

What is the “Bible”?

τὰ βιβλία

from *biblia* (Latin)

from earlier *tà biblía* (Koine Greek)

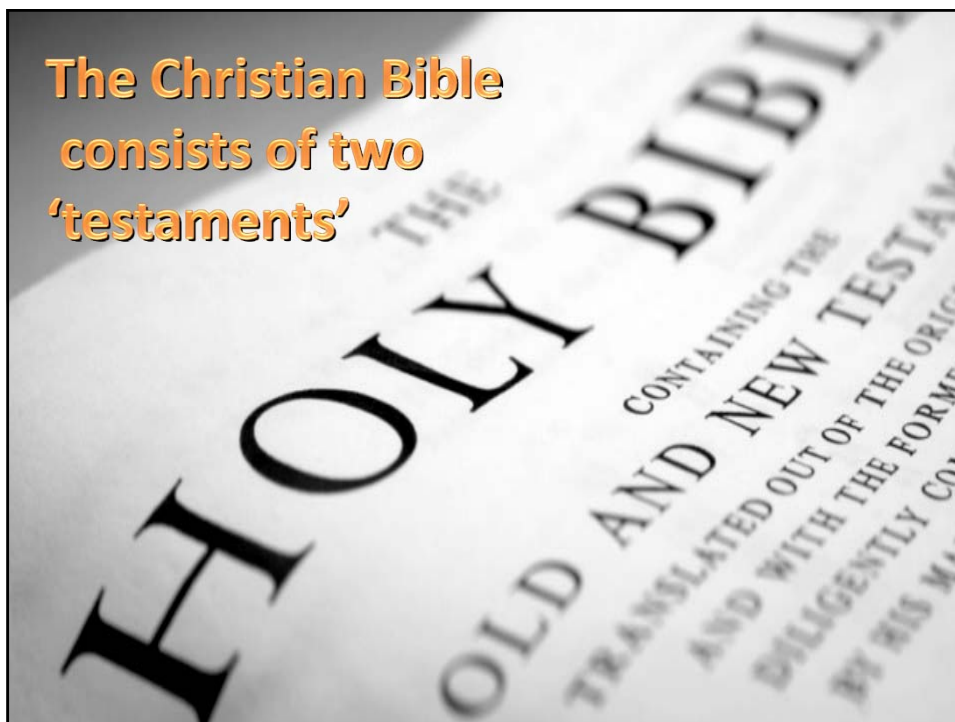
meaning “the books” or “library” or “book”

A collection of sacred texts or scriptures that Jews and Christians consider to be a product of divine inspiration and a record of the relationship between God and humans

Our “library” is a collection of 66 books



The Christian Bible
consists of two
'testaments'



testament

/ˈtɛstəmənt/
noun



1. (law) a will setting out the disposition of personal property.
2. a. a covenant instituted between God and man,
b. a copy of the Bible or either the Old or the New Testament.

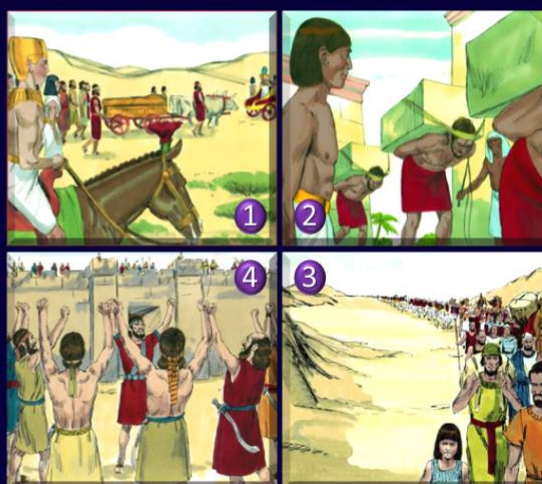
Origin: from Late Latin *vetus testamentum* and *novum testamentum*, loan-translations of Greek *palaia diatheke* and *kaine diatheke*. The Greek **διαθήκη** (*diathēkē* /dē-ä-thä'-kā/ Strong's G1242), means a compact, a covenant, a testament or a will.

The **New Testament** is the story of a **Man**
 ...told by people (**eyewitnesses**) who knew Him.



The **Old Testament** is the story of a **Nation**

- 1 The Hebrews went to Egypt as a Family.
- 2 They were later enslaved.
- 3 Moses led them out as a Nation...
- 4 ... that conquered Canaan.



Old and New Testaments

‡ The New Testament is in the Old Testament

concealed.

★ The Old Testament is in the New Testament

revealed.

Three Biblical Canons

The first part of the Christian Bible overlaps with the Jewish Scriptures, with three distinct canons:

✧ The Jewish Tanakh
(Hebrew Bible)

‡ The Protestant
Old Testament

✂ The Catholic (and Anglican and
Orthodox) Old Testament



(A "canon" is an authoritative collection of texts generally accepted as scripture.)

Three Biblical Canons

- ✧ The Jewish Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) contains 24 books.
- ✚ The Protestant Old Testament covers the same basic content as the Tenakh in 39 books (the Old Testament), plus adds 27 in the New Testament.
- ✂ The Catholic (and Anglican and Orthodox) Old Testaments cover the same basic content as the Protestant, plus an additional 9 books called the *Apocrypha*, or *deuterocanonical*.



The Old Testament consists of 39 books



The Old Testament

- Old Testament books fall into five categories:

LAW

GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY

HISTORY

JOSHUA
JUDGES
RUTH
1 SAMUEL
2 SAMUEL
1 KINGS
2 KINGS
1 CHRONICLES
2 CHRONICLES
EZRA
NEHEMIAH
ESTHER

WISDOM

JOB
PSALMS
PROVERBS
ECCLESIASTES
SONG OF SOLOMON

MAJOR PROPHETS

ISAIAH
JEREMIAH
LAMENTATIONS
EZEKIEL
DANIEL

MINOR PROPHETS

HOSEA
JOEL
AMOS
OBADIAH
JONAH
MICAH
NAHUM
HABAKKUK
ZEPHANIAH
HAGGAI
ZECHARIAH
MALACHI

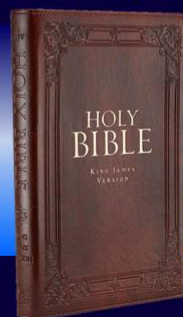
Two Testaments

The Christian Old Testament is **equivalent** to the Hebrew Bible, the Tanakh. It has the same basic contents but is organised differently and has a different emphasis.

Tanakh



Old Testament



The Jewish Scriptures (תנ"ך or מקרא)

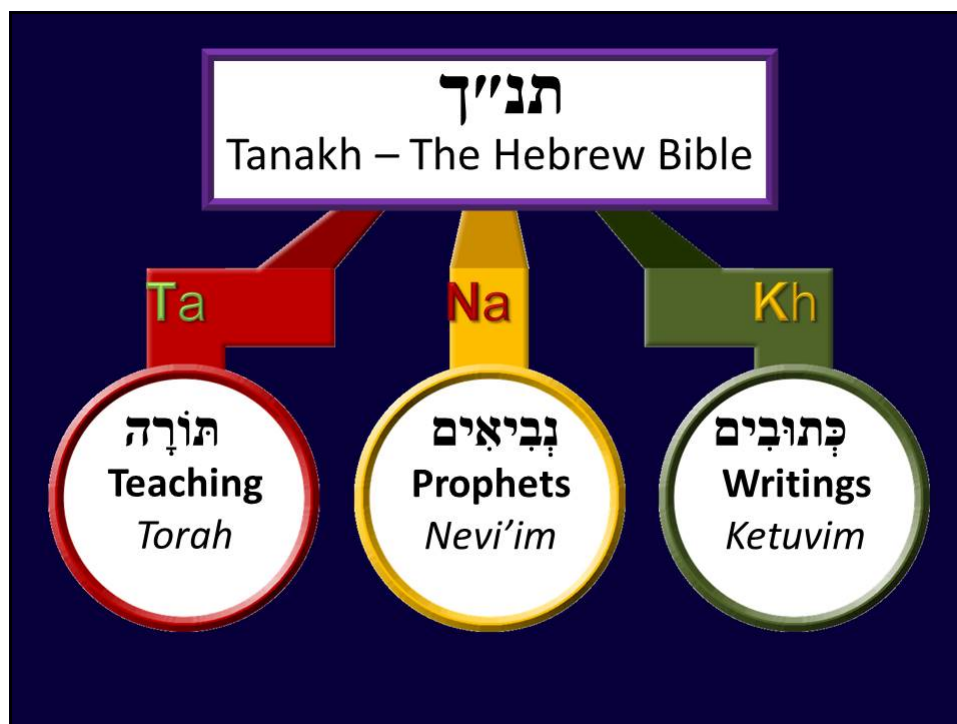


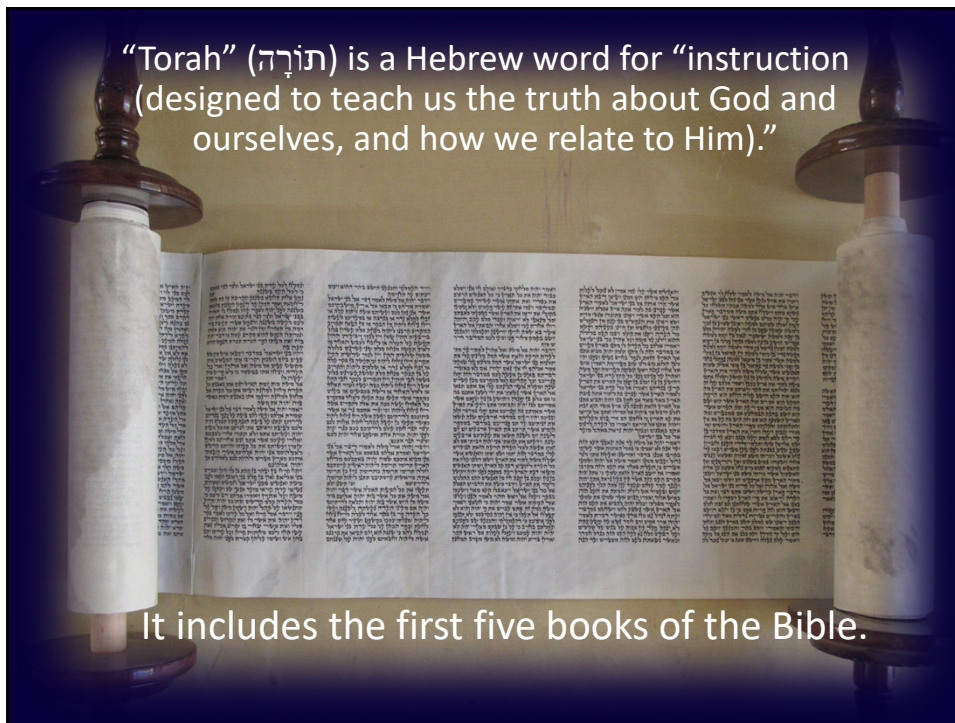
The Jewish Scriptures are called 'Tanakh' or 'Miqra':

★ **TaNaKh** is an acrostic of:

- ★ **T**orah ('Teaching' aka 'Law')
- ★ **N**evi'im ('Prophets')
- ★ **K**etuvim ('Writings')

★ **Miqra** (aka *Mikra*) means 'that which is read'.





“Torah” (תּוֹרָה) is a Hebrew word for “instruction (designed to teach us the truth about God and ourselves, and how we relate to Him).”

It includes the first five books of the Bible.

Torah

The Five Books of Moses

- Genesis – תּוֹרָה
- Exodus – תּוֹרָה
- Leviticus – תּוֹרָה
- Numbers – תּוֹרָה
- Deuteronomy – תּוֹרָה

From inception, the Torah was relayed in families by an oral tradition called the Oral Torah.

Jewish and Christian tradition hold that Moses authored these books (except the end of Deuteronomy).

Jesus referred to the Law as the **“books of Moses”** (Luke 24:44; John 5:46), as did Peter, James and Paul.

Some scholars hypothesise that four sources (*Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist and Priestly*) were combined to form the Torah around 450BC. Academic debate continues.



The five scrolls of the Torah

Genesis	בְּרֵאשִׁית Bere'shiyth	"in the beginning"
Exodus	שְׁמוֹת Shemot	"these are the names"
Leviticus	וַיִּקְרָא Vayikra	"He (the LORD) called out"
Numbers	בְּמִדְבָּר Bamidbar	"in the wilderness"
Deuteronomy	דְּבָרִים Devarim	"and these are His words."

"In the beginning, these are the names the LORD called out in the wilderness and these are His words."

Genesis	Chapters 1-11: God's creation of the world; Eden; the fall; the flood; human rebellion and invention of religion and cities. Chapters 12-50: Patriarchal and matriarchal ancestors. Joseph is enslaved in Egypt, but rises to power and eventual reunifies.
Exodus	The story of Moses, whom God calls to lead the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. At Mount Sinai, God's covenant with Israel.
Leviticus	Religious instructions for sacrifices and rituals; initiation of Aaron and his sons as priests; and laws concerning purity and impurity.
Numbers	Continues the narrative of the Israelites as they wander in the wilderness. Further instructions are given in this period.
Deuteronomy	Three speeches by Moses on the eastern side of the Jordan river, before the Israelites enter the promised land. Moses' death.

THE NEVI'IM

Prophets (נְבִיאִים)

Former Prophets

(נְבִיאִים רְאִשׁוֹנִים,
Nevi'im Rishonim)

Latter Prophets

(נְבִיאִים אַחֲרוֹנִים,
Nevi'im Aharonim)

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(נביאים ראשונים,
*Nevi'im
Rishonim*)

Latter Prophets
(נביאים אחרונים, *Nevi'im Aharonim*)

Major
Prophets

Minor Prophets
(תרי עשר, *Trei Asar*,
"The Twelve")

THE NEVI'IM

Prophets (נְבִיאִים)

Former
Prophets

Latter Prophets

Major

Minor Prophets

Joshua

Judges

Samuel

Kings

Isaiah

Jeremiah

Ezekiel

Hosea

Joel

Amos

Obadiah

Jonah

Micah

Nahum

Habakkuk

Zephaniah

Haggai

Zachariah

Malachi

THE KETUVIM

The Writings (כְּתוּבִים)

Sifrei Emet*
(ספרי של אמת)
(Book of Truth*,
Wisdom,
Poetry)

Hamesh
Megillot
(חמש מגילות)
(Five Scrolls)

Histories
(Other)

אמת (EMT) is the acronym of the first letters of the three Poetic books (*alef, mem and tav*):

Psalms (תהלים) *Tehillim*

Proverbs (משלי) *Mishlei*

Job (איוב) *Iyyov*.

אמת, "truth" in Hebrew

Rabbis call the poetic books the "book of Truth".

The Hebrew Alphabet (Aleph + Bet)

“Tav” is the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet → **אמת** ← “Aleph” is the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet
 ↑
 “Mem” is the middle letter in the Hebrew alphabet

Per Rabbis, “truth” is the beginning, middle and end.

Every letter in Hebrew has a meaning, based on the pictograph from the Paleo-Hebrew alphabet.

- Modern Hebrew א came from Paleo-Hebrew א. It stands for ox, bull, strength, leader, first... and **God**.
- The modern מ is from מ (water, massive, chaos).
- א comes from א (cross, covenant, sign of a covenant).

Truth is אמת

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Truth is א נ א
 Remove God (א) from truth, א נ א

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Truth is א נ א
 Remove God (א) from truth, א נ א
 we are left with *mowth*..... א נ, or "death".

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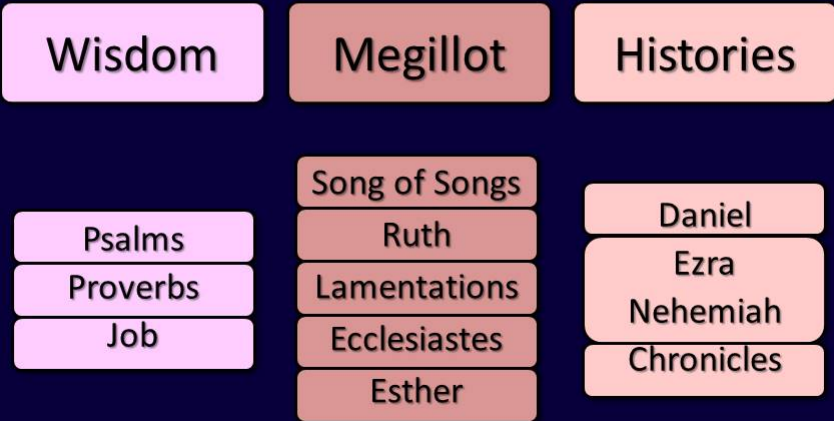
- Modern Hebrew א came from Paleo-Hebrew א. It stands for ox, bull, strength, leader, first... and **God**.
- The modern נ is from נ (water, massive, chaos).
- ת comes from ת (cross, covenant, sign of a covenant).

Truth is אמת
 Remove God (א) from truth, אמת, we are left with *mowth*..... ת, or "death".

Removing God from truth yields death!

THE KETUVIM

The Writings (כְּתוּבִים)



The Old Testament

- The 39 books of the Old Testament cover the same material as the Jewish Bible - the Tenakh - just organised a little differently.
- It covers everything from God's creation of the universe, following the Israelites as they coalesce into tribes and a nation under a covenant with God. It records their historical ups and downs as they rebel against God and then repent, repeatedly.
- The Old Testament then covers prophets called to give God's messages to various peoples, few of which were heeded. It stops short of the birth of Jesus, but the Old Covenant keeps running up to Jesus' death, when Christians believe a New Covenant was forged.

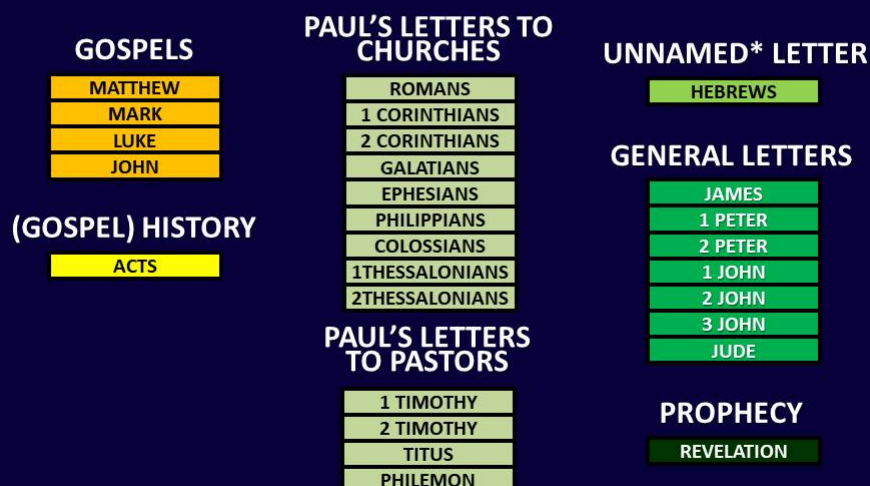


The New Testament

- The 27 books of the New Testament are a record of historical events in the life of Jesus Christ - His life, death, resurrection, ascension - and the birth and spread of Christianity in the 1st Century AD by His disciples.
- The New Testament covers a New Covenant between God and humans in which the dispensation of grace is revealed through Jesus Christ.
- Christians believe that the New Testament add to the Old Testament to complete the revelation of God.
- Therefore, Jesus came to complete the revelation of God. In so doing, His life and death fulfilled hundreds of Old Testament prophecies.

The New Testament

- New Testament books fall into seven categories:



NOTE: * Probably written by Paul.



gos'pel

noun | gos•pel | \gä-spəl\

1. *capitalised*: good news; the message concerning Christ, the Kingdom of God, and salvation
2. *capitalised*: one of the four New Testament books telling of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ
3. a lection from one of the four gospels used in a religious way
4. any system of religious doctrine; sometimes, any system of political doctrine or social philosophy; as, this political gospel.
5. anything promoted or accepted as infallible truth or as a guiding principle of doctrine

Middle English, from Old English *gōd-spel* meaning "good news" or "glad tidings", which is a calque (word-for-word translation) of the Greek word εὐαγγέλιον, euangelion (eu- "good", -angelion "message") or in Aramaic (ܐܘܢܘܢ ewang'eliyawn).

Okay, but what IS the Gospel?

¹ Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

² By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

The “Good News” of the Bible

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

01

Jesus died,
according to the Scriptures...

02

He was buried...

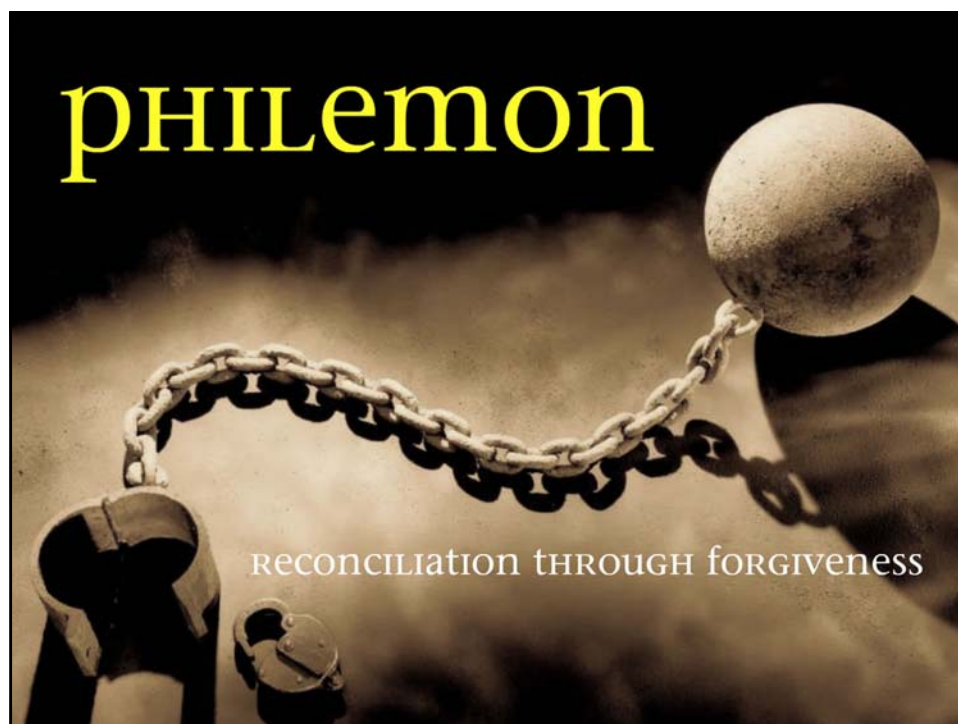
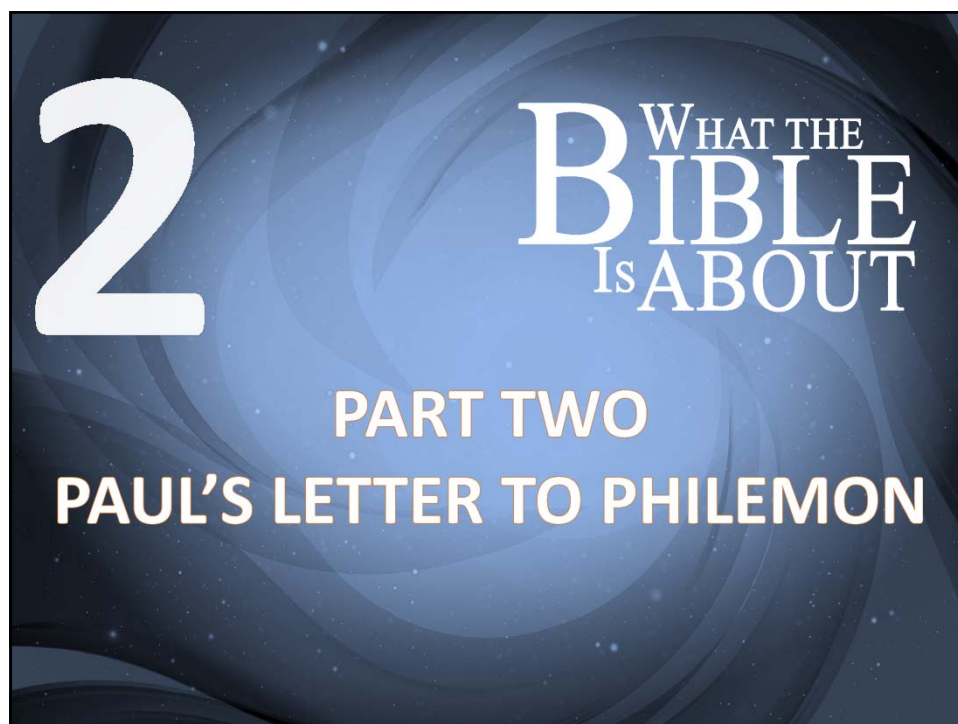
03

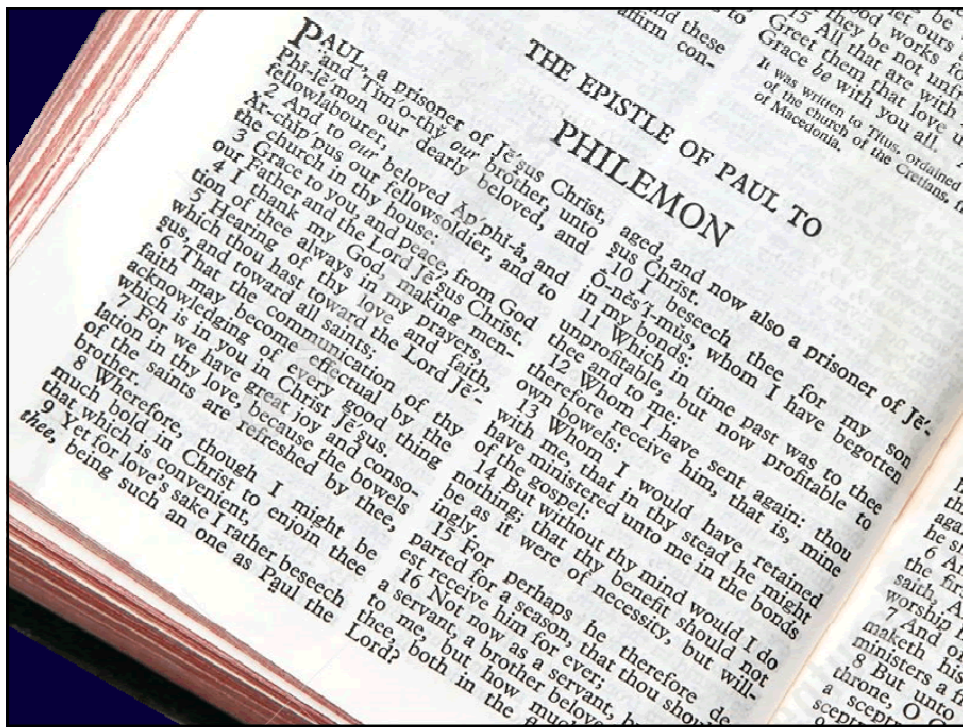
He rose again on the third day,
according to the Scriptures.

3 **Died**
according to the scriptures

Buried
Rose **on the** **3rd** **day**
according to the scriptures



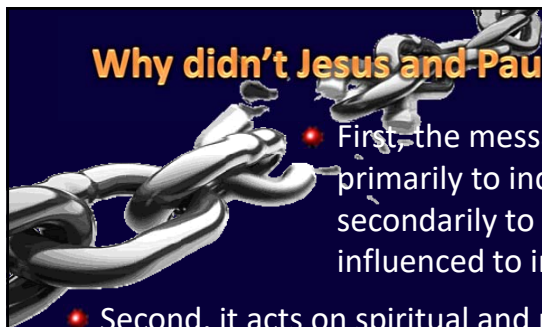




Religion or Relationship?



Why didn't Jesus and Paul condemn slavery?



- First, the message of Christianity is primarily to individuals, and only secondarily to society. It leaves those ... influenced to influence the mass.
- Second, it acts on spiritual and moral sentiment, and only afterwards and consequently on deeds or institutions.
- Third, it hates violence, and trusts wholly to enlightened conscience. So it meddles directly with no political or social arrangements, but lays down principles which will profoundly affect these, and leaves them to soak into the general mind.

Alexander Maclaren, "Commentary on Colossians",
The Expositor's Bible (Eerdmans, 1940; vol. VI, 301).

About the author

- Saul (later called Paul), a Roman citizen, was born and raised in Tarsus, home to a famous university, higher in reputation than universities in Athens and Alexandria. He was taken to Jerusalem as a young boy and educated by the well-known teacher Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). He became a Pharisee.
- Saul held the stoners' coats while Stephen was stoned to death for his faith. He persecuted of the church with authority to imprison Christians (Acts 26:9-11). He travelled to foreign cities to root them out.
- He was travelling to Damascus to arrest believers when Jesus confronted him outside the city: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"
- In the city a believer called Ananias visited Saul. His blindness was healed and he was baptized (Acts 9:1-19).
- Paul stayed three years in Damascus, preaching in synagogues.

A private letter

- Paul received news from Epaphras of a threat to the faith in Colossae (epistle to the Colossians).
- Paul intercedes for Philemon's runaway slave Onesimus, who apparently robbed his master in Colossae and fled to Rome.
- Onesimus came in contact with Paul and was converted. He began to live up to his name, "Profitable" (v.11).
- Although Paul would have liked to have kept him in Rome as friend and helper, he insists Onesimus return to Colossae.
- Since he was returning as a Christian, Paul asks Philemon to receive him as a "brother beloved" (v.16).
- Paul expects Philemon to do even more than he asks (v.21).

Slavery

- Estimates suggest that there were 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire; men and women were traded like pieces of chattel or merchandise. The average slave sold for 500 denarii. (One denarii was a day's wage for a common labourer.) Educated and skilled slaves were sold for as much as 50,000 denarii. A master could free a slave, or a slave could buy his freedom if he could raise the money (Acts 22:28).
- The master would register the name and description of a runaway slave with the officials, who would place him on the "wanted" list. Masters could execute rebellious slaves. While some masters were cruel, others were humane. A slave was an useful piece of property it would cost the owner to lose.
- Philemon had a dilemma. If he forgave Onesimus, what would the other masters (and slaves) think? If he punished him, how would it affect his testimony?

Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and Onesimus

- Philemon (affectionate, one of a kind) from Colossae, a city of Phrygia, was a man both wealthy and noble; the assembly met in his home. He was one of Paul's converts (v. 19)
- Apphia was Philemon's wife.
- Archippus, their son, was a minister of the Gospel (Col. 4:17).
- Onesimus (profitable), formerly an unbeliever and slave of Philemon (v. 16), stole certain things and fled to Rome (v. 15). While there, Paul guided him to faith (v. 10) and he became very useful to Paul (vv. 11-13, Col. 4:10). Paul encouraged him to voluntarily return to his master Philemon, and provided a letter of commendation to take.
- In this epistle, Paul commended Onesimus to his master and reconciled the two. Onesimus was later made a bishop; in Greece he is honoured as the patron Saint of the imprisoned.

Greeting

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy *our* brother,

To Philemon our beloved *friend* and fellow laborer, ² to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Commending Philemon's Love and Faith

⁴ I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, ⁵ hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, ⁶ that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

⁷ For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

(LOOK **back**)

The Plea for Onesimus

On the basis of Onesimus' conversion

⁸ Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting, ⁹ yet for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*—being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ— ¹⁰ I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, ¹¹ who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.

(LOOK **within**)

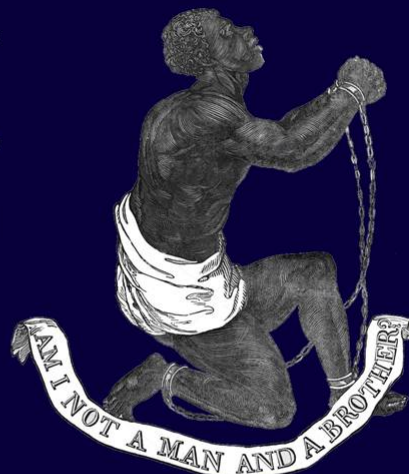
The Plea for Onesimus

On the basis of Philemon's and Paul's friendship

¹² I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, ¹³ whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. ¹⁴ But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

(Look **within**)

¹⁵ For perhaps he departed for a while for this *purpose*, that you might receive him forever, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. ¹⁷ If then you count me as a partner, receive him as *you would* me.



Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, London, 1787.

Paul's Promise

¹⁸ But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord.

²¹ Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. ²² But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.

(Look **beyond**)

Farewell

²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,

²⁴ *as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow labourers.

²⁵ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

Five fellow workers:

- **Epaphras:** evangelist who started churches in Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis.
- **Mark:** it is now 11 years after Mark's breach with Paul; two years later he told Timothy to bring Mark with him and reconciled.
- **Aristarchus,** of Thessalonica: Paul's companion on his third missionary tour.
- **Luke:** remained with Paul until the end. He wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts.
- **Demas:** later deserts Paul in 2 Timothy 4:10. Calvin suggests: "And if one of Paul's assistants became weary and discouraged and was afterwards drawn away by the vanity of the world, let none of us rely too much on our own zeal lasting even one year, but remembering how much of the journey still lies ahead, let us ask God for steadfastness."

Contrasts and comparisons

Paul's approach	"I might be much bold in Christ" (v.8)	"for love's sake I rather beseech you " (v.9)
Paul and Onesimus	"Paul the aged " (v.9)	"my son Onesimus" (v.10)
Onesimus' value	" unprofitable "	" profitable " (v.11)
Philemon's service	"the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee " (v.7)	" in thy stead he (Onesimus) might have ministered unto me" (v.13)
Paul's choice	"I would have retained " (v.13)	"I have sent again" (v.12)
Onesimus' position	"departed for a season " (v.15)	"receive him forever " (v.15)
Onesimus' status	"a servant " (v.16) "in the flesh " (v.16)	"a brother beloved" (v.16) "in the Lord " (v.16)

Paul introduces seven terms:

1. Love (vv. 5, 7, 9, 16)
2. Prayers (v. 22)
3. Sharing (v. 17)
4. Partnering (v. 17) *koinonos*
5. Good/Goodness (v. 14)
6. Heart (vv. 12, 20)
7. Refreshed (v. 20)

Values expressed in this letter

- **Personal value:** shines light on Paul's character;
- **Ethical value:** focus on what is right;
- **Providential value:** God is behind and above all events;
- **Practical value:** application of highest principles to the commonest affairs;
- **Evangelical value:** encouragement to seek and to save the lowest;
- **Social value:** presentation of the relation of Christianity to slavery and all unchristian institutions;
- **Spiritual value:** the analogy between it and the Gospel

Food for thought

- "An inscription erected by a freed slave from Laodicea was dedicated to Marcus Sestius Philemon, than king him for his manumission. It will be recalled that a Philemon who owned the slave Onesimus was a leader in the church of Colossae. We cannot identify this Philemon with the slaveholder to whom Paul wrote, but the coincidence of the inscription from the same area is intriguing, especially since it refers to the manumission of a slave."

(John McRay, *Archaeology And The New Testament*, p. 247).

Conclusions

- What Paul did for Onesimus with Philemon, Jesus Christ has done for everyone with God.
- Jesus Christ said on our behalf, "Charge that to My account! Receive them as you would receive Me!"

Philemon,
Charge it to my account.

"We are all His Onesimi, to my thinking." Martin Luther