

Introduction:

1. This year in our Bible reading we have been journeying through the history of Israel. It's been refreshing to see God's mighty power and why we should have faith in Him.
2. Yet there was something in our Bible reading this week that may have challenged your thinking or maybe your faith. In [Numbers 21:14](#) the Bible says, "Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD..." Moses quoted from a book that we don't have today. Some believe this is a missing book that's supposed to be a part of the Old Testament. In fact, many believe that the Bible is not only missing this book, but many other books. People will often mention...
 - a. The book of Jasher, [Joshua 10:23](#).
 - b. The books of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, [1 Chronicles 29:29](#).
 - c. The book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia, [Esther 10:2](#).
 - d. Paul's earlier letter to the church in Corinth, [1 Corinthians 5:9](#).
3. How do we handle the accusation that the Bible is missing books? People need answers to this question and so do we. That's what we will seek to do tonight. To answer the question about the alleged missing books, we will need some rules to help navigate us through this process. These rules will ensure that we reach a sound conclusion on this important topic.

The Lesson:

I. Rule #1: We must treat the Bible fairly.

- A. What does the Bible say about itself in regards to being the complete word of God?
 1. Whatever it says we should believe (because it claims to be from God, [2 Timothy 3:16](#)) as being true unless there is conflicting evidence to say otherwise. So what evidence do we find in the scriptures that will help us to determine that what we have in the Old and New Testament is complete?
 - a. First, Jesus believed the books that make up the Hebrew Bible are complete and exactly what God wanted them to have, [Luke 24:44](#). The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms (which was a part of what the Jews called the Writings), are how the Jews categorized their Hebrew Bible. What's interesting is that the very same books Jesus referenced in this text are the very same books we have in our Old Testament. It's important to note that Jesus didn't recognize the book of the Wars or the book of the chronicles of Persia and Media as scripture (divine writings). The internal evidence regarding the Old Testament books is clear. What we have is complete and sufficient.
 - b. Now here's a question everyone should consider. Since the internal evidence demonstrates that God preserved His words from the Old Testament, shouldn't it be the case that God would do the same with the New Testament documents? The answer is yes! This is what the evidence demands. Jesus taught that His words would never pass away, [Matthew 24:35](#). Peter spoke about the enduring nature of God's word, [1 Peter 1:23-25](#). The evidence shows what we have in both the Old and New Testament is complete for our knowledge of God, and is what God wants us to have.
 2. This is how we handle the Bible fairly. We examine the evidence and then draw our conclusions from it.
- B. Yet, this is rarely done when people handle the Bible.
 1. Many quickly dismiss what the Bible says about itself. They fail to use common sense and examine the evidence. People seem to be more willing to believe a documentary on the History channel than taking the time to actually see what the Bible says about itself.
 2. When people fail to consider the evidence in the scriptures about Jesus, or the sufficiency of God's word, they are not treating the Bible fairly.

II. Rule #2: We must be careful not to assume.

- A. People often assume things in the Bible which are not true. This happens all the time.
 1. People assume Adam and Eve ate an apple, [Genesis 3:1-7](#). They could have, but they also could have eaten a peach or a pear.

2. People assume that Lucifer in [Isaiah 14:12](#) is referring to Satan, when it actually refers to a man. Assuming is something that can lead people to unwarranted conclusions.
- B. Assuming gets people into trouble when it comes to thinking that there are “missing books.”
 1. In [Exodus 24:7](#) we read about the *Book of the Covenant*. Some have said, “This is another missing book, right?” The truth is, this is referring to the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Law). Sometimes it’s referred to as the *Book of the Law*.
 2. People assume that in [Esther 10:2](#) the *Book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia* is inspired, because the author referenced it. But that’s making an assumption. The truth is, this book was the official record of the Persian Empire, not an inspired writing, [Es-ther 2:23, 6:1](#). It was likely referenced to point the early readers to further details about the events in the Persian Empire. It’s simply a lost historical document, not a lost inspired document God wanted us to have.
 3. The apostle Paul would often reference other writings that were not inspired to make a point, [Acts 17:28](#); [Titus 1:12](#). But Paul was never endorsing their writings as scripture. Do you see why we can’t assume?

III. Rule #3: Possible answers are sufficient.

- A. As we seek to answer the question about books that are alleged to be missing, our answers only need to be possible answers.
 1. Some of the books that claim to be missing are actually in the Bible, like the Book of the Covenant. Other times, people have simply assumed something that is not true. This is often the case for many of the alleged books that people think are missing. However, there are times where a person may make an argument about an alleged missing book, like the example of [1 Corinthians 5:9](#), where more consideration must be given. We do need to provide some type of answer to people who raise these arguments. Our job is to then give possible answers to these questions. The truth is, there may be one or more potential answers which may be correct. Now some may be concerned with what I’ve just said because people want absolutes. However, only when it can be shown that there is no possible answer should we then be concerned.
 2. This puts the burden of proof on those who insist that there are missing books.
- B. So let’s attempt to answer the argument that’s made from [1 Corinthians 5:9](#).
 1. What possible answers could be given regarding this alleged missing letter from Paul?
 - a. One answer is that Paul was referencing what he stated in verses 1-8. But this is not a good answer because of what Paul states in verses 10-11. He clearly is referencing an earlier writing.
 - b. It could be that what Paul wrote to them was not inspired. Don’t assume that the apostles could never speak unless they were inspired.
 - c. It could be that what Paul wrote to them was inspired but not intended to be a part of the New Testament. Consider something for a moment. In [Acts 2](#) we have inspired words from Peter on the day of Pentecost. Yet in [Acts 2:40](#) we see that Peter said many other words in his sermon, yet we don’t have those words. The same is true regarding [Acts 2:11](#). Does this mean that what we have is incomplete and not sufficient for us? No! We have what God wanted us to have.
 2. These are possible answers that can be given to those who make these allegations regarding the missing letter of Paul to the church in Corinth. The burden of proof is on those who actually believe that we are missing some books to demonstrate their point.

Conclusion:

1. When people say that we have “lost books or missing books”, it gives the impression that we are supposed to have it and don’t. The truth is, we don’t need these writings. What we have is sufficient in regards to our knowledge of God and Christ, [2 Peter 1:3](#); [John 20:31](#). The 66 books that make up the Bible are the books that God wanted us to have. Therefore, there are no other books needed for us to add to our faith.
2. Why is it that so many people are adamant about the so called missing books? It could be because they don’t like the words that are in this book. Let’s not be deceived. We have God’s truth. These words will judge us in the last day, [John 12:48](#).