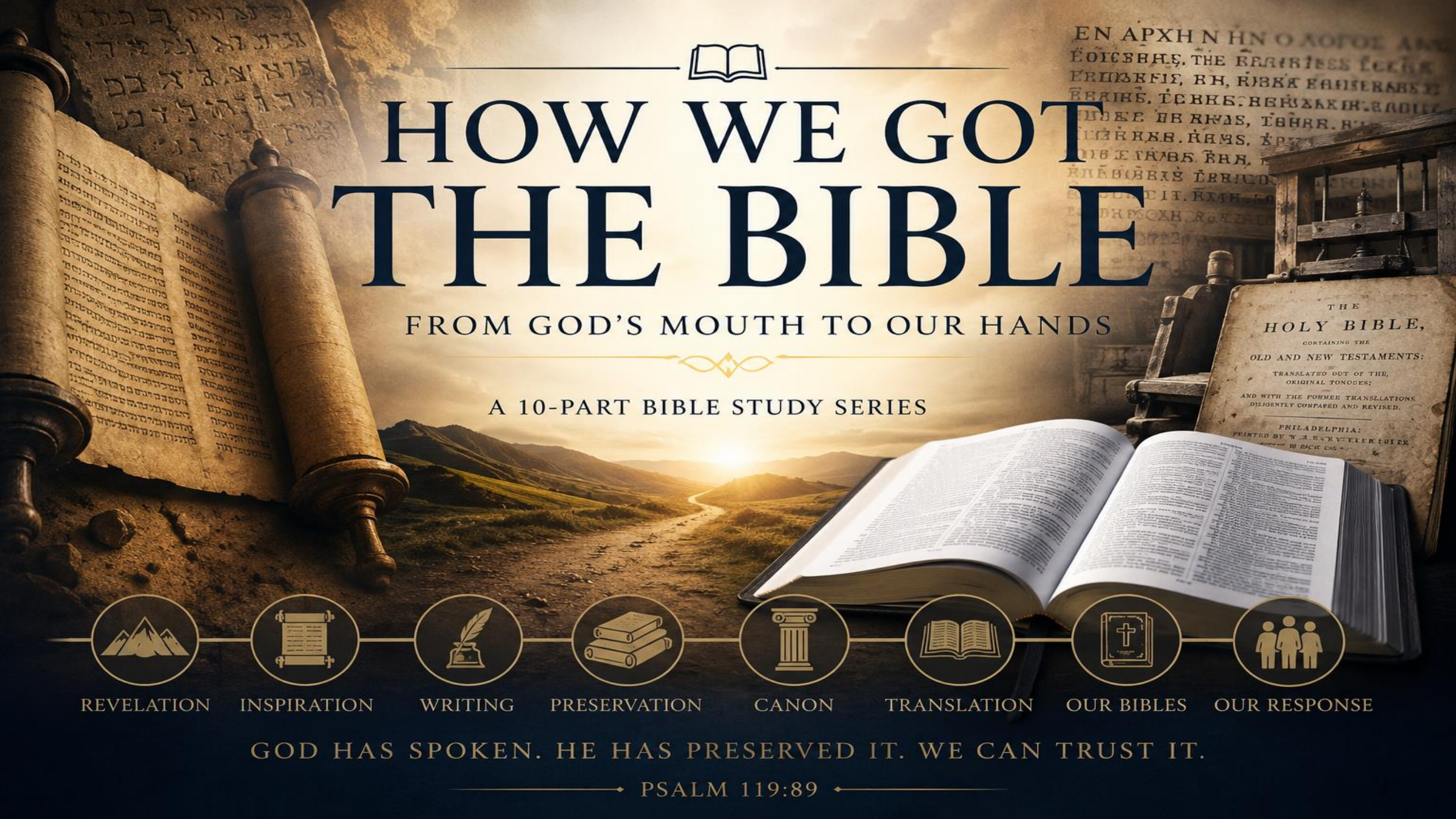

HOW WE GOT
THE BIBLE
FROM GOD'S MOUTH TO OUR HANDS
A 10-PART BIBLE STUDY SERIES
THE
HOLY BIBLE,
CONTAINING THE
OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS:
TRANSLATED OUT OF THE
ORIGINAL TONGUES;
AND WITH THE FORMER TRANSLATIONS
DILIGENTLY COMPARED AND REVISED.
PHILADELPHIA:
REVELATION
INSPIRATION
WRITING
PRESERVATION
CANON
TRANSLATION
OUR BIBLES
OUR RESPONSE
GOD HAS SPOKEN. HE HAS PRESERVED IT. WE CAN TRUST IT.
PSALM 119:89


The
Canon
of
Scripture

Main Questions for This Study



1. What does the word **canon** mean?
2. **Who** determined which books belong in Scripture?
3. How was the **Old Testament canon** recognized?
4. How was the **New Testament canon** recognized?
5. What about the **Apocrypha**?
6. What about the so-called **"lost books of the Bible"**?
7. Can we have **confidence** that our Bible contains the books God intended?

What Is the "Canon" of Scripture?



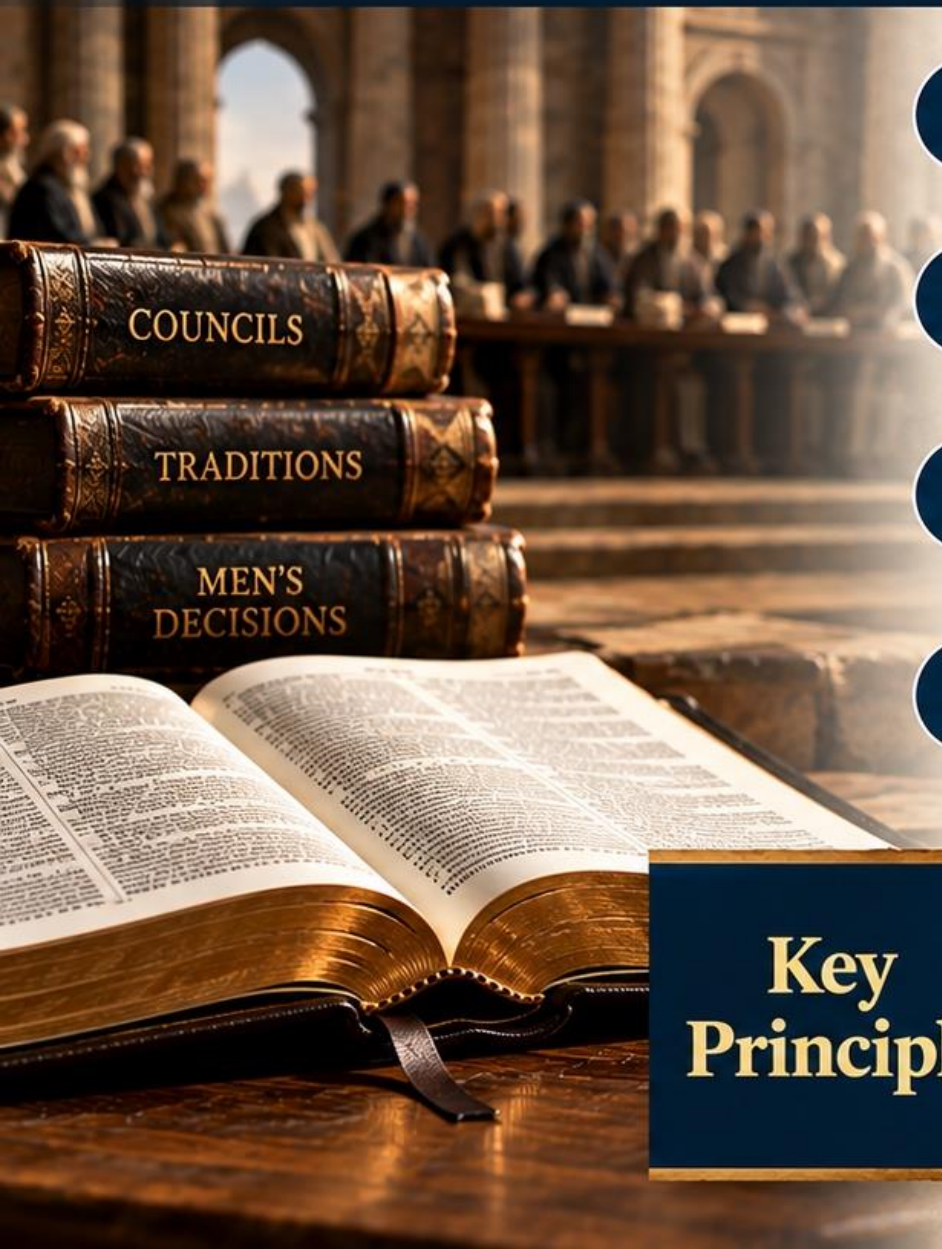
The Meaning of "Canon"

1. The English word **canon** comes from the Greek ***kanōn***.
2. It originally referred to a **reed**, **measuring rod**, **rule**, or **standard**.
3. The word eventually came to describe the recognized collection of writings that constitute Scripture.

A Simple Definition

The **canon of Scripture** is the collection of writings recognized as the **inspired Word of God**.

Men Did Not Make a Book Inspired



1. A council could not take an **uninspired book** and make it Scripture.
2. Neither could **rejecting** an inspired book remove its God-given authority.
3. Consider **2 Timothy 3:16**:
   "All Scripture is breathed out by God…"
4. The authority of Scripture comes from **God**, not from the people who recognize it.

Key Principle:

The question of the canon is not,
"Which books did men decide should be Scripture?"
but,
"Which books had God given as Scripture?"

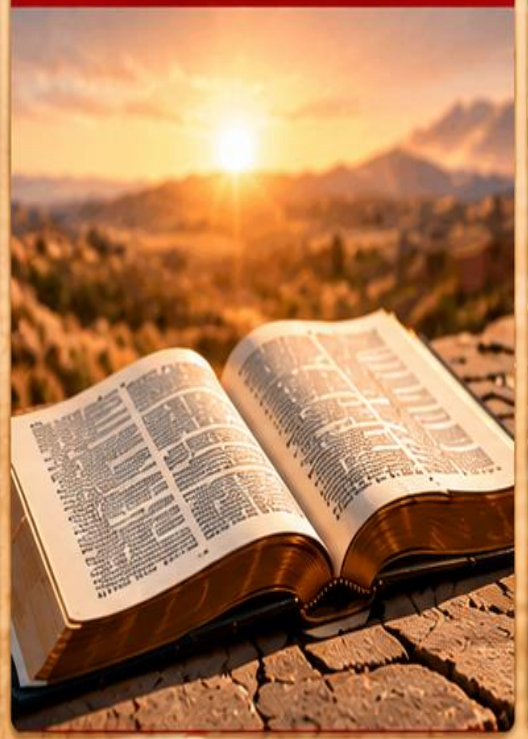
The Test of Canonicity

How do we know if a writing belongs among the inspired, authoritative Scriptures?

1 From an Authorized Spokesman of God?



2 Consistent with Previously Revealed Truth?



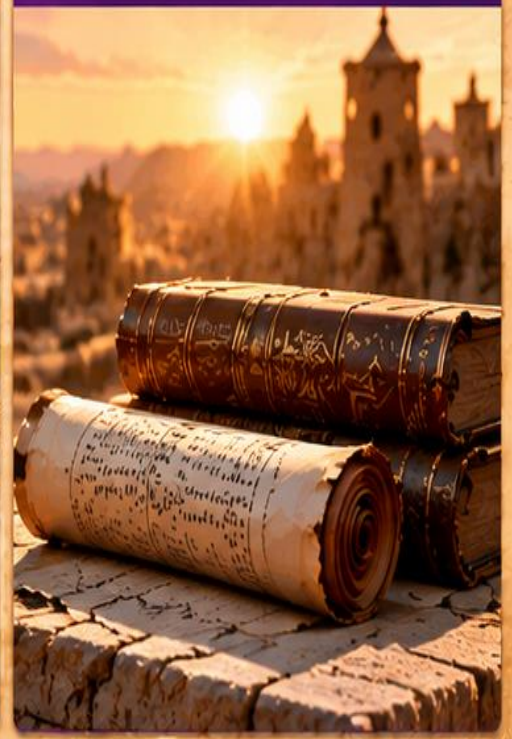
3 Claims or Demonstrates Divine Authority?



4 Recognized and Received Among God's People?



5 Important Conclusion



God's People Recognized Authoritative Writings from the Beginning

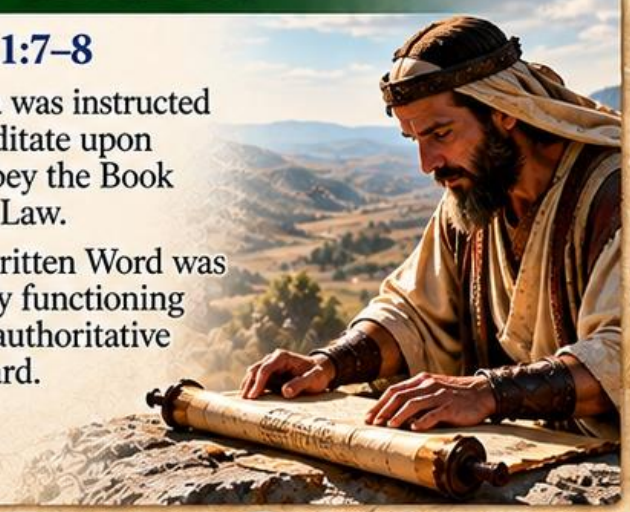
1 Moses' Writings Were Treated as Authoritative



Deuteronomy 31:24–26

- Moses completed writing the Law and commanded that it be placed beside the Ark of the Covenant.
- These writings were authoritative because they contained God's revelation.

2 Joshua Recognized the Written Law



Joshua 1:7–8

- Joshua was instructed to meditate upon and obey the Book of the Law.
- The written Word was already functioning as an authoritative standard.

3 Later Writers Recognized Earlier Scripture



Daniel 9:2

- Daniel understood God's prophecy concerning Jerusalem through the writings of Jeremiah.
- This demonstrates that earlier prophetic writings were being received as authortivative revelation.

4 The Same Pattern Appears in the New Testament



2 Peter 3:15–16

- Peter refers to Paul's letters alongside "the other Scriptures."

Colossians 4:16

- Paul instructed congregations to exchange and read his letters.

1 Thessalonians 5:27

- Paul commanded that his letter be read to the brethren.

5 An Important Observation



- God's Word was being recognized as authoritative long before later councils formally listed biblical books.
- The process involved writings being:

Written → Received → Read → Copied → Circulated → Preserved

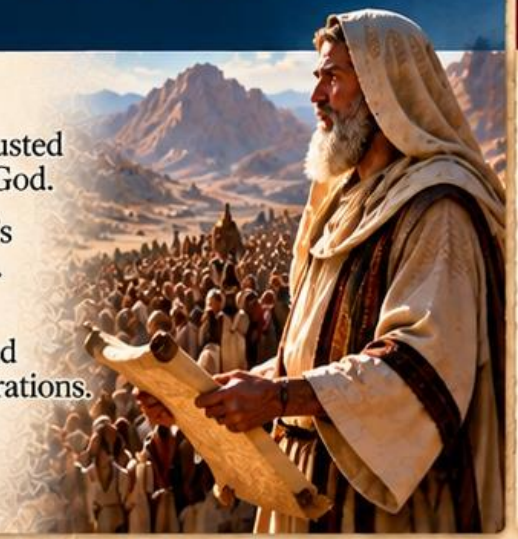
The Canon of the Old Testament

God entrusted His revelation to Israel.

Romans 3:1–2

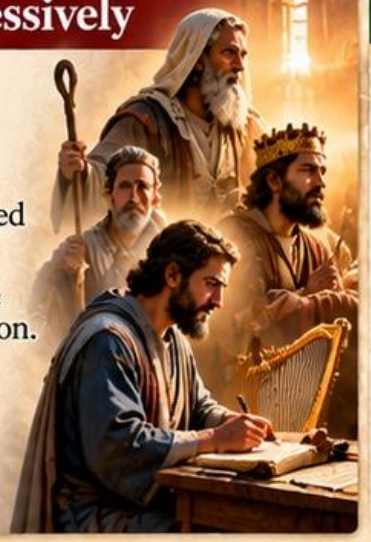
1 God Entrusted His Revelation to Israel

- **Romans 3:1–2**
- The Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.
- Israel received God's covenant revelation.
- God's Word was preserved and passed down through generations.



2 The Old Testament Was Revealed Progressively

- God did not give the entire Old Testament at one time.
- Moses recorded the Law.
- Historical writings documented God's dealings with Israel.
- Psalms and wisdom literature contributed inspired instruction.
- The prophets communicated God's Word to successive generations.



3 The Hebrew Bible Was Traditionally Organized into Three Divisions

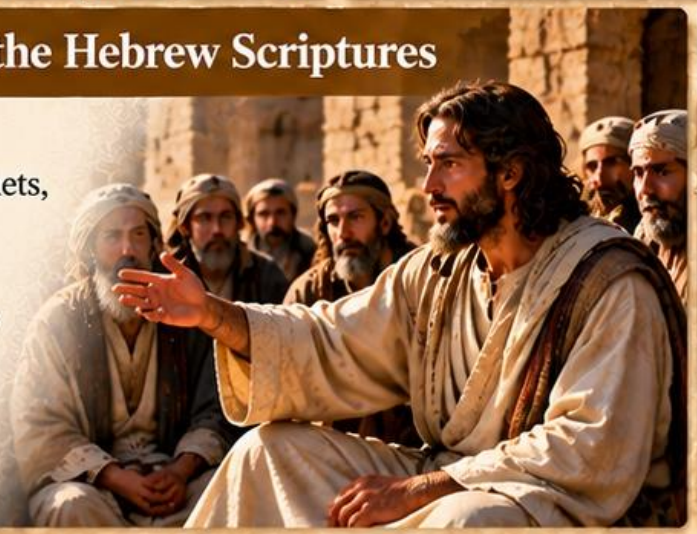
The Hebrew Bible is called the **Tanakh**.

The Law (Torah)	The Prophets (Nevi'im)	The Writings (Ketuvim)
		
Genesis through Deuteronomy	Former and Latter Prophets	Psalms, Proverbs, Job, and other writings.

The name **TaNaKh** is derived from the initial letters of these three Hebrew divisions.

4 Jesus Recognized the Hebrew Scriptures

- **Luke 24:44**
- "The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms."
- Jesus consistently appealed to the authority of Scripture.
- **Matthew 4:4, 7, 10**
  "It is written…"



5 Jesus Referred to the Sweep of Old Testament History

- **Luke 11:49–51**
- Jesus refers to righteous blood from Abel to Zechariah.
- Abel's death is recorded in Genesis 4.
- The death of Zechariah son of Jehoiada is recorded in 2 Chronicles 24:20–22.
- In the traditional Hebrew order, Chronicles appears at the end of the Writings.
- This may reflect the breadth of the Hebrew Scriptures, though it does not independently establish every book's canonical status.

