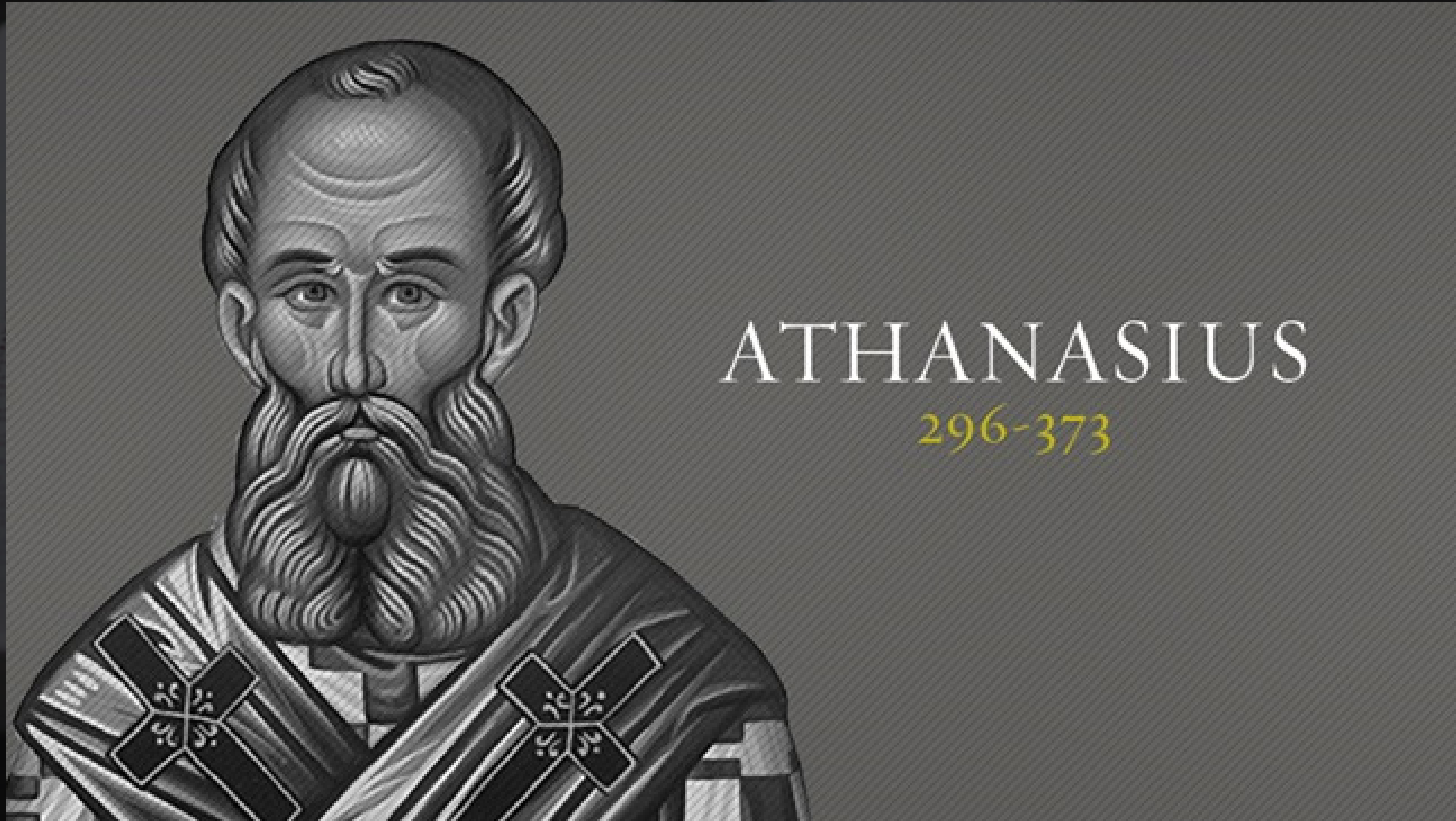


Diritti Biblioteca Ambrosiana. Vietata
la riproduzione. Aut. No. F 157 / 05

The Muratorian Fragment

Lines 32-85

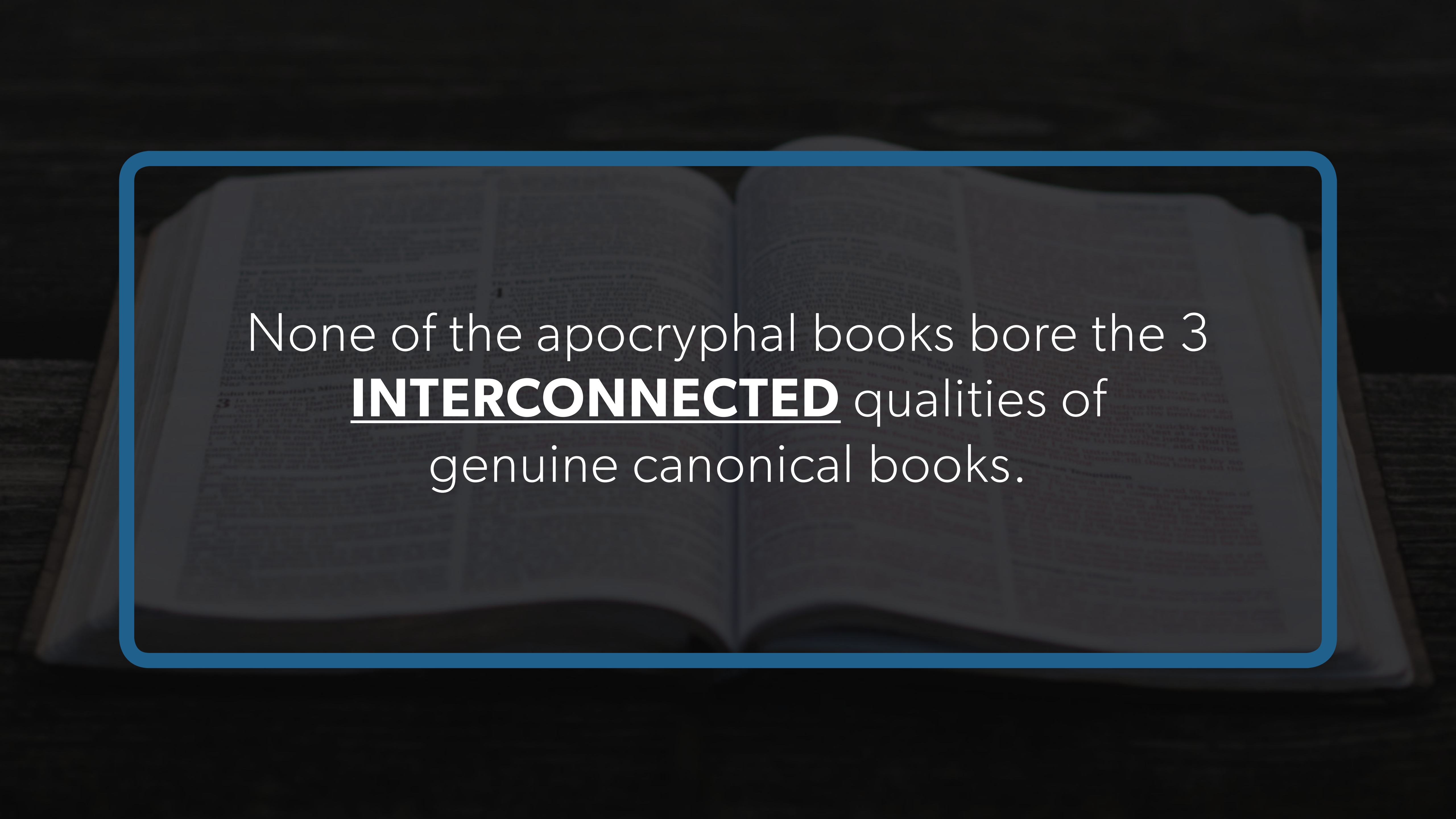
Complete Canonical List





CHALLENGE: WHAT ABOUT THE APOCRYPHA?

From the Greek, ἀπόκρυφος (apokryphos), meaning “obscure.” These are books of doubtful authenticity and thus considered non-canonical.



None of the apocryphal books bore the 3
INTERCONNECTED qualities of
genuine canonical books.



TAKE AWAY: The Biblical canon of books we have today are self-attested by their divine qualities, apostolic origins and corporate reception. What we have is what God intended.

II. TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION

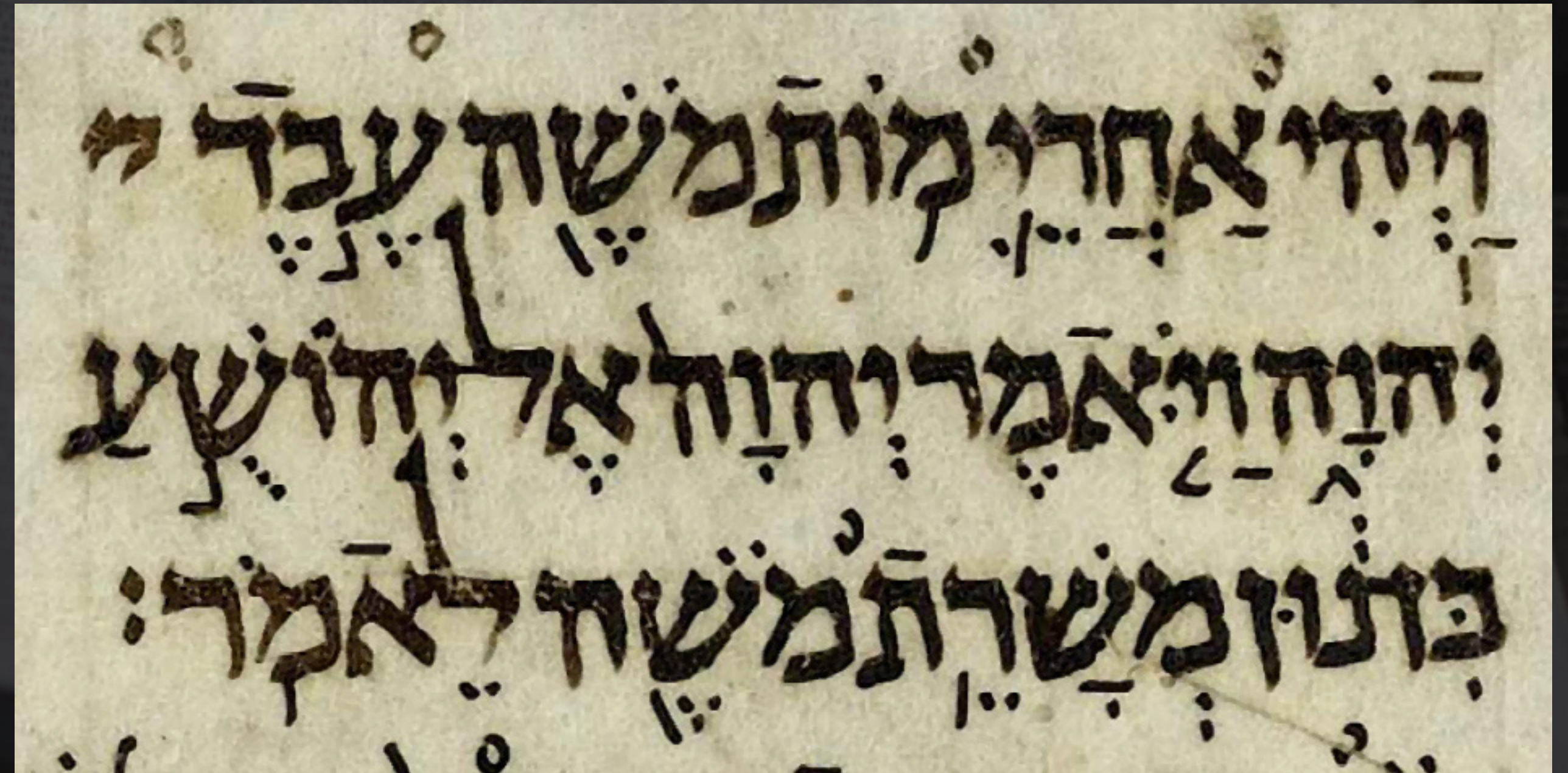
The Bible claims that God's word stands forever (Isa. 40:8), and Jesus even claims that heaven and earth would sooner pass away than even one of the smallest marks of his words (Matt. 5:18, 24:35).

Is it like a game of broken telephone?

PRESERVATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The traditional Hebrew and Aramaic version of the OT which we have preserved today is called the Masoretic Text.

ALEPPO CODEX (10th century)



PRESERVATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

For example, the Scroll of Isaiah was found to be 95% the same - and the 5% difference was mainly in obvious scribal mistakes which made no difference to the meaning of the text.

PRESERVATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

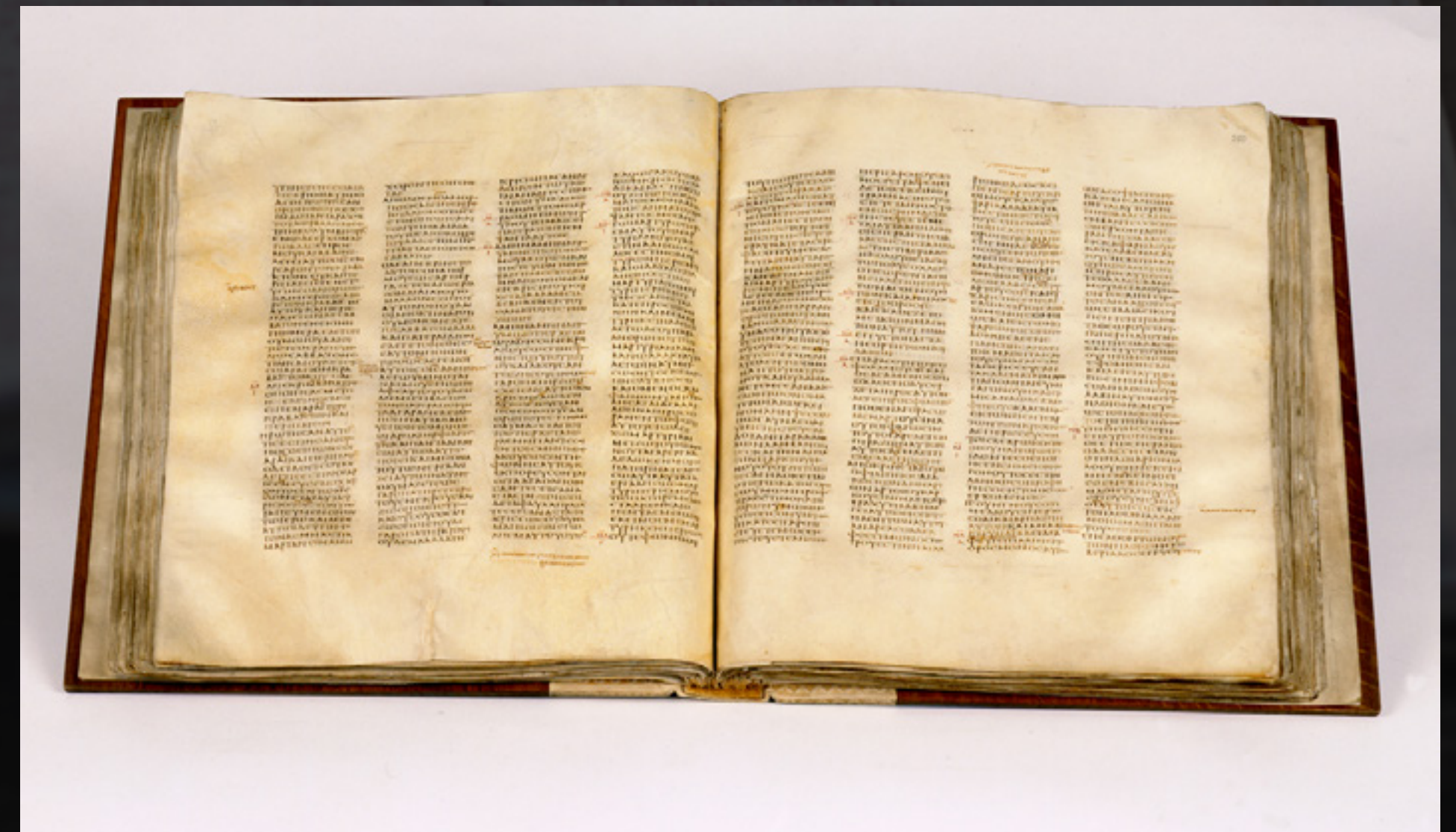


TARGUM - Aramaic
(500 - 1000 AD)



SILVER SCROLLS
Paleo-Hebrew
(587-586 BC)

SEPTUAGINT
Greek
Codex Vaticanus,
Codex Sinaiticus
(300-100 BC)

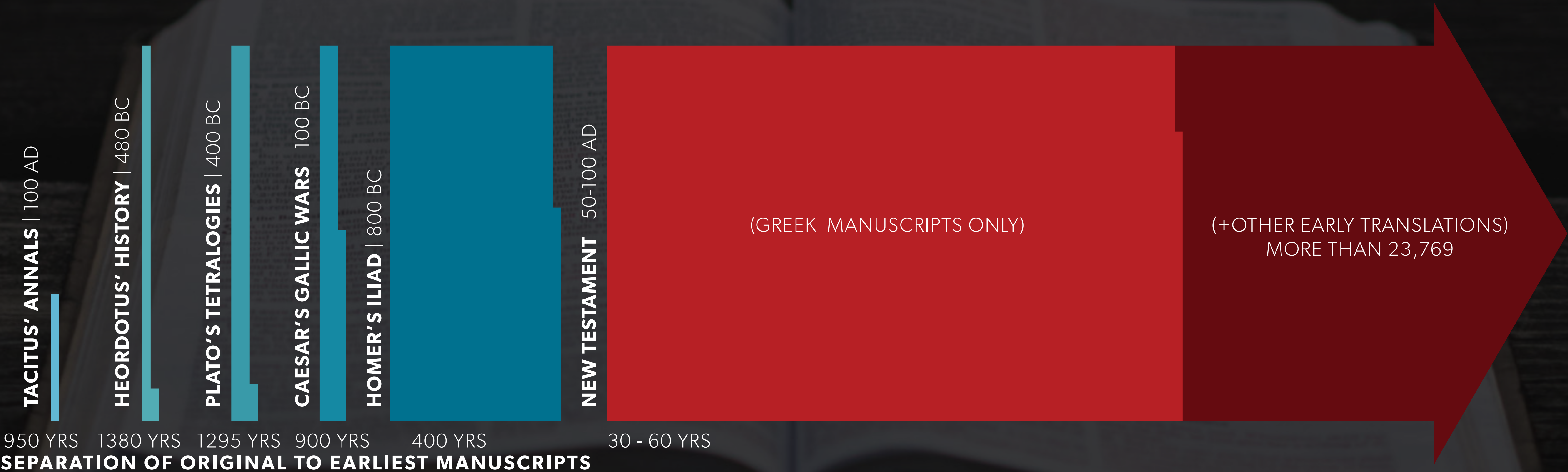


PRESERVATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The evidence we have for the preservation of the New Testament is *simply staggering* - especially when compared to any other similar work of antiquity.

PRESERVATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

There are over 5700 Greek hand-copied manuscripts containing either parts or all of the NT. The average size of a NT manuscript is over 450 pages. Some of the earliest manuscripts are dated possibly to within 60 years of the originals



PRESERVATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

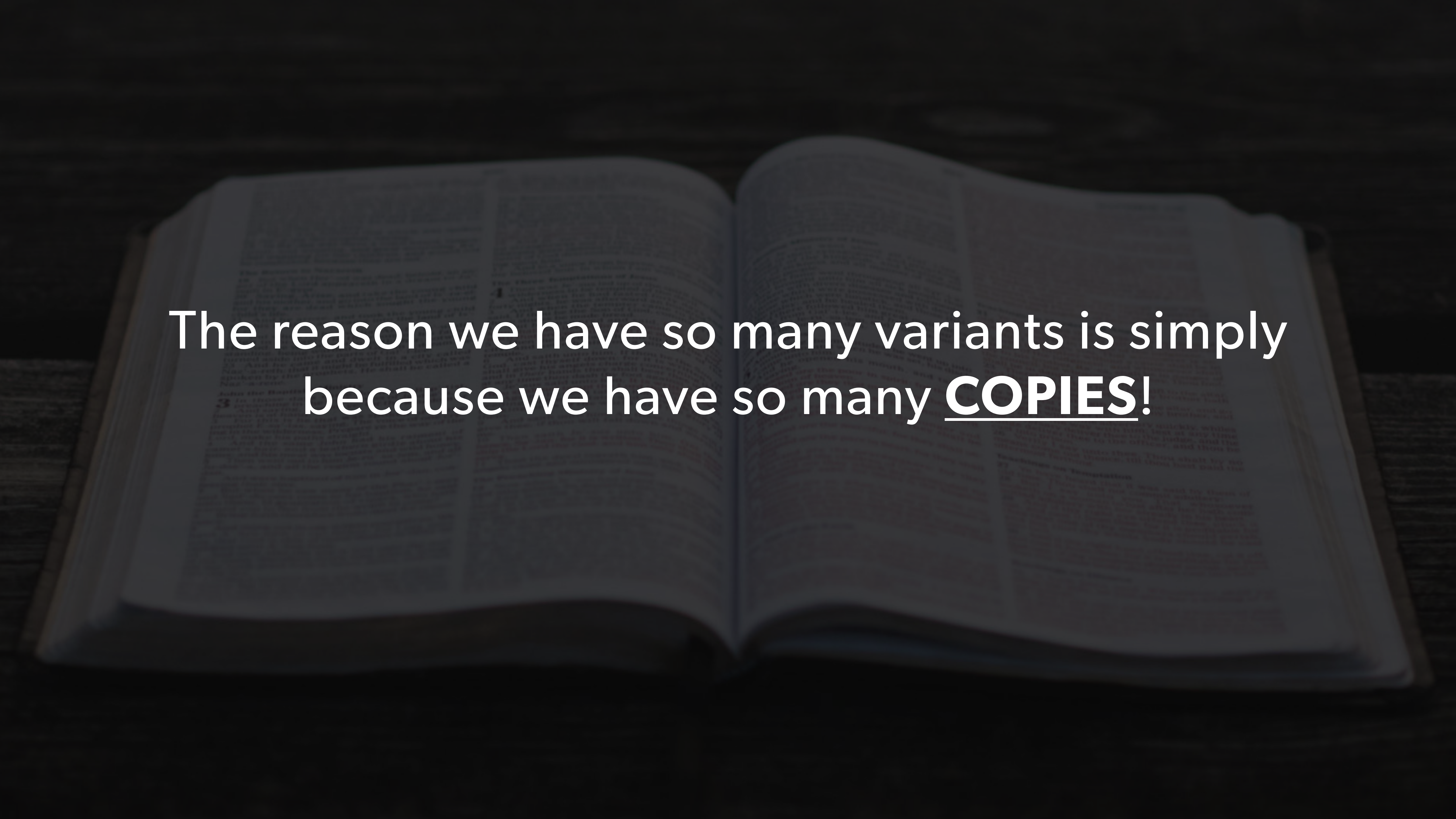
Simply stated, *no other work of antiquity* has the same level of manuscript evidence to support the *faithful transmission* of the text as the New Testament documents.



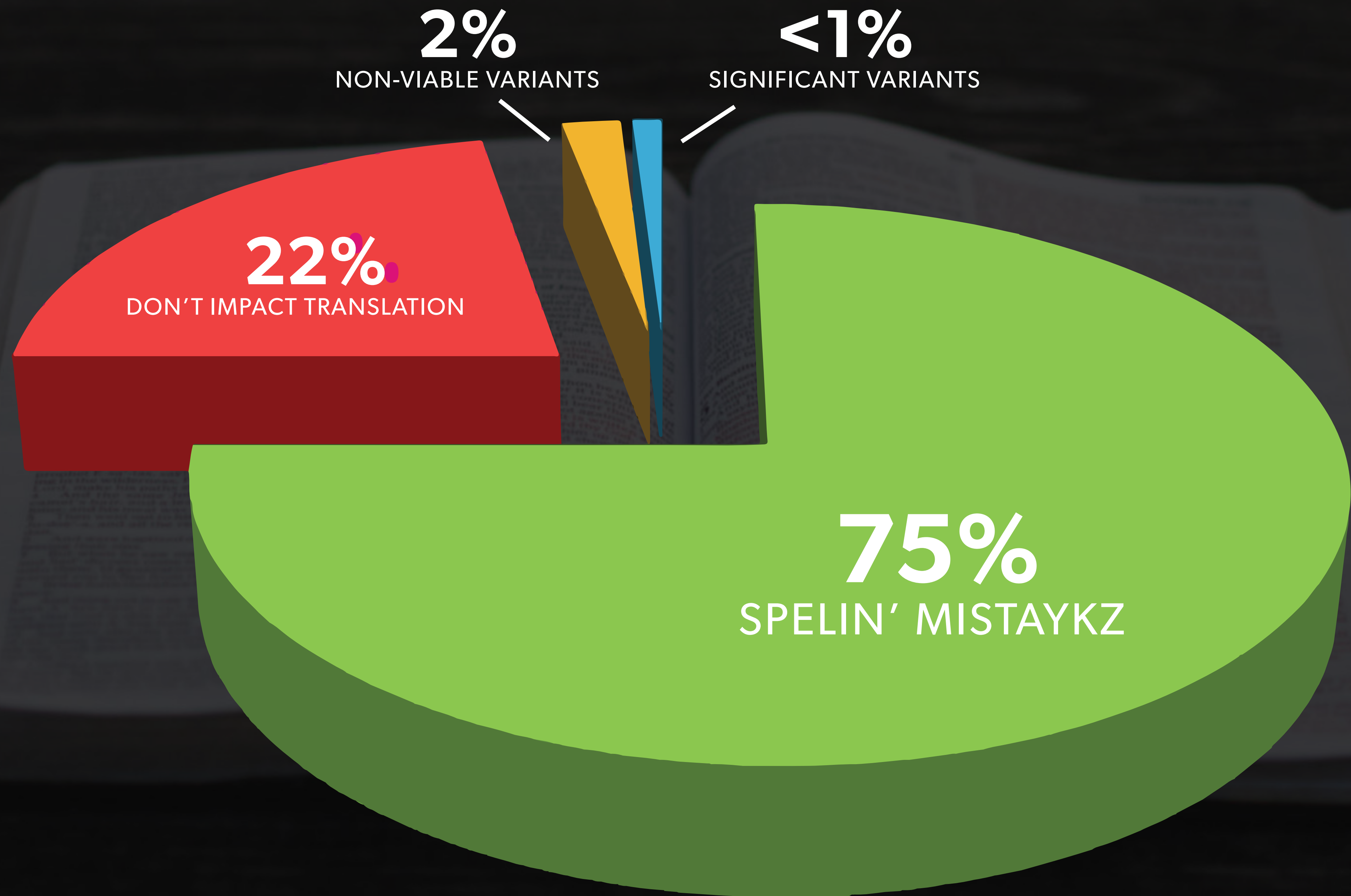
CHALLENGE: **WHAT ABOUT THE VARIANTS?**

Aren't there more textual variants than there are words in the New Testament?

How can we have any confidence about the text if there are that many 'mistakes' in the copies?

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, lying flat. The pages are filled with small, dense text, likely from a Bible or a similar historical document. The lighting is soft, and the overall tone is dark. Overlaid on the center of the open book is a large, white, sans-serif text. The text reads: "The reason we have so many variants is simply because we have so many COPIES!". The word "COPIES" is underlined and in all caps.

The reason we have so many variants is simply
because we have so many COPIES!



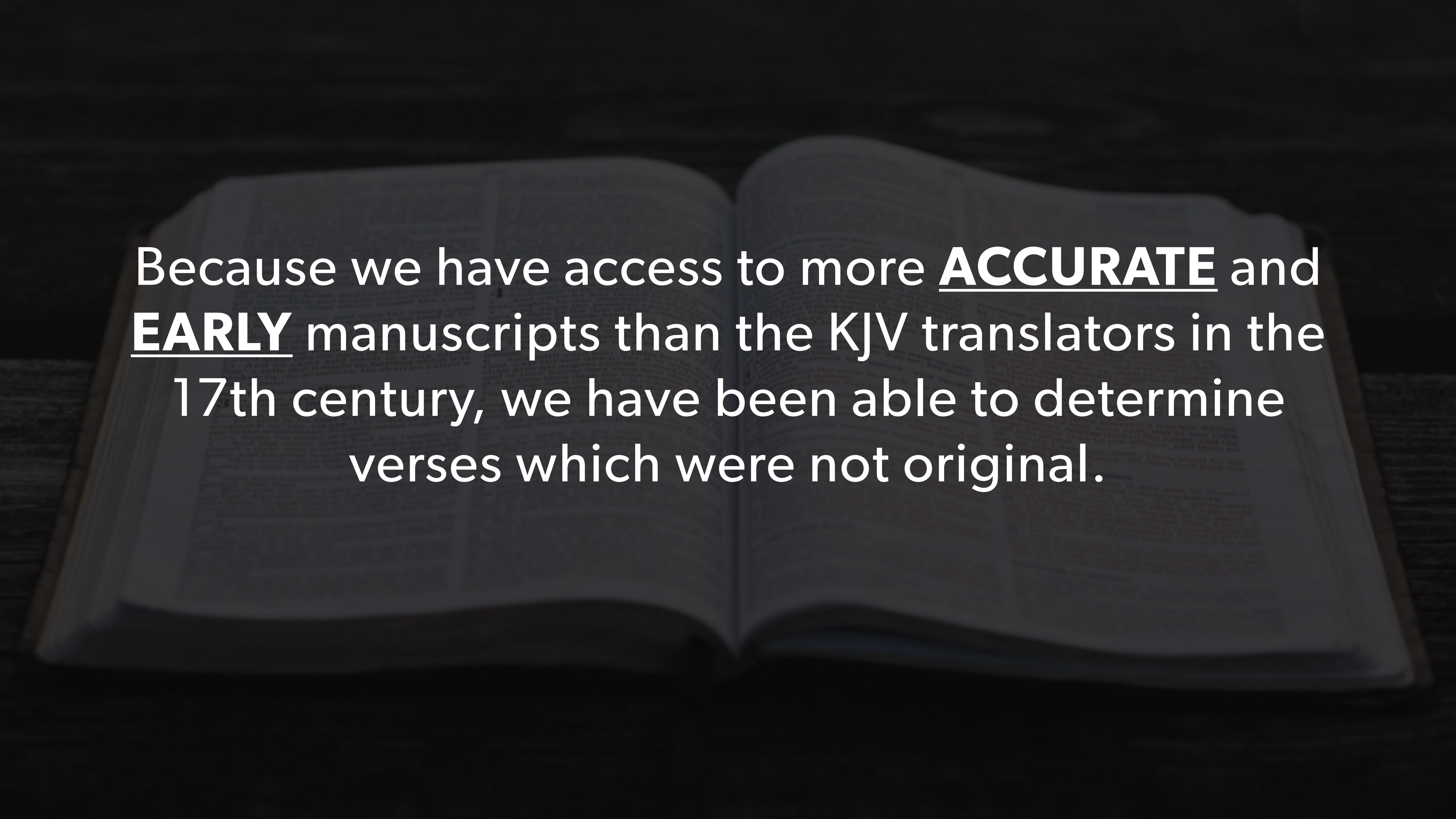


CHALLENGE: WHAT ABOUT THE MISSING VERSES?

Turn to **JOHN 5:4** in your Bibles.

JOHN 5:4 KJV

“For an Angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.”

An open book is shown in a dark, low-key setting. The pages are slightly aged and contain faint, illegible text. Overlaid on the center of the book is a large block of white text. The text discusses the availability of more accurate and early manuscripts compared to the KJV translators in the 17th century, and mentions the determination of verses that were not original. The words 'ACCURATE' and 'EARLY' are underlined and bolded.

Because we have access to more **ACCURATE** and **EARLY** manuscripts than the KJV translators in the 17th century, we have been able to determine verses which were not original.

ROMANS 5:1

Δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως εἰρήνην ἔχωμεν πρὸς
τὸν Θεὸν διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

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Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we
have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

An Embarrassment of Wealth of Evidence



“The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one ever dreams of questioning **...if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt.**”

(F.F. Bruce, The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?, pg 10)

WHY DO SKEPTICS STILL NOT BELIEVE?

“And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.”

(John 3:19)



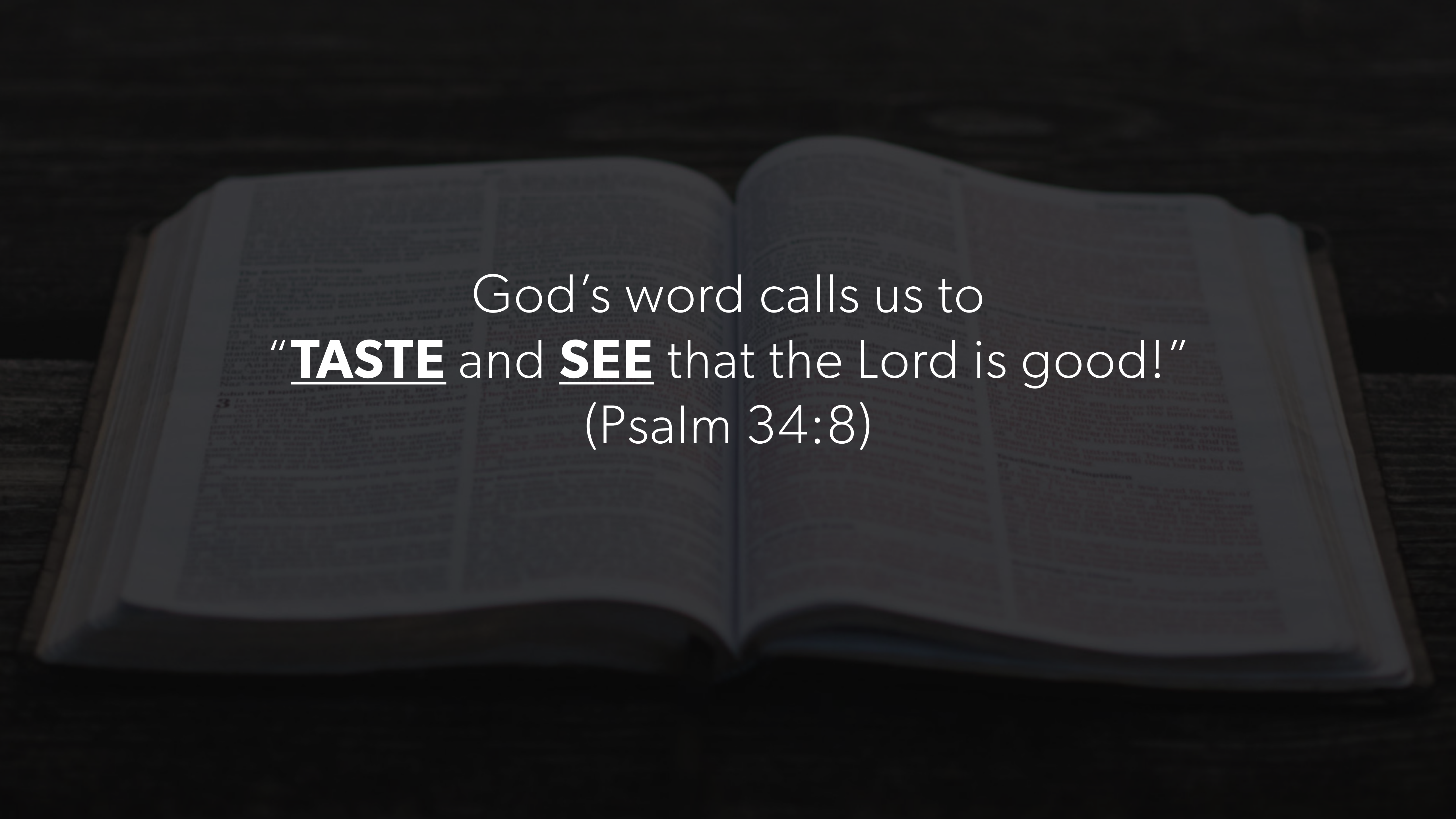
TAKE AWAY: The historical record of manuscripts show how the biblical text has been faithfully transmitted to us in a way that shows God's providential preservation of His Word.

3. TASTE AND SEE!

HAVE I EXPERIENCED THE BIBLE'S GOODNESS?



TASTE AND EAT THE HONEY!!!

An open Bible is shown, lying flat, with its pages slightly aged and yellowed. The text on the pages is faint and mostly illegible due to the low lighting and the overlay. The Bible is placed on a dark, textured surface, possibly a wooden table. Overlaid on the center of the Bible is a quote in white text. The quote reads: "God's word calls us to **TASTE** and **SEE** that the Lord is good!" followed by "(Psalm 34:8)". The words "TASTE" and "SEE" are bolded and underlined.

God's word calls us to
"**TASTE** and **SEE** that the Lord is good!"
(Psalm 34:8)

THIS BOOK READS YOU

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and ***discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

(Hebrews 4:12)

A. TASTE AND SEE PERSONALLY

Only then can you agree with the Psalmist:

“How sweet are Your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey in my mouth.”

(Psa. 119:103)

B. HELP OTHERS TO TASTE AND SEE

The reason some refuse to believe the Scriptures is not that there is any defect or lack of evidence in the Scriptures (the indicia are clear and objective) but that those without the Spirit do not accept the things from God (1 Cor. 2:10–14).

(Michael J. Kruger, *Canon Revisited*)

B. HELP OTHERS TO TASTE AND SEE

Only the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).



TAKE AWAY: So we must taste and see personally (Isaiah 55:1-11) and lead others to taste and see also (2 Corinthians 5:20; Romans 1:16).



JAMES R WHITE



MICHAEL J KRUGER



DANIEL B WALLACE

ISAIAH 55



THE REASON FOR HOPE

WHY TRUST THE BIBLE?

Q&A