

THE BIBLE: THE BOOK OF THE AGES

FROM THE MESSAGES OF ADRIAN ROGERS



The Bible: The Book of the Ages (Bible Study)

Published by Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc.
2941 Kate Bond Road
Memphis, TN 38133-4017
(800) 274-5683

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Printed in the United States of America

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INTRODUCTION

THE BIBLE: THE BOOK OF THE AGES

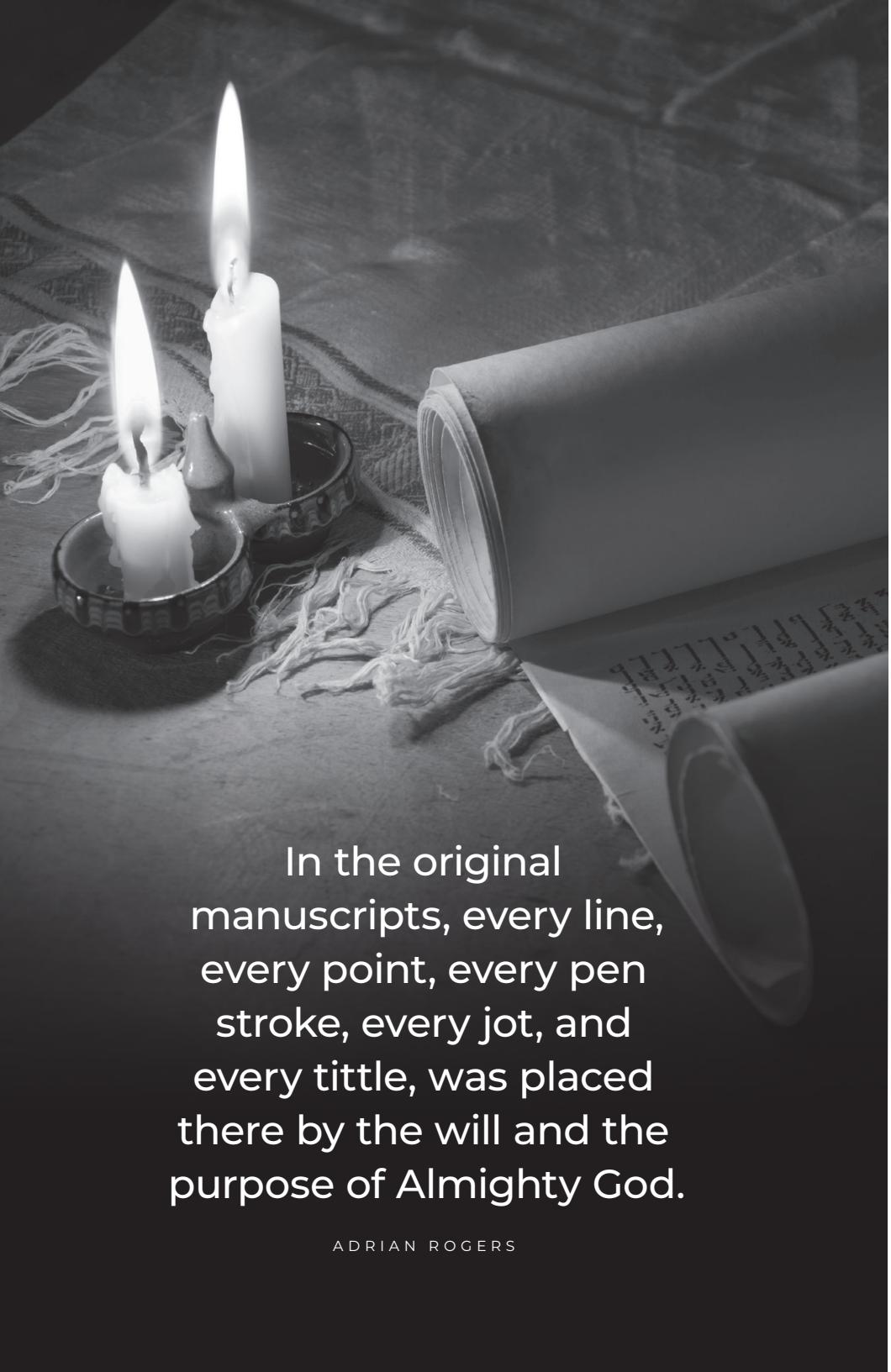
The Word of God was written for God's children to know Him and so they would know how to follow Him. Every single story from the beginning until the end has purpose and intention. Every word builds your faith and teaches you how to live the Christian life with authority. Victory comes from knowing, believing, and living out the Word of God.

The first part of this study explores six phrases in the Bible that reveal something unique about the Word of God. The second part of the study focuses on practical ways you can use God's Word in your daily walk with Christ. Each week you will become more and more convinced through biblical evidence that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. As you see Jesus in every chapter and on every page of Scripture, you will be transformed, becoming more like Jesus every day. The Bible has one theme: redemption. It has one hero: Jesus. It has one villain: Satan. The single purpose of the Bible is to reveal the glory of God. It is God's love letter to all of Mankind.

The Holy Spirit is your guide through the Scriptures—teaching you, revealing truth to you, and convicting you as the words transform your heart. Through this 12-week study, you will come to understand that the Bible is not just a good book of the month; it is a great book worth defending and using as the foundation for your faith.

WANT MORE?

The audio messages by Pastor Adrian Rogers from which this study is derived are linked using the QR code on page 170 at the end of this study.



In the original manuscripts, every line, every point, every pen stroke, every jot, and every tittle, was placed there by the will and the purpose of Almighty God.

ADRIAN ROGERS

WEEK 1

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF GOD'S WORD

■ INTRODUCTION

The Bible is a supernatural book, and it is unlike any other book. Pastor Lewis Sperry Chafer said, "The Bible is not such a book a man would write if he could or could write if he would." It is a wondrous book! Christians need to know and stand on the B-I-B-L-E.

Read through Psalm 119 and underline any form of the word "wonderful."

Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law. ...Make me understand the way of Your precepts; so shall I meditate on Your wonderful works. ...Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them (Psalm 119:18, 27, 129, emphasis added).

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World were first identified by Herodotus, who marveled at these architectural achievements. Many of his writings did not survive, and few of the seven wonders still stand. But God's Word remains as one of the best-selling books of all time. The truths and precepts found in the Bible still stand strong. This week we are going to look at the Seven Wonders of the Word of God.

■ PRAY OVER IT

Dear God, The more I read Your Word, the more wonderful it becomes to me. Show me the wonders of Your Word so that I can boldly share it with others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DAY 1

CONTEND EARNESTLY

■ PONDER IT

Some Christians say we don't need to defend the Bible because the Bible will defend itself. That might sound good, but the Bible says:

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to *contend earnestly* for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3, emphasis added).

John Calvin, a great theologian, said, "A dog barks when his master is attacked. I would be a coward if I saw that God's truth is attacked and yet would remain silent."

The great Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon declared, "The turning point of the battle between those who hold 'the faith once delivered to the saints' and their opponents, lies in the true and real inspiration of the Holy Scriptures." What you believe about the inspiration of the Word of God is the point of difference.

This is what Pastor Rogers said about the Bible:

When I began preaching as a nineteen-year-old boy, I believed the Bible was the Word of God. I believe it even more now than I believed it then, and I believe it with all of my heart.

The more I see of the Word of God, the more convinced I am that the Bible is exactly what it says of itself. I'm not finding hidden flaws; I'm finding hidden beauties.

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- How have you seen God's Word attacked in your community?
- Are you convinced that the Bible is God's Word? What would convince you or what did convince you?

- Have you ever been in a position in which you had the opportunity to defend the Bible as the inerrant Word of God? What did you do?

The Bible is not the book of the week; it is not the book of the month, nor is it the book of the year. It is the book of the ages!

ADRIAN ROGERS

A SUPERNATURAL BOOK

■ PONDER IT

First Wonder: The Bible is a supernatural book. No other book was written as the Bible was written.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

The word “inspiration” is from the Greek word “theopneustos.” It means that the Scripture is God-breathed. Your breath makes your voice. These sounds go into the air and go into listening ears. The vibrations created in the ears send signals to the brain and the brain interprets these sounds. What people hear when you speak is your breath.

The Bible is the breath of God. He breathed out the Scriptures. It is as much the Word of God as if God were here in a physical body speaking words. All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God. This recognition of the word-by-word inspiration is called the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible. “Verbal” is from the Latin word “verbum” and means “word.” “Plenary” comes from the Latin word “plenus” and means “full.” Every word of God is pure, and we can count on it for life.

Some people say the Bible is inspired in its thoughts but not in its words. The problem is that you cannot have accurate thoughts without accurate words. To have thoughts without words would be like trying to have mathematics without numbers. Words mean something. Jesus taught that every jot and tittle in the Word of God is important. (See Matthew 5:18.) In the original manuscripts, every mark was placed there by the will and the purpose of Almighty God

The Word of God is fully inspiring. Chronicles might read more like a Hebrew telephone directory than the Book of Romans, but 1 and 2 Chronicles are just as inspired as the Book of Romans. All Scripture is inspired by God.

The Bible uses phrases like “God said,” or “the LORD said” 380 times in the Bible. Either the Bible is the Word of God, or it’s a lie because it says that this is what God says.

Some people might ask why the Bible sounds so different if it is all the breath of God. What James wrote doesn’t sound like what Paul wrote. What Peter wrote doesn’t sound like what James or Paul wrote. The language and styles are so different, but the message is still given by the inspiration of God.

Think about a musician. If the same person were to play the trumpet and the trombone, the instruments would still sound different. Each instrument has a personality, tone, and temperament of its own, even when played by the same musician using the same music.

When you read the Bible, you can hear the unique personalities, temperaments, and characteristics of Paul, Simon Peter, and others, but behind each of these human instruments is the author, Almighty God.

For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21).

The Bible is a very human book. You see the prayers, praises, fears, victories, yearnings, and frustrations of the men who wrote it. It’s marked by their personalities, yet God, in and through these men, was doing the speaking and leading. It’s a supernatural book.

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- What characteristics make the Bible different from other books you have read?
- What do you believe about the inspiration of Scripture? Why does it matter?

The Bible is as much the Word of God as if God were here in a physical body speaking words.

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DAY 3

A SPIRITUAL BOOK

■ PONDER IT

Second Wonder: The Bible is a spiritual book. It was written by the Holy Spirit and must be interpreted by the Holy Spirit. Revelation is God's communication of truth to Man. Inspiration is the recording of that revelation, but we need illumination to be able to understand the Word of God. The Psalmist prays:

Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law (Psalm 119:18).

We can ask God to open our understanding so we can interpret the Scriptures.

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Apart from the Spirit of God, we can't understand the Bible. We might be able to list the names of the kings of Israel or ace a Bible history test, but we will never know the real message of the Bible until the Holy Spirit of God turns the light on in our souls. We must lay our intellectual pride in the dust and ask God to speak to us.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD... (Isaiah 55:7a).

Put away your slide rule and your microscope. Ask the Holy Spirit of God to teach you. God will reveal it to you or you won't understand it. Until the Holy Spirit uses the Word as His convicting, cutting sword or until He illumines you as a student of His Word, it'll not be real in your heart.

■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- How has reading the Bible impacted your spiritual life?
- What is the difference between studying the Bible in an academic way and reading the Bible in a spiritual way?

We will never know the real message
of the Bible until the Holy Spirit of
God turns the light on in our souls.

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THE SAVIOR'S BOOK

■ PONDER IT

Third Wonder: The Bible is the Savior's book. Jesus believed it, and it is all about Him. Jesus is the hero of the Bible. Even skeptics can't deny that Jesus preached about the inerrancy of the Word of God. Jesus called the Scriptures the Word of God. (See John 10:35.) He also taught that the Old Testament was about Him. (See John 5:37-47.)

Don't ever get the idea that the Old Testament is about Israel and the New Testament is about the Church, or that the Old Testament is about God the Father and the New Testament is about God the Son. Jesus was talking to the Jews of His day who had the writings of Moses in the Pentateuch—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Jesus endorsed what Moses wrote, and He put what Moses recorded on the same level as His own words.

Jesus opened the understanding of the two forlorn disciples on the road to Emmaus and reasoned with them about the resurrection.

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself (Luke 24:27).

Imagine walking along with the Son of God who, beginning with Genesis, teaches through the Bible. He showed them all the things concerning Himself in the Old Testament. Jesus is the theme, the hero of the Bible. We see Him throughout the Old Testament.

- The Promised Seed (Genesis 3:15)
- The Passover Lamb (Exodus 12)
- The Perfect Sacrifice (Leviticus 22:20-21)
- The Star out of Jacob (Numbers 24:17)
- The Prophet Who Is Greater Than Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-18)
- The Commander-in-Chief (Joshua 5:13-15)
- The Deliverer (Judges 3:9)

- The Ruler of All Things (1 Chronicles 29:10-12)
- God's Temple (Ezra 3-6)
- The Gate to the City (Nehemiah 3:1)
- The One who has come for such a time as this (Esther 4:14)
- The Redeemer who will stand on the last day (Job 19:25-27)
- The Good Shepherd (Psalm 23)
- The Wisdom of God (Book of Proverbs)
- The Virgin-born Son of God (Isaiah 7:14)
- The Branch of Righteousness (Jeremiah 23:5)
- The One Altogether Lovely (Song of Solomon 5:16)
- God's Son called out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1)
- The Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings (Malachi 4:2-4)

■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- Where do you see Jesus in the Old Testament? What is your favorite Old Testament picture of Jesus?
- What does it tell you about the inspiration of Scripture or the character of God to know that all of it testifies about Jesus?

If you read the Bible and don't find Jesus Christ somewhere, somehow standing in the shadows or presented in plain view, go back and read it again because the Bible is about the Lord Jesus Christ.

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DAY 5

A SOVEREIGN, SURVIVING, AND SUSTAINING BOOK

■ PONDER IT

Fourth Wonder: The Bible is a sovereign book. It is the supreme authority in spiritual matters; human reason is not. Don't parade the Bible past the bar of human judgment to see if you agree with it or not. Conscience is not the supreme authority. It is not an infallible guide; it is more like a sundial. Only the sun makes it reflect the right time. Don't look at the Bible with the flashlight of human opinion or tradition. Jesus warned of those who make the Word of God ineffective through their traditions. (See Mark 7:13.) You have to look at the Bible in the light of the Holy Spirit of God. God has magnified His Word even above His Name.

I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name...for You have magnified Your word above all Your name (Psalm 138:2).

A man and his word may be opposite in today's world, but God and His Word are the same. If you can bank on God, you can bank on the Word of God. It is a sovereign book.

Fifth Wonder: The Bible is a surviving book. It goes on and on and on throughout the ages.

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

When Earth becomes a cinder, and the stars splinter and fade, the Word of God will still be in existence. It doesn't change; it survives. We should be glad the Bible doesn't agree with modern science in every instance because if it agrees with today's science, tomorrow it may be wrong. Science is constantly changing. With enough time, it may eventually catch up with the unchanging Word of God. God's Word

is incredible, indestructible, and infallible. It's timeless, ultimate, and eternal.

Sixth Wonder: The Bible is a sustaining book. You're physically sustained by physical nutrition, but you're spiritually sustained by the Word of God. This is what Jesus said when He was being tempted in the wilderness:

“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4).

Every word that comes out of God's mouth is to your spirit what bread is to your body. It is our spiritual food:

I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food (Job 23:12).

Dr. R. A. Torrey said:

You may read many books and go to many conventions and you may have your all-night prayer meetings to pray for the power of the Holy Ghost; but unless you keep in constant and close association with the one Book, the Bible, you will not have power. And if you ever had power, you will not maintain it except by the daily, earnest, intense study of that Book.

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- What authorities do you trust in more than the authority of God's Word?
- Why do you think the Bible has survived as long as it has? Do you think it is still relevant to your life?
- How does time in God's Word sustain you in your spiritual life?

If you can bank on God, you can
bank on the Word of God.

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SCRIPTURE IS SUPERCHARGED

■ PONDER IT

Seventh Wonder: The Bible is a supercharged book. It has incredible power. We read other books; this book reads us.

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

It's alive! It breathes. It sings. It pulsates with power. There's power in the Word of God. It's full of energy. This book does things to people that nothing else will. It's able to pierce and scrutinize the innermost part of your personality.

The Bible is called a seed because it impregnates. (See Luke 8:11-18.) It's called a fire because it burns and a hammer because it crushes. (See Jeremiah 23:29.) It's called a sword because it cuts. (See Hebrews 4:12.) The purpose of the Bible is to present Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. Paul wrote:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek (Romans 1:16).

We've covered seven wonders out of seventy thousand wonders of the Word of God. If you're ready to commit to really searching God's Word for truth and direction on a more regular basis, you can pray a prayer like this:

Father, I thank You again for Your Word. I stand in awe and humbled, and I confess before You my lack of study, appreciation, appropriation, and application of Your Word. I commit, dear Lord, my heart to You to know it, love it, preach it, practice it, and ponder it in a better way. Please help me to do that. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

■ **PROCLAIM IT**

If you want to know more about what it means to be a Christian, we can provide you with free resources to help you grow in your new faith. Please let us know by going to lwf.org/discover-jesus, scrolling down the page, and clicking on I BELIEVE.

Ask God to give you an opportunity to share with someone what you have been learning about the Word of God. If you have other questions about Scripture, make time to sit with your pastor or spiritual mentor to seek answers.

The more of the Word of God you give
away, the more it will stick to you.

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