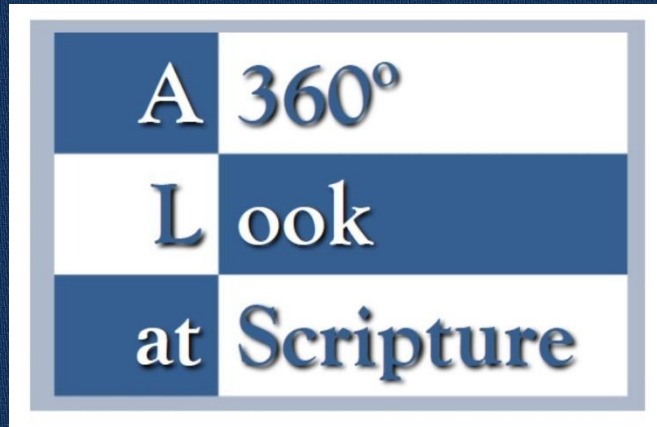




Contents:

- The Bible
- The Word of God
- The Canon of Scripture
- Many Books, One Book





THE BIBLE

The Bible was written by various authors at different times, in different geographical locations, and in three different languages:

- **Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.**

Reading and studying the Bible in its entirety is fundamental; for us Christians, it would be unproductive to read only part of it.

Jesus said: "... if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me " (John 5:46).

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them " (Matthew 5:17).

The Bible has

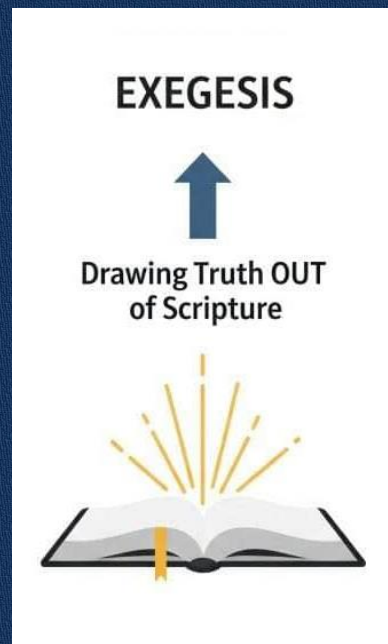
ONE interpretation (exegesis)

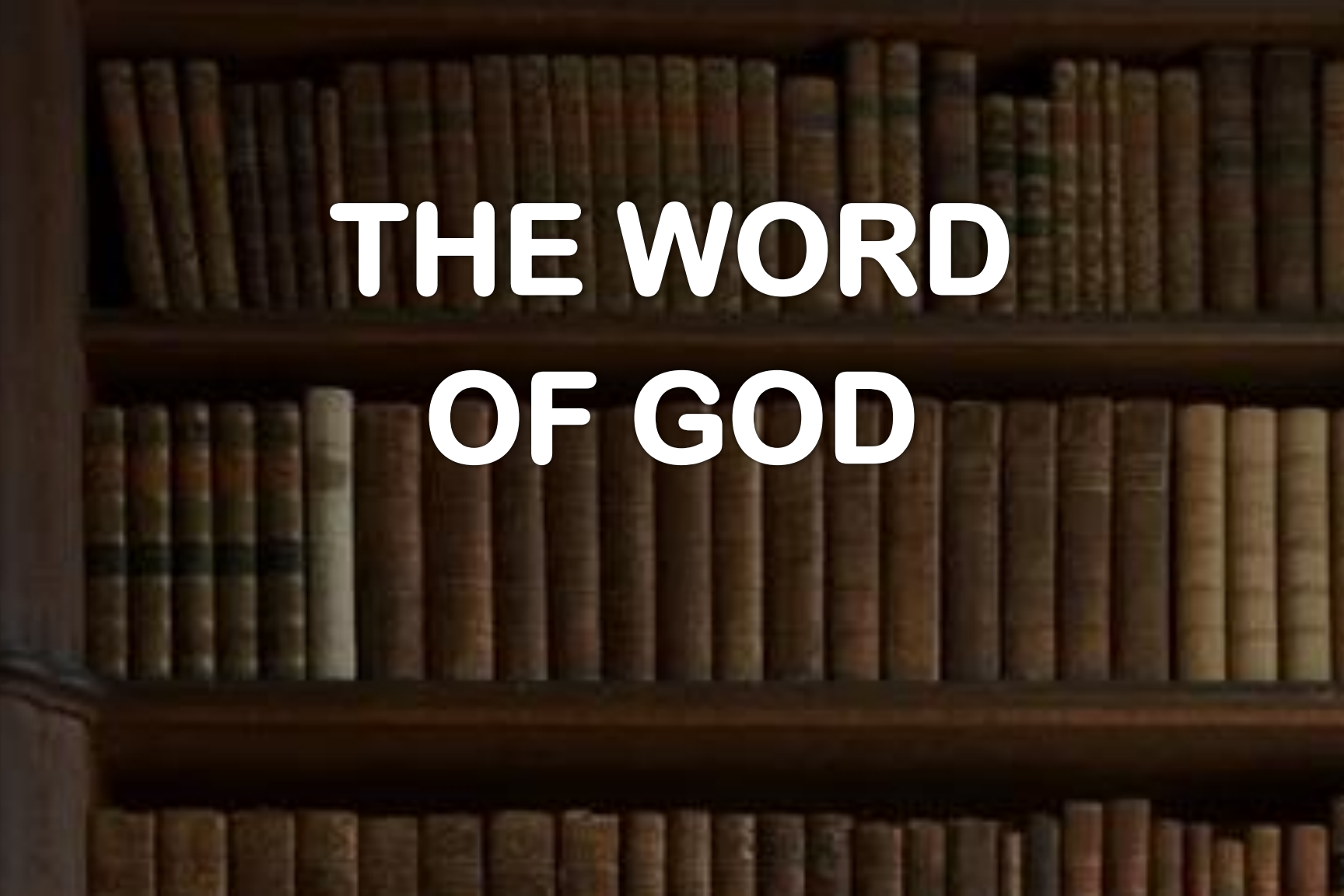
MANY applications.

Today, then, more than ever, there are no excuses for being *ignorant witnesses of our faith*, but every opportunity to be *educated witnesses of Christ*, well *equipped* with the necessary spiritual and intellectual tools to fight the good fight of the Christian life.

Paul wrote to the Colossians,

“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge (Ἐπίγνωσις, epignosis, better knowledge) of God” (Colossians 1:10)





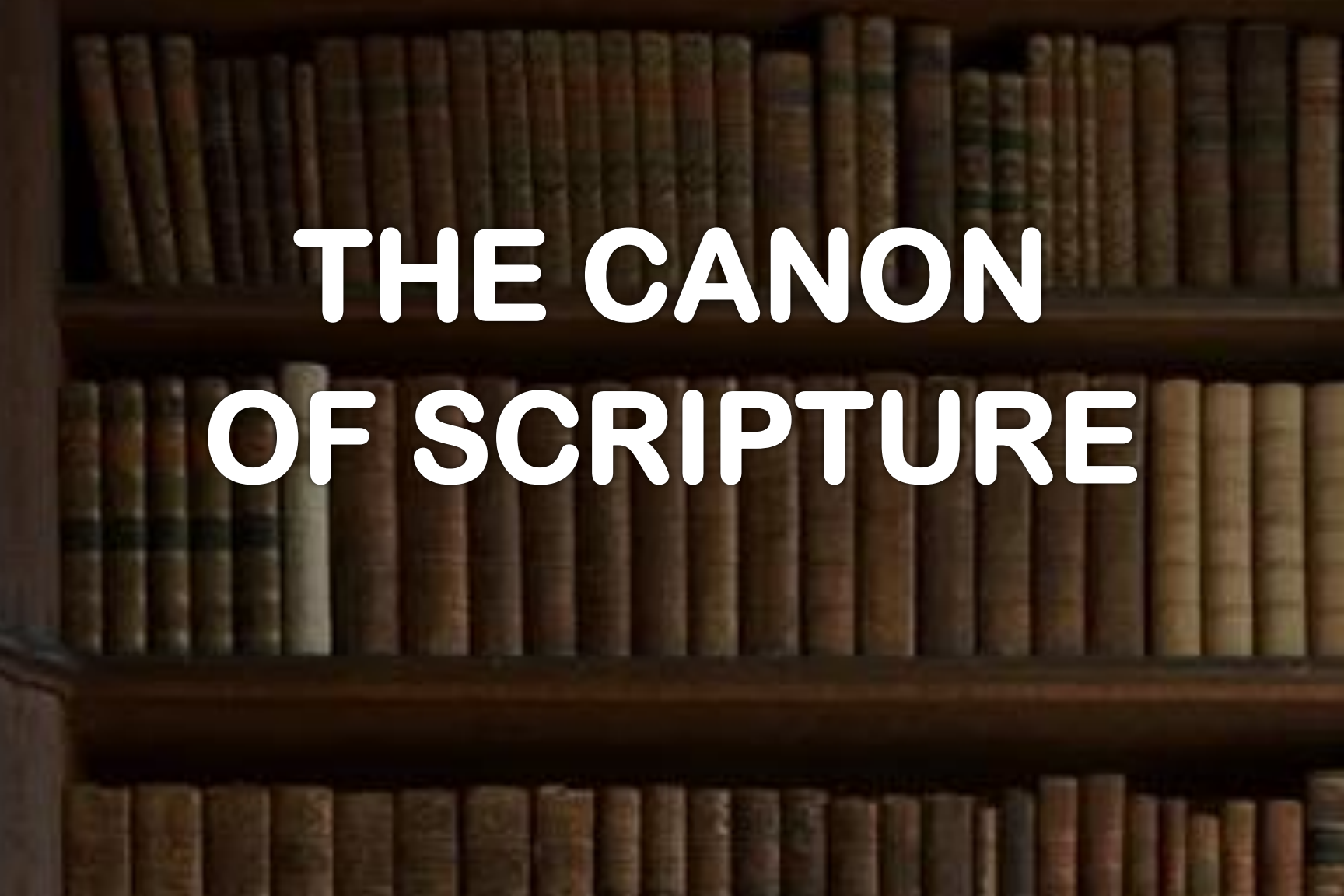
THE WORD OF GOD

In **2 Timothy 3:16-17** the apostle Paul writes: “**All Scripture** is given by **inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

“...for prophecy never came by the will of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” (**2 Peter 1:21**)

Paul writes to the church in the city of Thessalonica: “For this reason we also always thank God, because when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it really is, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.” (**1 Thessalonians 2:13**)

“Blessed is he who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear them, and keep those things which are written in it: for the time is at hand!” (**Revelation 1:3**)



THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE

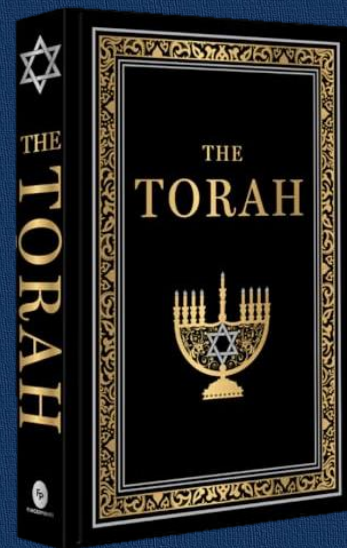
Before the end of the first century AD, the Jewish historian Josephus (Against Apion 1.8) attests that this was the number of books considered Holy Scripture for time immemorial. This is his authoritative testimony:

“For we have an innumerable multitude of books among us, which neither agree nor contradict one another (like the Greeks), but only twenty-two books, which contain the narratives of former times...and how firmly we attach importance to those books of our own nation, is evident from our behavior, since during so long an epoch past, no one has dared to add to them, take away from them, or alter the text. Nay, it becomes natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem those books to contain divine teachings...” *The Works of Josephus*, Hendrikson Publisher, January 1991.

The Jews counted as 22 then, 24 today, the same books we count as 39.

The Jews called the Old Testament TENAKH, תנ"ך, because of their threefold division:

- TORAH – תורה – The Law of Moses
- NEVI'IM – נביאים – The Prophets
- KETUVIM – כתובים – The Writings



Jesus himself sealed the Hebrew canon with his words, quoting from it and, most importantly, fulfilling the prophecies written in those books concerning him. He also recognized the classic Jewish division into Law, Prophets, and Psalms (Writings), which included the same books we read in our Old Testament today – see [Luke 24:44](#).

The early Church was called to recognize the authentic apostolic testimony.

We read in **Revelation 2:1-2**: “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These things says he who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: I know your works and your labor and your patience, and that you cannot tolerate evil men; and you have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and have found them liars.”

Paul was very careful and took care to provide unique confirmations that guaranteed the authenticity of his writings.

“The greeting is with my own hand, Paul; and this is the token in every letter of mine; for this is the way I write” (**2 Thessalonians 3:17**)

“The greeting is with my own hand, Paul” (**1 Corinthians 16:21**)

“The greeting is with my own hand, Paul” (**Colossians 4:18**)

“I charge you by the Lord that this letter be read to all the brethren”
(1 Thessalonians 5:27)

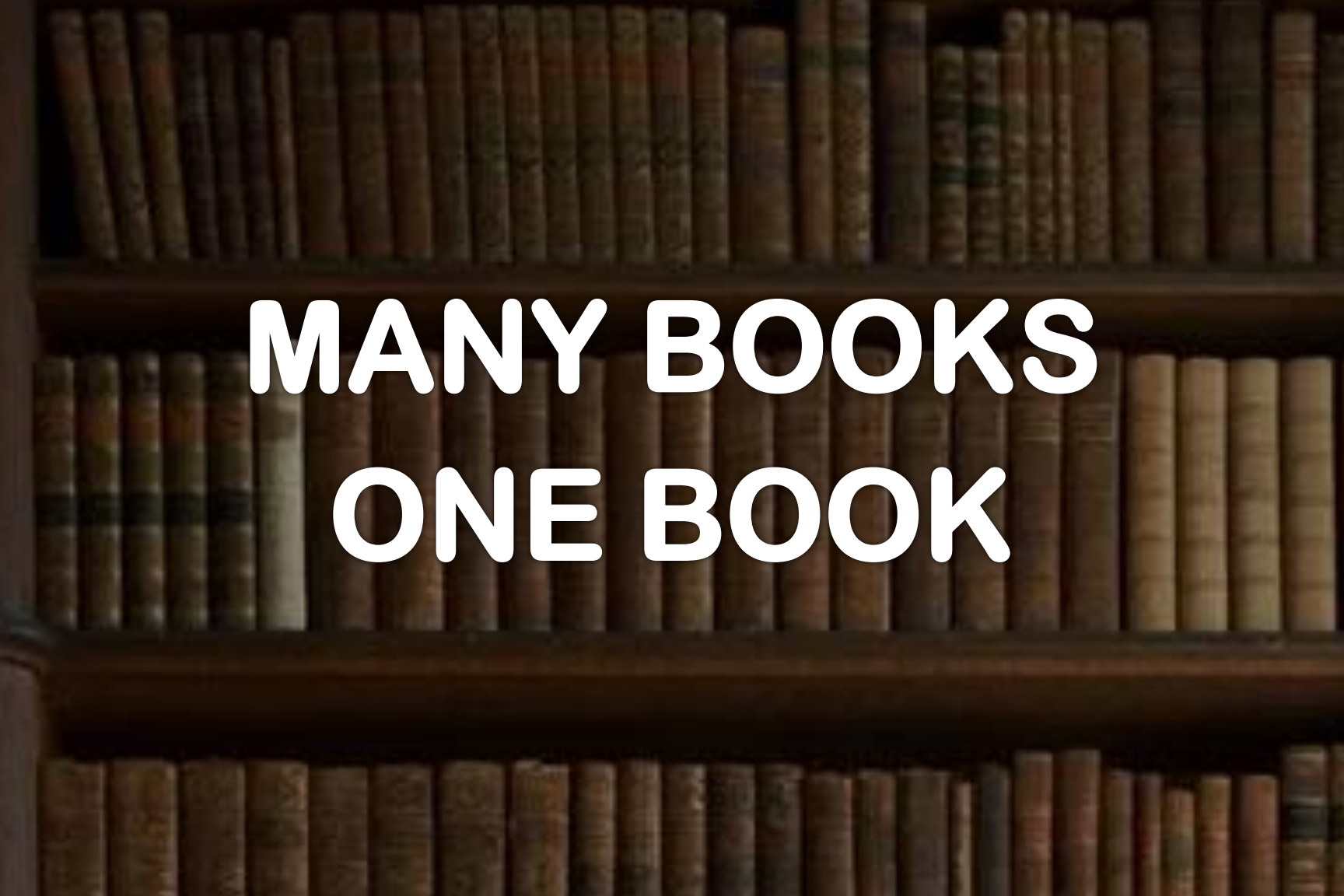
“...and consider that the patience of our Lord is salvation. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters in which he speaks of these things. In them are some things hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people twist, as they do also, to their own destruction” (2 Peter 3:15-16)

Peter writes: “Therefore I will be careful always to remind you of these things, although you know them and are established in the truth that is with you. And I think it right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by my exhortation. For I know that shortly I must put off this tent of mine, as our Lord Jesus Christ made known to me. But I will make every effort so that after my departure you may always have occasion to remember these things. For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Peter 1:12-16).

When the eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection were no longer alive, the canonical Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and finally the book of Revelation came to be the official sources of the teachings of Christianity.

The Old and New Testaments complete the Revelation, delivering the Holy Scriptures to the believers of the post-apostolic era,

“So that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”
(2 Timothy 3:16)



**MANY BOOKS
ONE BOOK**

The Bible collects several books,

- written by various authors,
- in different times and under different circumstances,

Yet, the more you study it the more you perceive its **UNITY**

That is conclusive evidence of the special assistance of the **HOLY SPIRIT**

The unity of design revealed in the pages of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is further proof of the supernatural element and of the divine inspiration that guided the authors of the sacred pages.

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15, connected to Revelation 12).

“In the past, God spoke to our fathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways; but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son” (Hebrews 1:1-2a)

“For the law was given through Moses;
Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ”

Some mistakes concerning Christian doctrine or practice originate from an erroneous or imperfect perception of the continuity existing between the teachings of the Old Testament and those of the New: the transitory nature of the first covenant and the completeness and perfection of the second, in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

