

The Bible claims to be the writings of various men chosen by God and guided by the Holy Spirit of God. Nearly all the writers of the books of the Bible claim inspiration, divine guidance, to be writing the words given them by God. For example, in Exodus, the second book of the Bible, the words, "And Jehovah (or the Lord) said,..." and the words, "And Jehovah (or the Lord) spoke ...," appear 160 times. In many books are such expressions as, "The word of Jehovah (or the Lord) unto, by, came to..." Several writers in several books acknowledge other writers as teachers from God and their books as the words of God. Almost half of the words of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John purport to be the spoken words of Christ. The New Testament contains many quotations from the various books of the Old Testament. These are declared to be the words of God, or the words of the Holy Spirit by the various writers. And then there are general statements such as these: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation (or unloosing). For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:20-21; note that Peter is talking about how prophecy of Scripture came). "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son..." (Heb. 1:1-2). Read also 2 Tim. 3:14-17 and 1 Cor. 2:1-13.

3. What is the connection between the Old Testament and the New Testament? Bear in mind that the Old Testament is much larger in size than the New Testament, and was completed more than 400 years before any part of the New Testament was written. The entire Bible may be described as the history of God's dealings with the human race. The Old Testament contains the history of God's dealings with the Hebrew race, the Israelites, finally known as the Jews. The Old Testament also contains a record of the special law that God gave that people (the law of Moses). The Israelites as God's chosen people, the law that God gave them through Moses, and the entire Old Testament are portrayed as temporal, as means to an end, as paving the way for a universal Savior and for a better covenant which could bring to all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, forgiveness and hope. The old covenant fulfilled its purposes and gave way to the new covenant. Jeremiah 31:31-34 foretells the making of this new covenant and describes its superiority, and Hebrews 8:6-13 quotes this passage and declares its fulfillment in the new covenant of Christ. Many prophecies or predictions are found in the Old Testament -- of Christ, His gospel, and His kingdom. These are fulfilled in the New Testament. It has been said time and again: "The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed." The meaning and purpose of the Old Testament are not clear without the New Testament, and the New Testament is difficult to understand without some knowledge of the Old Testament.

4. What is the purpose of the Bible? The purpose of the Bible is to bring men (the creatures made in God's image) into a right relationship with God (the Creator). Romans 3:23 declares of Jews and Gentiles, "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." And sin separates men from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). The purpose of the Bible is to help men fulfill their purpose in life -- to be faithful to their whole duty, to glorify God. "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13). "..., or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). The purpose of the Bible is to promote the happiness and welfare of men. God does not wish us to be miserable and unhappy. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). "Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7). The purpose of the Bible is to bring us salvation, to offer us forgiveness of our sins here and the hope of eternal life hereafter. "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10). "...I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). The purpose of the Bible is to teach us what is right; to show us how to live; to provide us with everything we need to know, to believe, and to do in the realm of religious or spiritual matters. "Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3). Jesus promised the apostles all the truth (Jn. 16:13); they received all the truth (2 Pet. 1:3); they preached all the truth (Acts 20:26-27); they wrote or recorded all the truth (2 Tim. 3:14-17); the providence of God preserved all the truth (1 Pet. 1:23-25). If you would like to receive a copy of an outline titled "I Don't Know How to Study the Bible," please write or phone and request it.

If you really want to go to heaven, study the Bible, God's "road map" to heaven.