

The Bible

The Christian Bible is the only widely-acknowledged scripture of the Christian Faith. The Bible consists of two main divisions, namely the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is common to both Judaism and Christianity and consists of some 24 books in the Jewish version, some 39 books in the Protestant version, and some 46 books in the Catholic version. The New Testament consists of some 27 books. There is a third group of books called the Apocrypha, included in some versions of the Bible, which some Christian groups also acknowledge as scripture.

The Bible is considered by Christians to be the Word of God, but there is a very large diversity in belief and interpretation among the various denominations. Many, more fundamentalist Christians, believe it is inspired by God, literally true, and inerrant. Others, more moderate Christians, believe it is inspired by God and valuable in some sense literally, in some sense symbolically. To the metaphysician, the Bible is a wonderful source of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, but predominantly through symbolism. The real value to most spiritual students is its “speaking” to anyone at any time according to his or her circumstances and consciousness. Thus it can be interpreted on many levels, from the superficial literal reading, to profoundly symbolic reading.

One of the problems in interpretation is that it has been translated from the original languages by different people at different times in history, in different ways, according to the assumptions, cultural and personal biases, and consciousness of the translators. Many words have been sincerely but poorly translated. For example, the word “meat” has been confused with the word “food” and the word “wine” has been confused with the word “drink” ... Thus it is important for the student of the Bible either to go back to the original language and place the translation into a higher context or to simply rely on the spiritual intuition for guidance in context, meaning, and import.

Of course, the esoteric student does not rely on any scripture as a source of knowledge, understanding, or wisdom, but as a compilation of threads for higher consciousness. As the student evolves in consciousness, and can rely to some

extent on the higher intuition, the student can read scripture and evoke threads of consciousness.

And needless to say, God is infallible but human beings are not. And while many scriptural writings are genuinely inspired, they still reflect to some extent the weaknesses, limitations, biases, and consciousness of the authors.

For many Christians the real import of the Bible is in the New Testament teachings concerning salvation. However, these have been seriously misinterpreted and misunderstood.

