



A consistent message

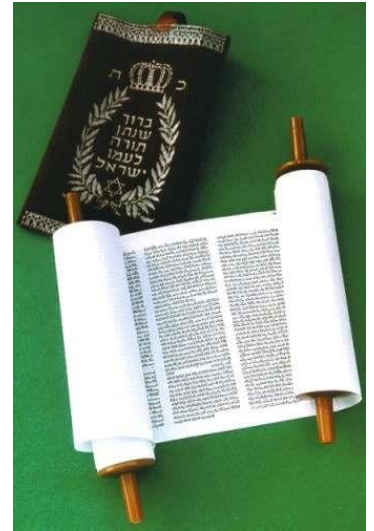
1. Overview

In this booklet we shall look at:

- The variety of people who wrote the Bible over a large time period
- The “ring of truth” in the writings of all these people
- The unique way similar ideas and principles run through the different books of the Bible, enhancing our understanding as we go
- The message we build up when we look at these ideas throughout the books of the Bible

This message deals with vital issues such as:

- Where did we come from?
- What is the meaning of life?
- Where are we going?
- The message the Bible has for us personally



The unique message of the Bible can transform our lives and give us real meaning and purpose to life.

2. The variety of people who wrote the Bible

The Bible is made up of 66 individual books. They were written down by people of many occupations spread over a time period of hundreds of years.

The table below shows the large variety of backgrounds, cultures and time periods from which the writers of the books of the Bible came. Fuller details are shown on pages 27 and 28.

Backgrounds	Locations	Situations	Date
Slave	Egypt	Single	1450 BC
Temple servant	Israel	Married	to
Priest	Babylon	Marital problems	AD 96
Captive in foreign land	Persia		
Shepherd	Rome		
King	Greece		
Musician	Turkey		
Royal descent			
Herdsmen			
Customs officer			
Doctor			
Prisoner			
High-ranking Jew			
Fisherman			

There is *no other book in the world* written by so many different authors spread over a period of 1,500 years that has one consistent message.

Some of the Bible writers suffered terribly or even died for giving their message. People don't give their lives for a message they have made up. The Bible writers had good reasons to believe that their message was true.



3. The “ring of truth” found in the Bible

3.1 The painful truth

The Bible is unique among the world’s history books – it is brutally honest about the great men it describes. It gives a balanced picture. It tells us what to admire in them and, with equal openness, it tells us where each one fell down. Most historians’ records of ancient kings are noticeably silent about their misdeeds – they usually concentrate on how great and mighty they were. The media in our day often expose facts about leaders that they would rather hide. No leader wants his bad points to be public knowledge, and great efforts are sometimes made to conceal them. It is a natural reaction to want to hide our weaknesses.

The Bible gives an unusually balanced view:

- Abraham, one of the greatest characters in the Old Testament, betrayed his wife to save his own life
- King David, another famous Old Testament character, murdered to try and cover up the fact that he had taken another man’s wife
- The men who founded the first-century church are all shown initially as being selfish in wanting to be “number one”
- In his early days, the great New Testament preacher Paul condemned many people to death because he disagreed with what they believed

The Bible is *unlike any other record of history*.



3.2 Undesigned coincidences

This was the name that Professor J J Blunt gave to unrelated groups of Bible verses that either support each other or reveal some extra information.

Here are just two examples:

a) The giants

If we look at three verses from the books of Numbers, Joshua and 1 Samuel, we find an “undesigned coincidence”:

There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants) ...

Numbers 13 v 33

None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.

Joshua 11 v 22

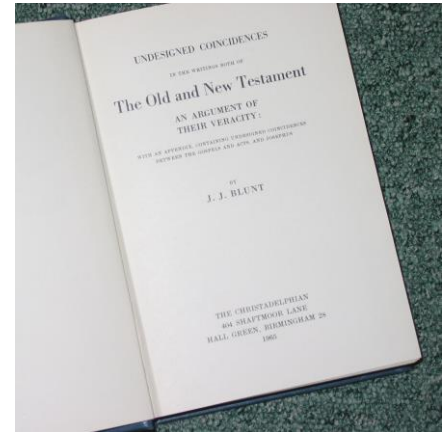
And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

1 Samuel 17 v 4

These three verses were written by three different men at different times, but they all reveal a harmony which gives a “ring of truth”:

- The first verse tells us that the giants that troubled the early Israelites were sons of a man called Anak
- The second verse tells that at one time the “Anakim” or “Sons of Anak” were found mainly in three towns: Gaza, Gath and Ashdod
- The third verse casually mentions that a giant called Goliath came from Gath. It is highly unlikely that the writer of the third verse was a fiction writer who searched the earlier books of the Bible until he found the “right” town to put his giant into!

There is a “ring of truth” about this set of verses. They sound more like accurate history than fiction.



Blunt’s book *Undesigned Coincidences* shows many groups of passages that have the “ring of truth”



b) Ahithophel's treachery explained

In another section of his book Blunt brings together a whole string of apparently unrelated chapters from one book, with remarkable results. There were two great tragedies in the later part of king David's life. The first was when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and then murdered her husband, Uriah the Hittite. The second occurred when David's son Absalom rebelled against him and temporarily seized the throne.



Undesigned coincidences show us the “ring of truth” in the Bible

The Bible tells us that the second incident was God's punishment on David for the first. But on the surface it does not tell us that there was also a purely human connection between the two incidents.

Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city – from Giloh – while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number.
2 Samuel 15 v 12

When Absalom decided to stage a rebellion, he sent for a man called Ahithophel the Gilonite to join him. This was a very surprising thing to do. Ahithophel was David's own right hand man. Yet Absalom clearly expected Ahithophel to change sides. Why?

The answer is in a list of names:

... Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite ... Uriah the Hittite: thirty-seven in all.
2 Samuel 23 v 34 and 39

In this list of the 37 officers of David's guard occur two vital names: Uriah the Hittite (the man David murdered), and “Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite” - that is, the son of the traitor. So the son of the future traitor and the murdered man had been colleagues, and probably friends. But this is not all:

So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"
2 Samuel 11 v 3

From an entirely different part of the book we learn that Bathsheba, the wife of the murdered man, was “the daughter of Eliam”. Uriah had evidently married the daughter of his fellow-officer. With these facts before us it is easy to see why Absalom anticipated Ahithophel's treachery, while David was astonished by it. The young woman that David had seduced was Ahithophel's granddaughter. The man David had murdered was Ahithophel's grandson by marriage. Blinded by his own passion, David could not see what effect this had upon Ahithophel. But Absalom was well aware that Ahithophel was seething with anger, and ready for revenge.



It goes without saying that this fascinating story-hidden-within-a-story could not have been deliberately contrived. Either these passages represent a whole series of lucky coincidences or - much more probably - they are an integral part of real history, told with meticulous accuracy.

There are about a hundred of these undesigned coincidences in Blunt's book. A similar book by Paley looking at the New Testament, lists many more. Bible students are constantly discovering still more of them for themselves.

Try discovering large numbers of undesigned coincidences in any work of fiction you like to choose. You will not succeed. They are the hallmark of true history, not fiction.

Bibliography:

J J Blunt, *Undesigned Coincidences*, Christadelphian Magazine Publishing Association, Birmingham, 1967

W Paley, *Horae Paulinae*, T R Birks, London, 1850 and 1855

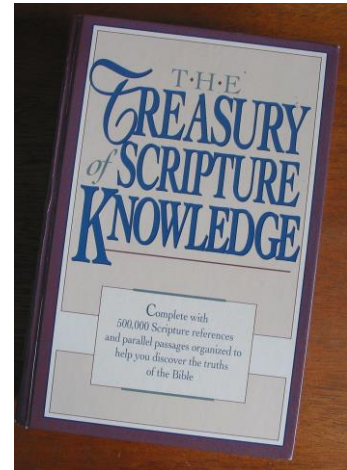


4. Similar ideas and principles running throughout the Bible

Although the Bible was written by such a variety of people over a long period of time, similar themes keep reappearing. Each time they occur, we learn a little more of the Bible message. Some people call these recurring themes “Bible echoes”.

There is no other collection of writings written over a period of 1,500 years by such a variety of writers that has these “echoes”.

We can find some of these themes by using books like *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*. This contains 500,000 of these links in ideas that have been found in the Bible. Some computer packages contain *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*.



The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge contains 500,000 Biblical links in ideas

Cross-references are used to identify these links in ideas. We will show you how these “echoes” help us to find the Bible message.

The Old Testament character Abraham had the following statement made to him in the book of Genesis:

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 12 v 3

We may wonder what this comment is all about. It sounds as though this is something which could benefit everyone.

If we look at the cross references in *Treasury of Scripture Knowledge* from Genesis 12 v 3, the following verses are the most interesting:

Genesis 18 v 18; 22 v 18; 26 v 4; 28 v 14.
Psalm 72 v 17.

Acts 3 v 25 and 26.
Galatians 3 v 8, 16 and 28.

We shall look at some of these references in “*The Bible message for us*” section on pages 20 to 24 of this booklet.

The Genesis references show that the same promise is also made to Abraham’s son and grandson. The reference from the Psalms comes at the end of a Psalm talking of a time when our world will be transformed from its present evil state. The Acts reference shows how the Apostle Peter picks up this phrase and tells us that it will be fulfilled through Jesus Christ. The Galatians reference tells us how we can be involved in all of this.



Let us consider the writers of this unfolding message:

The promise about all nations having a blessing was given to wandering nomads and written down about 1450 BC by Moses, a man born into a nation of slaves who became leader of the Jews.

The comments about a transformed earth in which all nations can be involved were written about 400 years later by David, a shepherd in his youth, who became king.

The apostle Peter was a fisherman who made his comments about 1,000 years after David. His words were written down by a doctor.

The additional information on how we can be involved was written down a few years after Peter made his comments. The writer, Paul, had been destined to reach the top in Jewish religious circles.

There is no other literature on earth that has this variety of writers and yet consistency of message.

Jesus himself supported this idea of looking for “echoes” in other parts of the Bible to learn more:

Then He said to them, ‘These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.’

Luke 24 v 44

Jesus is here confirming that we can find more information about him and his work in the Old Testament:

Law of Moses:

Genesis to Deuteronomy

Psalms

Prophets:

Isaiah to Malachi

Bibliography:

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, Hendrickson, 1982.



The Bible – unique in its variety of writers and consistency in message



5. The Bible message

In this section, we shall look at each of the three vital issues we mentioned in the overview. Under various headings we shall show that the Bible gives one consistent message. Under each heading we shall give three passages from different parts of the Bible to show the consistent message. We shall only give the relevant phrases, but we recommend that you look up the verses and let us know if you disagree with our conclusions.

5.1 Where did we come from?

a) We were put here by a power greater than ourselves

The Bible tells us many times of the power, greater than ourselves, that created our world and keeps it going. We are not expected to have blind faith, there is other evidence apart from the statements in the Bible that there is a power greater than ourselves. (The other booklets in this series look at some of this evidence.)



The Earth – created to support life

Here are some examples of what the Bible tells us:

<p>The first book of the Bible makes these simple statements:</p>	<p>The prophet Jeremiah tells of the power of our creator:</p>	<p>The Apostle Paul gave the Greeks at Athens the same message:</p>
<p><i>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.</i> <i>Genesis 1 v 1 and 2 v 7</i></p>	<p><i>Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.</i> <i>Jeremiah 32 v 17</i></p>	<p><i>God ... made the world and everything in it, ... He gives to all life, breath, and all things.</i> <i>Acts 17 v 24 and 25</i></p>



b) Our Creator does not change

The God who created our world does not change. We can see this because the natural laws which govern our world do not change. The same laws apply outside of our earth. This indicates that the same power is in control throughout the universe. Here are three Bible verses:



Our Creator's unchanging laws apply throughout the universe

The Psalmist says of God:	God speaking through the prophet Malachi makes a similar statement:	The Apostle James describes God as:
<i>But You are the same, And Your years will have no end. Psalm 102 v 27</i>	<i>For I am the Lord, I do not change. Malachi 3 v 6</i>	<i>... the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. James 1 v 17</i>

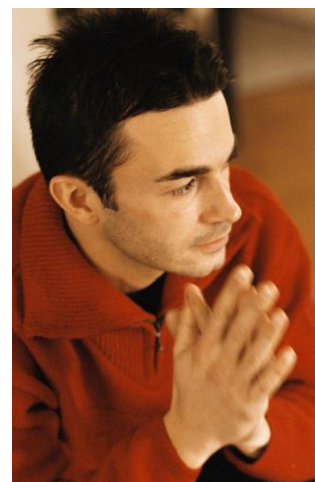
c) Our Creator's Words are true and so can be relied on

Because our Creator does not change, His message does not change either. This is an important issue to consider. When we are thinking of the vital issues we mentioned on page 3, we need a message that is totally reliable so that we can put our trust in it:

Moses refers to God as:	The sentiment is echoed in the Psalms:	Jesus also gave the same message:
<i>A God of truth. Deuteronomy 32 v 4</i>	<i>The entirety of Your word is truth. Psalm 119 v 160</i>	<i>Your word is truth. John 17 v 17</i>



d) Our Creator asks for respect for what He says



Because His message is true, the God of the Bible asks us to respect and obey what He says:

We should respect our Creator's message

Right at the start God gave our first parents a simple command:	In the Psalms, God asks people to listen to Him:	Again, Jesus gave the same message:
<i>And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat...'</i> <i>Genesis 2 v 16 and 17</i>	<i>Oh, that My people would listen to Me.</i> <i>Psalm 81 v 13</i>	<i>But He said, '... blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!'</i> <i>Luke 11 v 28</i>

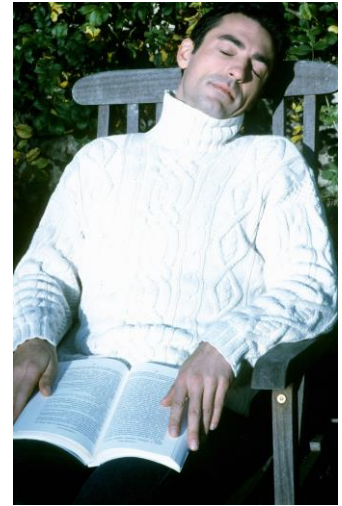
e) Our Creator approves of people who respect His requests

Throughout the Bible we can see that God approves of those people who do what He wants:

At the start of the Bible, Abraham was approved by God because he accepted what He said:	The Jews were promised a blessing if they obeyed God:	Jesus regarded those who respected God's purpose as his close family:
<i>And he [Abraham] believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.</i> <i>Genesis 15 v 6</i>	<i>Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you today...</i> <i>Deuteronomy 11 v 26 and 27</i>	<i>For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.</i> <i>Mark 3 v 35</i>



f) Because we have the choice we can reject God's message



We can easily be asleep to God's message

The Bible has many examples of those who reject God's requests:

Right at the start our first parents chose to disobey God:	One period of Jewish history is summarised like this:	The apostles in the first century encountered those who rejected God's Word:
<p><i>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.</i> <i>Genesis 3 v 6</i></p>	<p><i>Nevertheless they were disobedient And rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs ...</i> <i>Nehemiah 9 v 26</i></p>	<p><i>It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it ...</i> <i>Acts 13 v 46</i></p>



- We were created by a power greater than ourselves
- Our Creator does not change
- Our Creator:
 - Has given us a message that we can rely on
 - Asks for respect for the message
 - Approves of those who respect the message
 - Allows people to reject the message



5.2 What is the meaning of life?

a) The Bible shows that our Creator is concerned about people



Our Creator's care for us is seen all through the Bible:

The Bible shows our Creator's concern for us

Our Creator has promised that the natural cycles which support our lives will continue:	The prophet Jeremiah told the Jews what their attitude should be :	Jesus tells us that God's care is shown to all regardless of their attitude to Him:
<i>While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.</i> <i>Genesis 8 v 22</i>	<i>Let us now fear the Lord our God, Who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest.</i> <i>Jeremiah 5 v 24</i>	<i>... for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.</i> <i>Matthew 5 v 45</i>

b) God sent His Son to show us how we should reflect His care

The Jews were promised a special prophet who would speak for God:	Jesus came to show us what God is like:	By following Christ's example of showing love, we are imitating God:
<i>I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.</i> <i>Deuteronomy 18 v 18</i>	<i>No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.</i> <i>John 1 v 18</i>	<i>Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us...</i> <i>Ephesians 5 v 1 and 2</i>



c) God's care for people involves a plan to enable them to have life after death

The writer of Psalm 49 was confident in God's plan:	The plan involves the work of God's Son, Jesus Christ:	The letter to the Romans tells us that the death of Christ was involved in this plan:
<i>God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave.</i> <i>Psalm 49 v 15</i>	<i>For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.</i> <i>John 3 v 16</i>	<i>But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.</i> <i>Romans 5 v 8</i>

We shall look at more aspects of this plan of God in section 5.3

d) Knowing that we have a caring Creator gives us confidence for the future

We have seen that our Creator cares about us and has arranged a plan to enable us to have life after death. This must give us a real hope for the future, despite our present problems:



Having a caring Creator gives us confidence for the future

King David showed his confidence in God:	Psalm 18 tells us that it is better to trust in God, rather than national rulers:	The apostle Paul tells us to trust in the One who has power over death:
<i>The God of my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, My stronghold and my refuge;</i> <i>2 Samuel 22 v 3</i>	<i>The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? ... It is better to trust in the Lord Than to put confidence in princes.</i> <i>Psalm 118 v 6 and 9</i>	<i>... we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead,</i> <i>2 Corinthians 1 v 9</i>



e) Those who are not interested in God’s plan must take the consequences



The grave will be the end for those who reject God’s message

If we ignore God’s message, we shall eventually be destroyed:

The people in Noah’s day rejected God’s message and were destroyed:

The book of Proverbs tells us the consequences of ignoring God and going our own way:

Jesus likened rejection of his words to building a house without foundations:

*Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ...
So the Lord said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth ...’
Genesis 6 v 5 and 7*

*There is a way that seems right to a man,
But its end is the way of death.
Proverbs 14 v 12*

*But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.
Matthew 7 v 26 and 27*



- Our Creator is concerned about people
- God sent His Son to show us how to reflect that care in our own lives
- God’s care for people involves a plan to enable them to have life after death
- Knowing that we have a caring God gives us confidence in his promise of a future life after death
- There is no life after death for those who are not interested in God’s plan



5.3 Where are we going?

a) God's plan involves people being raised from the dead



Those who respect God's message
have a bright future

The Bible assures us that some people will be raised from the grave and given endless life. The New Testament reference tells us two important facts. Firstly, it tells us that the resurrection will take place when the Lord Jesus returns to the earth. Secondly, it tells us that it will be those who have a relationship with Christ who will be raised.

Your dead shall live;

Together with my dead body they shall arise.

Isaiah 26 v 19

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Daniel 12 v 2

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout ... And the dead in Christ will rise first.

1 Thessalonians 4 v 16

b) A worldwide peaceful kingdom is another part of His plan

Throughout the Bible, many verses talk of a future world order different from today's.

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains,

And shall be exalted above the hills;

And all nations shall flow to it ...

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 2 v 2 to 4

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

Daniel 2 v 44

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'

Revelation 11 v 15



c) God plans to fill the earth with people who respect Him

We can have the wonderful hope of being involved in this peaceful worldwide kingdom on earth:



Those who are raised from the dead will be involved in transforming our earth

*But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*

Psalm 37 v 11

*Then the kingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,*

Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.

Daniel 7 v 27

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection ... they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

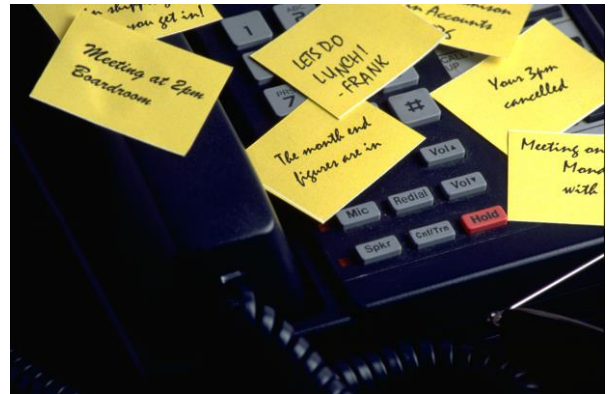
Revelation 20 v 6



- Those who die “in Christ” will be raised from the dead when Jesus Christ returns to the earth
- They will then be involved in a peaceful worldwide kingdom on earth



6. The Bible message for us



The Bible message is unlike any other –
it is totally reliable

We have seen that the Bible message is unique in the way it was given. We have also looked at the way some of the message is repeated through the books of the Bible. We shall now look in a little more detail at the Bible message to you personally and how it can help you.

a) God's promises

A promise is a statement that someone will do something in the future. We all make promises of various kinds, but often we don't or can't keep them. The other booklets in this series show that we can trust God's message. This gives us confidence to trust the promises to us that we read in His message.

b) God's message to the world

Early on in the Bible we read of promises that God made to a man called Abraham.

We shall now look at some of the cross references we saw on page 9. We find that, although Abraham was the father of both the Arabs and Jews, the promises that God made to him involve all nations.



The first recorded promise that God gave to Abraham makes it clear that all nations are involved. (Emphasis ours.):

*Now the Lord had said to Abram [Abraham]:
'I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'*

Genesis 12 v 1 to 3



God's message involves all nations

God makes it clear right at the start that everyone can be involved in the blessings on Abraham's descendants. The rest of the Bible is the account of how God worked out this promise.

God made similar promises to Abraham's son Isaac:

*Then the Lord appeared to him [Isaac] and said ...
'Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you ...
I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed'*

Genesis 26 v 2 to 4

"Seed" means a person's descendants, so Isaac is being told that the blessings to come on all nations would be through his descendants.

The same promise was also given to Isaac's son Jacob (who had his name changed to "Israel"):

Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 28 v 14



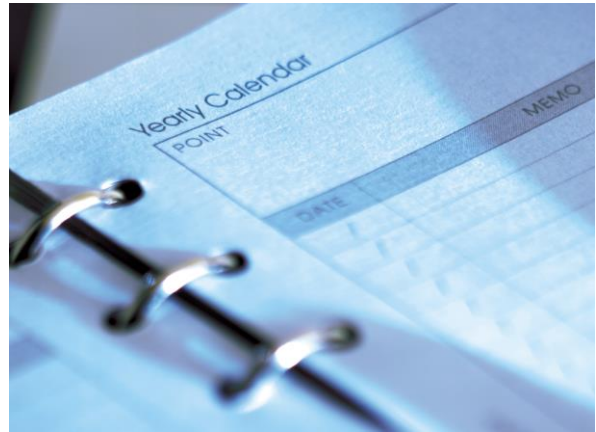
- God has promised to bless Abraham's descendants
- Through them all nations can be blessed
- His plan is to give blessings to all nations



c) God's plan through the Jews

We now want to look at how the Bible tells us that all nations can be blessed through Abraham's descendants.

We find the answer in the New Testament in the letter that the apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Galatia, an area of modern Turkey. (This is another of the cross-references from page 9.) He explains who the descendant was who would bring blessings on all nations:



God's plan for all nations is through the Jews

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, 'And to your Seed,' who is Christ. *Galatians 3 v 16*

So it would seem that it is through Jesus Christ that all nations can be involved in the promises made to Abraham.

Both Jesus and the apostle Paul confirmed the Jewish connection with God's plan:

Jesus: salvation is of the Jews

John 4 v 22

Paul: for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain

Acts 28 v 20

Paul again emphasises this in a speech at one of his trials:

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers. To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain.

Acts 26 v 6 and 7

The record in Acts also brings out the fact that Paul's New Testament message is based on the Old Testament:

So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets ... *Acts 28 v 23*



- God's plan with the Jews has extended to all people of all nations through Jesus Christ
- This plan is in both the Old and New Testaments



d) God's plan for planet earth

We shall now look at some of the details of this plan for our world, through the Jewish nation, which God has given to us.

The Old Testament prophets make it clear that part of God's plan involves making our earth a much better place to live in.



God plans to make our earth a better place in which to live

Again using the cross-references from page 9, we see that Psalm 72 gives a summary of God's plan:

*Give the king Your judgments, O God,
And Your righteousness to the king's Son.
He will judge Your people with righteousness,
And Your poor with justice ...
In His days the righteous shall flourish,
And abundance of peace ...
There will be an abundance of grain in the earth,
On the top of the mountains ...
His name shall endure forever;
His name shall continue as long as the sun.
And men shall be blessed in Him;
All nations shall call Him blessed.*

Psalm 72 v 1 and 2, 7, 16 and 17

From this we see:

- God is to send a king to rule the earth
- The rule will be just and fair
- War will be a thing of the past
- There will be an abundance of food

Read the whole Psalm through and you will see that it is a picture of our earth ruled by a just and fair king who has managed to solve the problems that face us today.



God's plan for our world involves:

- A just and fair world ruler
- An end to the problems in our world



e) Your involvement in God's plan

In Galatians chapter 3, which we looked at earlier, Paul also explains how we can be involved in God's plan:

[God] ... preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.'
So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. Galatians 3 v 8 and 9

It is those who believe and have faith in what God has communicated to us who will be involved in His plan.



God's plans for our lives are better than any plans we may have

Paul then explains what we should do to demonstrate our belief:

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
Galatians 3 v 27 to 29



A young man about to be baptized

So by being baptized, people from all nations can be involved in the things that God promised to Abraham and his descendants the Jews.





- People from all nations can become involved in the wonderful promises God made to Abraham by:
 - Believing that God will do what He has promised
 - Being baptized

Read the Bible yourself and you will find out more about this wonderfully consistent message. The other booklets in this series give more reasons why you should look at this message.

Have a look at the form enclosed with these booklets to find ways of helping you learn more about this message.

7. Summary

We have seen that there is no other collection of books like the Bible.

- It was written by people from contrasting backgrounds over a time period of hundreds of years
- It has a “ring of truth”
- There are over 500,000 links of ideas spread throughout all the books
- These links of ideas all combine to give a consistent message
- This message tells us that:
 - We were created by a totally reliable power greater than us
 - Our Creator asks for respect for His message, but allows people to reject it
 - God is concerned enough about people to have arranged a plan offering us life after death
 - God asks us to reflect His care in our lives
 - Knowing that we have a caring God gives us confidence in a future life after death
 - There is no life after death for those who are not interested in God’s plan
 - Those who die “in Christ” will be raised from the dead when Jesus Christ returns to the earth
 - Those who are raised from the dead will be involved in a worldwide kingdom on earth
 - We can have a part in God’s plan by believing that God will do what he has promised and then being baptized



8. The writers of the Bible message

All of the BC dates are approximate.

Old Testament book dates are "BC",
New Testament book dates are "AD"

Book	Writer	Background	Location	Time
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Moses	Born into family in slavery Brought up son of a king Became a shepherd Then leader of the Jews	Gen. & Exod – Egypt Lev to Deut. – Sinai Peninsula	1450
Joshua	Joshua *	Born in slavery in Egypt Then leader of Jews	Canaan	1400
Judges, Ruth 1 Samuel 1 to 24	Samuel *	Temple service as a young boy Became a prophet	Canaan	1050
1 Samuel 25 to 31 2 Samuel	Nathan and Gad*	Prophets in the time of King David	Jerusalem	1000
1 & 2 Kings	Unknown			
1 & 2 Chronicles Ezra	Ezra *	A priest, in captivity in Babylon. He led group of Jews to Israel	Babylon, then Jerusalem	450
Nehemiah	Nehemiah	Captive in Babylon. Became cupbearer to the Persian King Then Governor of Judah	Persia, then Jerusalem	445-433
Esther	Unknown		Persia	? 460
Job	Moses *	See Moses above		1450
Psalms (The number of Psalms written by each writer is shown in brackets)	Moses (1)	See Moses above	Wilderness	1450 1010 – 930
	David (73)	A shepherd, then King of Israel	Jerusalem	
	Asaph (12) Sons of Korah (11) Heman (1)	Chosen by David to be leaders of the musical aspects of Temple worship		
	Solomon (2) Ethan (1) Unknown (49)	King of Israel, David's son One of Solomon's "wise men"		
Proverbs	Solomon And others	See Solomon above An unknown group of wise men	Probably Jerusalem	1000-960
Ecclesiastes	Solomon	See Solomon above	Probably Jerusalem	1000-960
Song of Solomon	Solomon	See Solomon above	Probably Jerusalem	1000-960
Isaiah	Isaiah	Prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.	Probably Jerusalem	760-700
Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Son of a priest. Taken to Egypt	Jerusalem	625-585
Lamentations	Jeremiah *	See above	Jerusalem	586
Ezekiel	Ezekiel	A priest. Taken to Babylon	Babylon	592-570

* According to Jewish tradition



Old Testament book dates are “BC”, New Testament book dates “AD”

Book	Writer	Background	Location	Time
Daniel	Daniel	Of royal descent. Captive in Babylon. Promoted to high rank	Babylon/ Persia	607-524
Hosea	Hosea	At God's command he married a woman who was unfaithful	Northern Israel	785-725
Joel	Joel	Unknown	Israel	Uncertain
Amos	Amos	A keeper of cattle and a gatherer of figs	Northern Israel	787-797
Obadiah	Obadiah	Unknown	Unknown	587
Jonah	Probably Jonah	Galilee	Nineveh	**830
Micah	Micah	Came from the Moresheth	Israel	750-710
Nahum	Nahum	Unknown	Unknown	664-612
Habakkuk	Habakkuk	Unknown	Israel	608-597
Zephaniah	Zephaniah	Descendant of King Hezekiah	Jerusalem	630-626
Haggai	Haggai	Unknown	Jerusalem	520
Zechariah	Zechariah	Grandson of a prophet	Jerusalem	520-487
Malachi	Malachi	Unknown	Jerusalem	** 400
Matthew	Matthew	Roman tax collector. Chosen by Jesus to be a disciple	**Northern Israel	** AD 70
Mark	John Mark	Early Christian	** Rome	** 57-63
Luke	Luke	Doctor and early Christian	** Rome	** 60-62
John	John	Fisherman and disciple of Jesus	** Patmos	** 85-90
Acts	Luke	See Luke above	** Rome	** 62-64
Romans 1 & 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 & 2 Thessalonians 1 & 2 Timothy Titus Philemon	Paul	Free-born Roman citizen, Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia Brought up as strict Pharisee under Gamaliel, a highly respected Rabbi in Jerusalem Became a Christian and travelled widely in his preaching	Various	Between 49 and 66
Hebrews	Unnamed but possibly Paul	See notes on Paul above	Unknown	Uncertain, perhaps 66 - 67
James	James	Probably the oldest of the four half-brothers of Jesus Became a leader of the church in Jerusalem	Jerusalem	Uncertain, perhaps 40 - 50
1 & 2 Peter	Peter	A fisherman before becoming leader of the disciples	**Northern Israel	Probably 60- 66
1, 2 & 3 John	John	See John above	Ephesus	About 90
Jude	Jude	One of the half-brothers of Jesus	Probably Jerusalem	Uncertain, perhaps 66- 67
Revelation	John	See John above	** Patmos	About 96

** Information marked with asterisks is uncertain



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