The Bible, The Preserved Word of God

The Bible doctrine about the Bible

A 22-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

These 22 lessons are a course of study entitled The Preserved Word of God: the Bible doctrine about the Bible, the basic doctrines the Bible sets forth about itself. The course deals with three major issues: what the Bible is from God's perspective, with the doctrine of inspiration as the primary focal point (Lessons 1–6); the completion of the Word of God (Lessons 7–11); and the preserved word of God (Lessons 12–22). The course also deals with Satan's policy of evil against the written word of God, and with a modern phase of textual criticism that has exceeded its parameters and, as a whole, outrightly denies the doctrine of preservation. God vested preservation in the multiplicity of copies, and the preserved word of God in the English language is in the King James Version.

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Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
L1	God Knows What He's Doing Writing Books — Three major issues; Satan's policy of evil; Revelation 20, Malachi 3, Daniel 12, Psalm 139
L2	It's His Book: The Doctrine of Inspiration Begins — Revelation 5; Isaiah 4; II Timothy 3:14–17; Psalm 33:6; II Peter 1:20–21
L3	From Authorship to Penmanship, God Through and Through — II Peter 1; I Corinthians 2; I Thessalonians 2:13; Jeremiah 1 and 30; Isaiah 30 and 55; Psalm 138
L4	The Bible Is the Word of Truth — II Timothy 3 and 2:15; Titus 1:1–2; Daniel 10:21; John 17:17; Matthew 7; II Peter 1; Psalms 138 and 19
L5	Dealing With the Word, Dealing With God Himself — Hebrews 4:12–13; I Peter 1:22–25; Genesis 1; Psalm 33; Galatians 3:8; Romans 9:17; John 1; Revelation 19
L6	Unto Whom the Word of God Came — John 10:31–36; Psalm 82; Malachi 2–3; Isaiah 55:10–13; Psalm 138:2
L7	The Preplanned Design: Settled in Heaven — The completeness of the Word of God; Psalm 119:89; Galatians 3:8

Lesson	Core Focus
L8	Sense and Sequence: Beginnings and Their Fulfillment — Genesis 1–3 and Revelation 19–22; Genesis 15 and Exodus
L9	Everything Accounted For in the Two Programs — Leviticus 26 and Israel's Scriptures; Romans through Philemon; Colossians 1–2
L10	Internal Safeguards: Amos 8 and the Four Beholds — Amos 8:11–12; Zechariah and the Four Gospels; Colossians 1–2; II Thessalonians 2
L11	Nothing Missing: Closing the Completed Canon — Galatians 2; John 14–16; II Timothy 3; the Book of Psalms; Epistles That Seem Missing
L12	The Reality and Necessity of Preservation — Revelation 22:18–19; James; II Peter 1; Matthew 24 and Daniel; Hebrews 1
L13	Preservation Demanded: the Pattern and the Judgment Written — I Timothy 1:16; II Corinthians 1; John 5; Psalm 149; Deuteronomy 31–32; Revelation 15
L14	Write It in a Book: the Mechanical Means — Isaiah 30:8; Job 19; Jeremiah 30; Proverbs 22; II Peter 1; Psalm 12
L15	The Satanic Policy of Evil Against the Written Word — Genesis 3; II Corinthians 11; Romans 16:17–18; II Thessalonians 2
L16	Original Manuscripts Are Not Needed — Deuteronomy 4 and 12, Jeremiah 26 and 36, Exodus 32: Warnings and the Mechanics of Preservation
L17	God Has No Problem With Copies — Deuteronomy 31 and 17, Malachi 2, Jeremiah 8, Ezra 7, Proverbs 25: Custodians, Scribes and Copies
L18	Copies in Israel's Program and in This Dispensation — Daniel 9, John 5, Luke 4, Acts, I Corinthians 14, Romans 16:25–26: Scriptures All Over the Place
L19	Inspiration and Holiness Lodged in the Copies — Rules of the Masoretes; II Timothy 3, Luke 4, Matthew 22, Psalm 19, Daniel 10, II Peter 1
L20	A Brief Historical Synopsis of Preservation — Proverbs 22: the Certainty of the Words of Truth; the Masoretes; Majority and Minority Manuscripts
L21	Rationalism, Five New Tenets, Westcott and Hort — Manuscript Evidence, the Textus Receptus, the King James Version of 1611 and Two Kinds of Bibles
L22	The Preserved Word of God in English — Additions, Deletions and Rewordings; Telltale Examples in Mark 1, Matthew 5 with Mark 3, and Hebrews 3

Lesson Summaries

L1

God Knows What He's Doing Writing Books *Three major issues; Satan's policy of evil; Revelation 20, Malachi 3, Daniel 12, Psalm 139*

The Bible Doctrine About the Bible

- The course, entitled The Preserved Word of God, examines the basic Bible doctrines the Bible sets forth about itself
- The most precious thing you could ever possess, and do possess, is the written word of God; God designed His Word to be the point of contact between you and Him
- Hebrews 4:12 shows the word of God is entirely different from the word of man; discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart is within the province of God Himself

Three Major Issues

- The first is understanding what the Bible is from God's perspective; the doctrine of inspiration will primarily be the focal point of this first phase
- The second is the completion of the Word of God: the 66 books, Genesis through the Book of the Revelation, are the complete written Word of God — there are no such things as lost books of the Bible
- The third and final issue is what is resident within the course title: the preserved word of God

Satan's Policy of Evil

- The spoken and particularly the written word of God has been subject to a policy of evil Satan put together; in Genesis 3:1 — the first words out of Satan's mouth recorded in the scriptures — the issue was questioning what God had really said
- That policy of evil against the word of God, spoken or written, is still in effect today; a challenge to whether a verse is God's Word is not an issue you can be neutral in

The Modern Phase of Textual Criticism

- Textual criticism has existed since texts have, with a proper place and parameters; its modern phase has exceeded those parameters
- It handles the Bible texts with a viewpoint contrary to what God says about His Word, and the result has been fuel for the policy of evil against the written word of God

Books God Has Written

- The Bible is not the only book God has written: Revelation 20 mentions at least three books, none of which is the Bible, and the other book is named the book of life
- What is written in those books must be preserved intact — without deletion, without corruption, without addition
- Malachi 3 speaks of a book of remembrance with the names of the remnant of Israel, which God is preserving; in Daniel 12 a written book comes into play in the Day of the Lord
- In Psalm 139 David speaks of a book with his very members written in it — not the book of life; a natural preservation concept applies to all books God has written, the Bible included

L2

It's His Book: The Doctrine of Inspiration Begins *Revelation 5; Isaiah 4; II Timothy 3:14–17; Psalm 33:6; II Peter 1:20–21*

Other Books God Has Written

- When you deal with the written Word of God, you are dealing with the living Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ
- God treats the Bible the same way He treats other books He has written: it will accomplish the purpose He has written it for, it will survive, it will be preserved
- The Revelation 5 book, taken by the Lord Jesus Christ from the hand of God the Father, is already written and sealed; there won't be a missing phrase or a missing word
- Isaiah 4:3's "written among the living in Jerusalem" points to another book; it appears to be something like a national register for the nation Israel

It Is God's Book

- The Bible is the only book God has written that man can get his hands on, but that causes God no trouble; any attempt to corrupt or destroy His books isn't allowed to succeed
- God will preserve the Bible simply because it is His book, and He treats it as His other books get treated

II Timothy 3:14–17

- Paul speaks of the Hebrew Scriptures Timothy knew from a child and of his own writings; it was given to Paul to complete the Word of God, and when he goes off the scene the Scriptures are complete
- The Bible, being the Word of God, is vested with the attributes of God; verse 15 calls the scriptures holy, which has far-reaching effects into the doctrine of preservation

Not Man's Words

- In II Timothy 3:16, "given by inspiration of God" means the writings from Genesis 1 to the end of Revelation 22 are not the product of human imagination and creativity; men were utilized by God to put the words on the page
- God did not make zombies of the writers; even Paul's personal remarks are things God wants down on the page, and Paul knew he was writing Scripture
- The modern Christian viewpoint on the Bible has been molded by the modern phase of textual criticism — more than the average Christian thinks

Out of the Mouth of God (Psalm 33:6; II Peter 1:20–21)

- Inspiration of God declares that the words on the page are out of the mouth of God; in Psalm 33:6 the word is the breath of His mouth
- II Timothy 3:16 and the last two verses of II Peter 1 give the doctrine of inspiration in its most succinct but deepest form
- Peter, dealing especially with the scriptures of Israel's prophets, says no prophecy is a private idea of the human writers; the Holy Ghost is the member of the Godhead particularly in charge of inspiration

L3

From Authorship to Penmanship, God Through and Through

II Peter 1; I Corinthians 2; I Thessalonians 2:13; Jeremiah 1 and 30; Isaiah 30 and 55; Psalm 138

Inspiration Recapped (II Peter 1:19–21)

- These are fundamental issues, not yet the doctrine of preservation — the

final thing in the course — but they are involved in it

- If something's private, it's your own; the Holy Ghost, the third member of the Godhead, is the mechanical means — from authorship to penmanship it is God through and through
- In II Peter 1:19 Peter addresses the remnant of Israel about the prophetic scriptures; the prophets spoke and then also wrote, and the words out of the prophet's mouth are the word of God
- Critics object that I Corinthians 2 and I Thessalonians 2 speak of Paul teaching verbally; yet Peter realizes the majority, if not the totality, of what ends up written was first spoken

Paul: Spoken and Written

- In I Corinthians 2, concerning things kept secret in ages and generations past, the wisdom of God in a mystery, the Holy Ghost chose the words; Paul taught verbally and also wrote it down
- We are not short-changed compared with saints who had Paul in their midst: the things he taught are ours through the written ministry of the Apostle of the Gentiles — everything God wants communicated to a member of the church, the body of Christ, in Paul's epistles for us today
- I Thessalonians 2:13: Paul's words were God's words, not a man giving his opinions; Paul knew when he spoke, and when he wrote, that it was the Word of God
- The Galatians received Paul as a messenger of God; in II Corinthians 5:20 the ambassador's words are to be recognized as the words of the one he represents
- No human being would have originated words like II Corinthians 5:21; those are God's words, along with the rest of them, Genesis 1 to Revelation 22

Jeremiah and Isaiah: In a Book for the Time to Come

- Jeremiah is a perfect example of the prophecy of old time not coming by the will of man — his will back in verse six is against this; Jehovah's words come out of Jeremiah's mouth
- Jeremiah 30:1–2 commands the words written in a book, for a time to come; much in Jeremiah is yet to be fulfilled in God's program with Israel
- Isaiah 30:8 commits Isaiah's spoken words to a book for the time to come; the Isaiah 55:11 words went out of the Lord's mouth to Isaiah, and God claims the words in the book as His own

The Point of Contact (Psalm 138:2)

- The word of God is the main, God-ordained point of contact with God Himself; in Psalm 138:2 David, functioning as a prophet describing what he's going to be doing once the kingdom is established, says, "for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name"

Holy Because From the Holy One

- Timothy's scriptures are holy because they come from the Holy One Himself; they are the God-breathed words, out of the mouth and breath of God Almighty — that is inspiration

L4 The Bible Is the Word of Truth *II Timothy 3 and 2:15; Titus 1:1–2; Daniel 10:21; John 17:17; Matthew 7; II Peter 1; Psalms 138 and 19*

Timothy's Copies Called Holy and God-Breathed

- Timothy did not possess the original autographs — not the copy Isaiah originally wrote, nor the original Romans or Galatians — yet the scriptures he possessed, copies, are called holy and God-breathed
- The doctrine of inspiration applies to more than the original manuscripts, more than the autographs; inspiration and preservation go hand in hand in God's thinking
- The modern phase of textual criticism applies inspiration and inerrancy only to the original manuscripts; of the copies it says inspiration and inerrancy are only a percentage of what they used to be; that doesn't match what the Bible says about itself
- No one used to plug the idea of original manuscripts into II Timothy 3; it is plugged in repeatedly today. As the lesson puts it, ninety percent of the time God speaks of the scriptures, copies are meant

The Word of Truth (II Timothy 2:15; Titus 1:1–2)

- II Timothy 2:15 underscores handling the Bible by the division between Israel's program and the mystery revelation and dispensation of grace committed to Paul
- Without divine revelation from God the Creator we wouldn't know the truth; the Bible is the Word of truth, telling us what's really going on
- It even contains truthful records of lies, such as what Lucifer said in his heart in Isaiah 14; God cannot lie, so every word out of His mouth is the truth

The Scripture of Truth (Daniel 10:21)

- The scripture of truth Daniel was dealing with were copies, including Jeremiah's book and the five books of Moses; it is scripture, God's words on the page, and because that's what it is, it's truth
- In Daniel 10:21 it is an angel, Gabriel; in John 17:17 the Lord Jesus Christ Himself — God, an angel and a man saying the exact same thing

Thy Word Is Truth (John 17:17; Matthew 7)

- In John 17:17, "thy word is truth", the Lord declares where truth is to be found; His prayer had the Day of the Lord in view, the mystery dispensation still being a mystery
- The fruit by which the false prophets of Matthew 7 are known is what comes out of their mouths — words the adversary has put there

The Final Absolute Authority

- What's on the page, because it's the Word of God on the page, is the final criterion for judgment, the final authority, the final court of appeal; a spokesman whose words don't match it is declared false
- Peter says the written word, a more sure word of prophecy, is better than his eyewitness testimony; the final determining issue on truth is always the book — the final absolute authority
- In Psalm 138:2 God made the written word the repository of truth; in Psalm 19 David dealt with a copy of the law and understood that copy was perfect and God's words

L5

Dealing With the Word, Dealing With God Himself *Hebrews 4:12–13; I Peter 1:22–25; Genesis 1; Psalm 33; Galatians 3:8; Romans 9:17; John 1; Revelation 19*

Where the Course Is Going

- The course title focuses on the last issue, divine preservation; the second section deals with canonicity, the completion of the Word of God; the third and final is the doctrine of divine preservation
- God designed and ordained His Word to be the point of contact between Himself and us; He applies divine attributes to the Scriptures because they are His words

Hebrews 4:12–13: Part of His Godness

- The person spoken about is God Himself: verse 12's subject is His word, verse 13's His eyes — things unique to God, part of His Godness
- The word of God is part of God's Godness and carries attributes of Himself, because it is His word; it is alive because it comes from the mouth of the one who has life as His intrinsic nature
- Peter writes to the remnant of Israel who believed the gospel of the kingdom John the Baptist began to proclaim; the Word of God is likened to the incorruptible seed
- The gospel of the kingdom in Israel's program and the gospel of God's grace in this dispensation of grace are both spoken of here as the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth

Powerful: Genesis 1 and Psalm 33

- It is powerful, carrying the omnipotence of God: in Genesis 1 God spoke and it came into existence, and in Psalm 33 His Word accomplished what it wanted to get done
- In this dispensation of grace especially we ought to appreciate the power of God's word to work within the inner man; Paul is the example in our epistles, God's word working effectually within him and producing stability of soul

A Discerner of the Heart

- It can divide asunder soul and spirit and is a discerner, or critic, of the thoughts and intents of the heart, carrying God's righteousness, holiness, justice and judgment — God's word reads you as you read it
- Together the two verses speak of three omni attributes: His eyes carry omniscience and omnipresence, His word omnipotence
- This is not exclusive to Israel's program; it applies to us also, because aspects of God's Godness never change regardless of the dispensation

The Scripture Foresaw; the Word of God as a Name

- In Galatians 3:8 the scripture is the subject of the verbs, though Moses wrote Genesis at least five hundred years after God said it to Abraham; that can only be if Scripture is thought of as equal with God
- In Romans 9:17 the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, as if already in existence; dealing with the scriptures is dealing with God Himself, our point of contact with God
- It is not an undesigned coincidence that the Lord Jesus Christ, the expressive member of the Godhead, is called the Word and the Word of God; so is this book, because they are His words

L6

Unto Whom the Word of God Came *John 10:31–36; Psalm 82; Malachi 2–3; Isaiah 55:10–13; Psalm 138:2*

John 10 and Psalm 82: Who the Gods Are

- The Lord speaks of the Word of God coming to a class of people within

Israel, not just any person

- In John 10:34 the Lord quotes what God declared in Psalm 82; the point of interest is the explanation the Lord gives for why God called them gods
- God designated a class in Israel gods: the ones governmentally in charge, the governmental and religious rulers; the poor and the fatherless weren't called gods, but the ones in charge of dealing with them were

Why They Were Called Gods

- They were called gods because they were the ones unto whom the word of God came, and they were entrusted with the scripture — the writing of it, the copying of it
- An Israelite wanting the word of God was to go to that class, designated as standing in God's stead; dealing with the word from their mouths and pens was dealing with God
- In Malachi 2 the priest is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts, and the book of the law was committed to the Levites to keep and copy; through the words from the priests' mouths there was a point of contact with God Himself
- Malachi 3:1 prophesies John the Baptist, the herald of the fourth installment of the fifth course of punishment; the one who comes is Jehovah Himself, who designated them gods

The Lord's Argument Concluded

- Possessing the word of God in written form, they possessed the very contact with God He had ordained; Israel understood that contact with that written word was contact with God Himself
- The point of the argument: it is not blasphemy for Him to say He is the Son of God — He is the Word of God Himself, the one who gave it originally
- Though spoken in Israel's program, the nature of the Word of God doesn't change with dispensational changes; the words through Paul's mouth and pen in this dispensation of grace carry the attributes of God's deity

Isaiah 55: The Word Accomplishes Its Purpose

- God's word went out of His mouth into Isaiah, who spoke it and wrote it down; His word has the capacity to accomplish the things it said it would do
- The word of Israel's deliverance and the kingdom is down here now but not yet accomplishing; it will operate when God resumes His program with Israel after this present dispensation of grace

Closing the First Section (Psalm 138:2)

- There would be no difference effect-wise between dealing with His word and standing face-to-face before Him
- God magnified His word above all His name because His word makes His name understandable; everything we in this dispensation of grace can know about God is in that book

L7

The Preplanned Design: Settled in Heaven *The completeness of the Word of God; Psalm 119:89; Galatians 3:8*

The Second Issue: Completeness

- The first six lessons covered the first fundamental issue, the proper attitude toward the word of God; the second is the completeness of the word of God
- The sixty-six books — thirty-nine in what we call the Old Testament scriptures, twenty-seven in the New — are the completed written revelation

God wants us to have

Challenges to the Completed Word

- Challenges to the completed written word of God include the Book of Mormon, another writing some would join with Genesis through Malachi, and papal edicts issued ex cathedra
- The legitimacy of spiritual gifts ceased, as Paul explains in I Corinthians 12, 13 and 14; any extra-biblical revelation is a challenge to the doctrine of the completed word of God

Three Major Issues of This Section

- First, God designed the Bible in eternity past — not on the fly, but with a preplanned design and structure; second, the sense and sequence the Bible has as a whole, Genesis through Revelation
- Third, internal safeguards that testify to its completeness as one unit — for example, the Gospel accounts were designed to be four and four only

Psalm 119: Settled in Heaven

- The word of God is the subject of the entire Psalm; its sections run through the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, so a missing section would stand out like a sore thumb
- The Psalm is pictured as a wheel with verse 89 at the hub: “For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven”
- The whole issue of design started in eternity past when God’s Word was settled in heaven; God knows what He’s doing and works out a plan that doesn’t have to be adjusted all the time

Romans Through Philemon Settled Too

- The Psalmist knew nothing of the dispensation of grace or Paul’s epistles, but the portion dealing with us today, Romans through Philemon, was also in God’s mind
- Its in-time manifestation came when the Lord raised up Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9); from then until II Timothy 4 God was providing what was settled for us in Romans through Philemon
- God’s word was not being composed on the fly; the Bible’s section at the end deals with the resumption of Israel’s program, because He had preplanned that the mystery dispensation would interrupt Israel’s program

Design, Sense and Sequence

- What is designed has sense and sequence; Romans through Philemon, through its sense and sequence, is a complete unit of doctrine about and for this dispensation of grace
- Galatians 3:8 applies foreseeing, an attribute of God’s godness, to the Scripture; the preplanned design is the cornerstone on which sense and sequence and internal safeguards rest

L8

Sense and Sequence: Beginnings and Their Fulfillment *Genesis 1–3 and Revelation 19–22; Genesis 15 and Exodus*

The Completed Word and a Settled Design

- The completed written revelation has no lost books and no missing Gospels or epistles; the Apocrypha is not the Word of God
- Understanding this lets us dismiss any claim to extra-biblical revelation, especially from those who claim spiritual gifts by which God is revealing

things

- This dispensation of grace was kept secret since before the world began; it is not a spur-of-the-moment thought on God's part, and Romans through Philemon is not a spur-of-the-moment production

Sense and Sequence: a Feature of Design

- Sense and sequence is a feature of something that has design; randomness and haphazardness belong to something without design
- The Bible does not open with Romans through Philemon, nor do they follow Joshua; this dispensation of Gentile grace was not the first thing God did

The Timeline and Right Division

- The order of the books from Genesis to Revelation matches the timeline of the outworking of God's plan and purpose
- The threefold time designator produces the right division of God's Word (II Timothy 2:15): Genesis through Acts is time past, Hebrews through Revelation is to come, and Romans through Philemon is a divider between them

Beginnings in Genesis 1–3, Fulfillment in Revelation

- Genesis means beginnings, and it makes sense to begin at the beginning; every beginning described in Genesis has its counterpart in Revelation, with an ending and a fulfillment
- Genesis 3 gives the beginning of the usurper's reign; a whole slew of beginnings get underway in the first three chapters — sin, death, sorrow, a curse, the loss of man's dominion — and in verse 15 God sets forth His plan for dealing with the usurper and repossessing the earth
- Revelation describes the day of the Lord, the last installment of the 5th course; the usurper is dealt with, and the book ends with the restoration of what had been lost

Sense and Sequence Within the Two Programs

- God has a twofold plan and purpose: for the earth through the nation Israel, and for the heavenly places and their reconciliation
- Genesis through Acts with Hebrews through Revelation deals with God's plan with Israel; Romans through Philemon deals with His formerly kept secret purpose, and Paul's thirteen epistles leave none missing

Genesis 15 and Exodus: Everything Accounted For

- A time schedule of 400 years was given to Abraham, and the Exodus is the fulfillment of Genesis 15:16 — so no book is missing between Genesis and Exodus
- Where there is an accounting of what was declared, we have no right to think something might be missing; every course and every installment in every course of Leviticus 26 is accounted for

L9

Everything Accounted For in the Two Programs *Leviticus 26 and Israel's Scriptures; Romans through Philemon; Colossians 1–2*

No Lost Books

- There are no lost books of the Bible; competing writings claiming to be the Word of God are frauds and fakes — they may be real writings, but they are not God-breathed
- The preplanned design has been covered and the overall sense and

sequence was seen last lesson; the Bible also possesses internal safeguards that testify to its completeness

Everything Accounted For in the Two Programs

- Everything God set forth for Israel is accounted for in the books pertaining to Israel's program; everything for us in this dispensation of grace is accounted for in Romans through Philemon
- Genesis through Malachi, the four Gospels, especially the opening chapters of Acts, and Hebrews through Revelation account for everything in Israel's program — and that lets you kick out the Apocrypha

Leviticus 26: Israel's History Mapped Out in Advance

- In Leviticus 26 God mapped out Israel's history in advance, until the establishment of the kingdom; the interruption by this dispensation of grace is not there, because it was a mystery
- The record must account for the five courses of punishment; the 5th course has five installments, and at its end God restores Israel and establishes the kingdom
- The 1st course begins to be fulfilled (Leviticus 26:16–17); the 2nd is in I Kings 12–22, the 3rd in II Kings 1–10:31, the 4th from II Kings 10:32 — it is all accounted for

The Installments of the 5th Course

- There is more to the 5th course than seventy years out of the land; a time schedule is given through Daniel, who was himself taken in the captivity
- God described a time when He would go silent — the 3rd installment; for about 400 years there were no prophets, and the books of the Apocrypha were all written at that very time
- God declared Israel would behold their Messiah in a four-fold manner — that is why there are four Gospel accounts; the gospels of Thomas, of the infancy of Jesus and of Mary can be dismissed
- Daniel's book was to be shut up and sealed to the time of the end; the remaining issues for the resumption and fulfillment of Israel's program are contained in Hebrews through Revelation

Romans through Philemon: Foundation to Roof

- Romans through Philemon stands between Acts and Hebrews, where Israel's program was suspended and interrupted by the dispensation of grace; Paul's 13 epistles account for it all
- Romans declares itself to contain establishment, first-thing-first truths — that is why it comes first; its four major sections set forth four foundational cornerstones (Romans 1–5, 6–8, 9–11, 12–16); from Romans to Philemon you go from milk to meat
- In Colossians Paul is filling something up — a completion concept, to fulfill the word of God; with his 13 epistles fulfilling the design for edification, you have it all

L10

Internal Safeguards: Amos 8 and the Four Beholds *Amos 8:11–12; Zechariah and the Four Gospels; Colossians 1–2; II Thessalonians 2*

The Third Matter: Internal Safeguards

- The third matter regarding the completion of the Word of God is internal safeguards: things pointedly said in the Scriptures that guard especially

against other writings getting into the Bible

The Silence of the 3rd Installment (Amos 8:11–12)

- The 3rd installment, the middle of the five, lasts about 400 years, as outlined in Daniel 9; its feature is the silence of God to Israel
- Satan took advantage of that silence and inundated Israel with false prophets and false writings; the description of the 3rd installment functioned as an internal safeguard against additions to the Word
- In the famine "of hearing the words of the LORD" they would still have the written words, but would not hear the words of the Lord from a prophet's mouth
- The books of the Apocrypha were all written in that span; by Amos 8:11–12 they are dismissed as fakes and frauds if they claim to be the word of God, and should be rejected with full assurance

Four Beholds, Four Gospel Accounts

- Zechariah, raised up in the 2nd installment with Haggai and Malachi, has four times Israel is told to behold the Messiah: as a servant, a man, a king, and God having come to you
- Each account focuses upon one of the four ways He is to be beheld: Matthew sets forth the Messiah as the king; Mark, with no royal genealogy, the perfect servant; Luke, the perfect man; John, Jehovah's fellow — Behold your God
- Four beholds and four Gospel accounts: the internal safeguard is met; had there been five beholds and only four accounts, you could consider one missing
- The other gospels are not lost books of the Bible but false books, the product of the satanic policy of evil

Colossians: Paul's Ministry Completes the Word of God

- Colossians 1 makes clear that through Paul's ministry, with the capstone doctrines about this dispensation of grace, the word of God is completed; all other writings following his ministry are not part of it
- Colossians 2:18–19 warns of extra-biblical revelations, written or spoken; nothing about God's will is held back (Ephesians 1), so there is no waiting for another prophet or searching for a lost book

Counterfeit Epistles in Paul's Day (II Thessalonians 2)

- In Paul's ministry the policy of evil was already producing counterfeit scriptures, epistles claiming to be his (II Thessalonians 2); internal safeguards in his epistles tell how not to be deceived, and testify to completion along with sense and sequence

L11

Nothing Missing: Closing the Completed Canon *Galatians 2; John 14–16; II Timothy 3; the Book of Psalms; Epistles That Seem Missing*

Galatians 2: Israel's Apostles and Ours

- This lesson concludes the section on the completed canon of Scripture; challenges from outside, written or extra-biblical verbal, are to be categorically dismissed as not the Word of God
- The twelve apostles are Israel's apostles; Paul is our apostle, the one to whom the revelation of the mystery was committed
- In Galatians 2 Paul added to the Jerusalem apostles' understanding; they confined their ministry to the circumcision, and Hebrews through Revelation

is addressed not to the Body of Christ but to the twelve tribes scattered abroad

- So even if writings set forth as further epistles of Peter or John had any valid claim to being part of the word of God, they would not apply to us in this dispensation of grace, having been written only to the circumcision — another simple internal safeguard

John 14–16: Israel's Scriptures Completed

- In John 14–16 the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, would guide the apostles into all truth; the Holy Scriptures pertaining to Israel's program would be completed in the lifetime of Peter, James and John

The Two Programs Accounted For

- Put together with Colossians 1, where Paul was completely fulfilling the Word of God, the two programs of God are accounted for — sealing the completion of the Word of God
- That throws out the Book of Mormon, the Quran and papal bulls; Paul's epistles also dismiss any extra-biblical verbal revelations, and by II Timothy 3 Timothy is "throughly furnished" by the totality of Scripture

The Book of Psalms: a Self-Testifying Structure

- Understanding the Davidic Covenant shows the Book of Psalms has a self-testifying feature to its completeness: it should have the 150 Psalms it has, with none missing
- Israel needed the Messiah to be five things — Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, King and Blesser — and the five books of Psalms deal with Him in that order; within each book no Psalm is missing

Epistles That Seem to Be Missing

- From I Corinthians 5:9 it is obvious Paul had already written Corinth a letter that First Corinthians is not; the view here is that we need to recognize that Paul wrote more epistles than we possess
- John shows there are inspired things Jesus did and said that did not get written down; in Revelation 10 the seven thunders' words were inspired, but God did not want them in the book
- Not everything inspired is wanted in the book, but everything God wants in the book gets in; the answer: God did not want that earlier epistle to be part of the Holy Scriptures — it isn't needed
- Colossians 4:16 says the epistle "from Laodicea", not to it, and the saints often wrote to Paul about problems; it does not appear to speak of a missing epistle Paul wrote
- The section closes with confidence that the 66 books of the Bible we possess are the completed word of God

L12

The Reality and Necessity of Preservation *Revelation 22:18–19; James; II Peter 1; Matthew 24 and Daniel; Hebrews 1*

Preservation and the Textual-Criticism Challenge

- Canonicity dealt with the completeness of the revelation; preservation deals with words, phrases, individual verses and portions of books
- The concern is with footnotes, margin notes and remarks based on the scholarship of the modern science of textual criticism, regarding passages like the last 12 verses of Mark 16; you cannot be neutral about these

challenges

- Preservation is not simply a theological concept or something someone just wants to make up, but a necessity in view of what God has said, down to individual words; if God's Word is to abide forever, it must be around, not just in God's mind

Revelation 22:18–19 in Its Dispensational Setting

- Paul's epistles deal with this dispensation of grace; Hebrews through Revelation deal with what is yet to come when God resumes and fulfills His program with Israel
- The things written in Revelation do not pertain to what is going on in the dispensation of grace; it will function like a daily newspaper for the remnant in the day of the Lord, the last seven years on Daniel's time schedule
- The very words of verses 18–19 demand that the very words of the book be preserved, or the warning has no weight; one would have to be living in the day of the Lord to incur the penalty
- The book demands preservation beyond the dispensation of grace, down to the very words John wrote originally

James and II Peter 1: Israel's Scriptures for the Remnant

- James, though written then, has its main application in the day of the Lord; he refers to Job and Proverbs, which have a role with the remnant then — the book of Job is going to be preserved
- Peter had had no knowledge of a dispensation of grace interrupting the program; Israel's program has not ceased but is temporarily put into abeyance
- He exhorts the remnant to study the prophets as the more sure word of prophecy — God's own word, written on the page, which cannot lie; Genesis through Malachi will be preserved until that time

Matthew 24 and Daniel; Hebrews 1

- In Matthew 24 the Lord tells Peter, James and John to read Daniel; what He cites has not yet come to pass, so Daniel will be around in the day of the Lord — not in one copy in a safe, but for whosoever readeth
- Hebrews cites and quotes Genesis through Malachi a great number of times; the Hebrew saints were able to check out all those references and were expected to; Hebrews will have a role again when Israel's program is resumed, and the remnant in the day of the Lord will go back to Genesis through Malachi and find them, because Genesis through Malachi will be preserved for them out there also

The Modern Phase of Textual Criticism Denies Preservation

- The modern phase of textual criticism denies divine preservation — hence the questions about words, phrases, verses and passages; yet God's statements could not be true without the words on the page being preserved

L13

Preservation Demanded: the Pattern and the Judgment Written

I Timothy 1:16; II Corinthians 1; John 5; Psalm 149; Deuteronomy 31–32; Revelation 15

Four Issues in the Section on Preservation

- The section on the doctrine of preservation has four issues: verses declaring its reality and necessity; the satanic policy of evil against the written word of

God; a quick historical synopsis of that policy; and which Bible for us today

- The modern phase of textual criticism, in effect for the last 200 years anyway, has gotten away from fundamental issues and as a whole outrightly denies the doctrine of preservation

Written Down in a Book

- Preservation is something God accomplishes by writing His words down in a book; the very purpose of having the Bible is preservation
- The Bible is not the only book God has written — there is the Book of Life — and all these books demand preservation for the plan and purpose God has for them

The Pattern for Us (I Timothy 1:16; II Corinthians 1)

- Through Paul's ministry came a pattern "to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting"; we have that pattern in Romans through Philemon, going from milk to meat
- Because the pattern is for those who hereafter believe, God designed it to last at least to the end of the dispensation of grace; you cannot divorce the text from preservation, as modern textual criticism has done
- God had Paul record his sufferings and comfort so that II Corinthians 1:4 could be fulfilled; that demands the pattern's preservation throughout this dispensation — 2,000, 3,000 or 4,000 years would be no obstacle

John 5: Search the Scriptures

- In John 5:39 the scriptures were Genesis through Malachi, preserved through the 400 years since Malachi; the Lord's command to search them shows they were preserved
- The Father's witness of the Messiah is in Genesis through Malachi; Moses had long been dead, yet was still speaking in the Lord's day — divine preservation
- The remnant is going to tell them to do the very same thing — search the scriptures — and will have Genesis through Malachi out there to search; you cannot divorce the scriptures from their preservation

The Judgment Written: Psalm 149, Deuteronomy 31–32, Revelation 15

- Psalm 149 speaks of a judgment written, yet to be executed when the kingdom is established; one place that written judgment occurs is Deuteronomy 32, whose verses 1–43 are the Song of Moses
- The Lord had the song written as a testimony against Israel when the courses of punishment came; by writing the judgment down He gave the assurance of its preservation
- God understood at least 2,000 years of a dispensation of grace would fall between the 4th and 5th installments; in Revelation 15 the remnant sings the song of Moses at the end of the Day of the Lord
- The purpose of getting it written down is so that it will be there — that is preservation, and preservation is part of the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures

L14

Write It in a Book: the Mechanical Means *Isaiah 30:8; Job 19; Jeremiah 30; Proverbs 22; II Peter 1; Psalm 12*

The Mechanical Means of Preservation

- The mechanical means by which preservation occurs is writing; preservation in written form is a natural, integral part of the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures

- Man's foolishness, arrogancy, supposed professed superior scholarship, pride and stupidity divorce the two — the prevailing viewpoint in the modern phase of textual criticism, and the reason for its declarations of uncertainty
- In Deuteronomy 31, to which the lesson returns when it comes to mechanics, God has a guild, so to speak, set up for this, and it has not been left to chance; it is not a noble endeavor on man's part, even saved man's part, but something God designed

Isaiah 30:8: "for the time to come for ever and ever"

- Isaiah, living during the 4th course, deals in chapters 29–30 with the 5th installment and the end of the 5th course; the 1st installment gives Israel a foretaste of the 5th
- God tells Isaiah to "note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever" — the time to come being the 5th installment, the Day of the Lord
- The book is the means by which Isaiah's prophecy is designed to be there in the Day of the Lord; the preservation of God's Word is for as long as God exists
- Religious leaders are in many cases the tool the satanic policy of evil uses to attack the written Word; expect the majority of attacks from people who would call themselves Christians

Job 19 and Jeremiah 30

- Job wants his words "printed in a book" to last forever; Job 19 will be there when the Lord stands upon the earth at the latter day, because it is part of the Word of God
- God tells Jeremiah to put the words he has spoken in a book, to operate in the 5th installment — the time of Jacob's trouble; you can't divorce preservation from the written word of God

Proverbs 22: the Certainty of the Words of Truth

- Proverbs 22:20–21 gives two purposes of writing: that you might "know the certainty of the words of truth", and "answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee"
- Certainty is part of the doctrine of preservation; the modern phase of textual criticism has no certainty because it denies preservation, and certainty is also an issue in this dispensation of grace
- Proverbs is designed especially for the remnant of Israel in the 4th and 5th installments; Solomon's words were written to exist in Israel's last days generation

II Peter 1 and Psalm 12

- Peter, teaching the remnant doctrines that will come into play when Israel's program resumes, provides for them to be "always in remembrance" by writing this epistle
- Psalm 12: the Lord's pure words have no error, overstatement, understatement or corruption, and He will keep and preserve them from this generation forever — divine preservation, by writing it down

L15 The Satanic Policy of Evil Against the Written Word *Genesis 3; II Corinthians 11; Romans 16:17–18; II Thessalonians 2*

The Second Issue: the Satanic Policy of Evil

- This lesson is a brief survey of the second of the four issues in the concluding section on preservation: the satanic policy of evil against the written word of God
- A basic tenet of the modern phase of textual criticism is that the Bible in transmission would suffer nothing different from any normal human writing — ignoring that it has a determined adversary, Satan himself

Genesis 3: Satan's First Words

- Satan attacks the Word of God to produce a corrupt understanding, knowing he can attack Almighty God Himself by attacking His Word; uncertainty is an aspect of corruption
- By asking a question regarding what God said, Satan raised the question in the woman's mind as to exactly what God said and set the stage for altering its meaning — the policy of evil is set forth in his very first words

II Corinthians 11 and Romans 16: Doctrinal Corruption

- In II Corinthians 11 Paul speaks of the policy of evil in effect today; the major goal of Satan's subtlety against the Body of Christ is doctrinal corruption
- Corruption can also come through a manipulation of the very text; Satan beguiled Eve by taking God's words and manipulating them, altering the meaning
- Paul's concern is "the simplicity that is in Christ"; the fundamental doctrines taught in Romans are under attack, and in Romans 16 Paul warns of those who work by "good words and fair speeches"

Another Jesus, Another Spirit, Another Gospel

- Jesus can be preached another way by going back into Israel's program and the gospel accounts, or by a Bible that keeps taking out the blood of Christ; another spirit, by going back to the day of Pentecost
- Another gospel can come from the Bible, because there is more than one gospel in the Bible

False Writings and the Modern Phase of Textual Criticism

- Even in Paul's time false writings were produced, some purporting to come from him — "nor by letter as from us"; all we have today is the written form, and we deal with attacks upon it
- Over the past two hundred years the modern phase of textual criticism, departing from its previous convictions, moved from opposing the policy of evil to denying it — becoming a ready ally of it

The Simple Mechanics of the Policy of Evil

- There are really only three things that can be done to produce corruption, and only one of the three is needed; adding to the words changes the meaning, and so does subtracting or taking away from them
- In Genesis 3 the woman said "lest ye die", not surely die; Satan denied God's exact words, deleting them from her understanding, then added — a complete change of meaning, the prohibition eliminated

L16

Original Manuscripts Are Not Needed *Deuteronomy 4 and 12, Jeremiah 26 and 36, Exodus 32: Warnings and the Mechanics of Preservation*

Textual Criticism: God's Ally Turned Opponent

- God set up the science of textual criticism — men didn't develop it; but now it denies preservation and the adversarial challenges and attacks upon the

Word of God

- One Bible is described in which all the colors, according to its legend, represent “degrees of probability as to whether this actually was said or not”
- When “those two pillar concepts are denied,” the science of textual criticism is no longer an ally to the Word of God: “It’s an opponent, and it’s a tool of the adversary himself”

God's Warnings: Don't Add, Don't Diminish

- God sets forth warnings regarding the very tactics the adversary employed in Genesis 3 — don’t add, don’t take away from; Revelation 22 carries “the same prohibition about adding or deleting”
- The warning is not given because it’s impossible to add or to delete, but because it’s easy; if you add or diminish, you change the meaning
- In Deuteronomy 12:32 diminishing means taking a portion out — certain words; in Jeremiah 26 God gives Jeremiah the very words to speak, not a basic concept to put in his own words
- God knows the policy of evil and its mechanics; He warned because it could and would take place. Additions, deletions and rewordings don’t destroy preservation — their product isn’t the Word of God

Mechanics of Preservation: The Autographs Are Not Needed

- God has built into the preservation process a means for dealing with additions, deletions and rewordings — “a means by which uncertainty can be reversed and certainty can be had”
- The original manuscripts — “the very first recordings of the written Word of God” — are not essential to knowing God’s Word; the opposite is a basic tenet of the modern phase, always trying to get back to them
- Preservation does not depend upon the existence, preservation, or reconstruction and rediscovery of the original manuscripts; to God’s thinking they are “not really a big deal”

Original Manuscripts Destroyed (Exodus 32; Jeremiah 36)

- The tables written with the finger of God were an original manuscript; Moses deliberately broke them, it isn’t cited as a sin, God isn’t upset — He just made another one
- Jeremiah 36 verse four is “a dictation principle” — a theory “blasted today”, but “It’s not blasted by God. It’s employed by Him”; the king destroyed that original manuscript, yet another one was produced

Vested in the Multiplicity of Copies

- God has vested preservation in the multiplicity of copies, not in original manuscripts or man’s capacity to reconstruct a text; Timothy had copies, “and yet they’re called holy scriptures”
- The adversary can only attack a minority of copies, and by the testimony of the majority certainty is had; preferring a minority of witnesses is “The exact reversal of the principle of preservation”

L17

God Has No Problem With Copies *Deuteronomy 31 and 17, Malachi 2, Jeremiah 8, Ezra 7, Proverbs 25: Custodians, Scribes and Copies*

The Safeguard in the Multiplicity of Copies

- The original manuscripts are not something God has to keep in existence to preserve His Word; He has preserved it through copies of those original

manuscripts

- Within the multiplicity of copies is a safeguard: the policy of evil can only grab hold of a minority of copies, and these can easily be detected because their witness "will not stand the test of the majority"
- Textual criticism was once "a ready and a designed ally of the Word of God"; its modern phase has departed from its historic roots and reversed this, holding that the minority group of manuscripts overrules the majority; it has "very little, if any, divine sanction behind it"

Deuteronomy 31: Custodians Designated by God

- In Deuteronomy 31 the book is written down and delivered to the divinely designated custodians; by putting it in a book, "preservation is the designed intent"
- Preservation was declared and extended out to the end of Israel's program; God set up a custodianship and a process for preservation and for handling the policy of evil He knew would come
- The priests, the sons of Levi, are the custodians and caretakers, and through them come the copyists; God delivered that honor unto them, and copies were generated and provided throughout the nation Israel

Deuteronomy 17: The King's Copy

- The king was to write him a copy of the book of the law — the first time the issue of a copy is encountered; the Lord did not want the king dealing with the original manuscript
- Each king must have his own copy; the copy concept is "a divinely designed issue," and God sanctions the copy — "And actually copies plural"
- Inspiration and holiness are lodged within the copies, not only within the original manuscripts; the Scripture referred to in II Timothy 3:14–17 and II Peter 1:19–21 is "manifestly copies"

Priests and the Pen of the Scribes (Malachi 2; Jeremiah 8)

- The priests' custodianship involved communicating the Word verbally and making copies for distribution throughout the nation; Malachi 2 shows the priests had a teaching ministry in Israel
- Some sons of Levi were set up as scribes to copy the law with a pen and get it out amongst the nation; in Jeremiah 8 "they've been copying that book of the law," and the law of the Lord was profuse within the land

Ezra, the Men of Hezekiah, and the Purpose of Copies

- Ezra, a priest and one of the scribe classes, copied the very words, not just the gist — a word for word copy, and he made a number; of the letter recorded in Ezra 7, "You don't have the original manuscript of that letter either"
- What you still have preserved today in Proverbs 25 is a copy of what Solomon originally wrote — not the original writings King Hezekiah's men had access to; God designed copies — "It's men who have a problem with copies. God has no problem with them"
- The main practical purpose of the multiplicity of copies is that God's people in Israel's program and the church, the body of Christ today, have the Word available; built within it is the safeguard against the policy of evil

L18 Copies in Israel's Program and in This Dispensation *Daniel 9,*

John 5, Luke 4, Acts, I Corinthians 14, Romans 16:25–26: Scriptures All Over the Place

Daniel Had Copies (Daniel 9)

- Daniel knew the time schedule for the first installment because he had the book of Jeremiah, and the book of the law among his books; he did not have the originals — "Daniel's got copies. And he hasn't got the only copy"

Copies Throughout Israel (John 5; Luke 4)

- In John 5 the witness the Lord speaks of is the Scriptures, Genesis through Malachi; He doesn't say they lack the word because it no longer exists — the scriptures existed in copy form all over Israel
- In Luke 4 a copy of Isaiah is delivered to the Lord in the synagogue in Nazareth — not the only synagogue that had the scriptures: "Every synagogue had a copy of the scriptures"

Copies in the Book of Acts

- In Acts 15 every city with a synagogue of the dispersed Israelites had a copy of the law; how anybody could conclude no one in the apostles' days had a personal copy "is beyond me"
- The Ethiopian eunuch, a proselyte, had his own copy — what II Timothy designates as inspired and holy, though not an original manuscript; he believed on the base of what he read in the copy and Philip's testimony
- Modern English translations based on the dictates of the modern phase don't have Acts 8:37 — "Because of what it makes so painfully obvious about a copy"
- Paul reasoned out of copies in Thessalonica and Berea and had no trouble with them; Apollos could not be mighty in the scriptures without having them — "Folks there's scriptures all over the place"
- Multiplicity of copies is "the divine modus operandi" for the preservation of God's Word; the provision for preservation God instituted when Moses began to first record the words of God in a book has been going on from that time

Apostles and Prophets of This Dispensation

- The prophets of I Corinthians 14 are not Old Testament prophets; members of the Body of Christ at the beginning of this dispensation were gifted with prophecy — prophets that don't pertain to Israel's program
- The apostles and prophets of Ephesians 2:19–20 and 4:11 are for the body of Christ, not the twelve; their ministry doesn't continue throughout the dispensation "as far as people having them" — "he gave them past tense"

The Scriptures of the Prophets (Romans 16:26)

- At the beginning of this dispensation the custodianship of Paul's epistles was vested in the apostles and prophets: "The prophets copied the epistles and the apostles took them out"; a prophet could acknowledge Paul's writings as "the commandments of the Lord"
- "The scriptures of the prophets" in Romans 16:26 is misunderstood most times; the New Testament prophets were copying Paul's epistles — a lack of familiarity with Romans through Philemon is the only reason anyone would think otherwise
- Copies of Paul's epistles put with copies of Israel's scriptures gave a completed Bible in the hands of the assemblies; local assemblies functioning as a pillar and ground of truth would be involved in copying the holy scriptures

Copies in Paul's Day

- Timothy had copies of the holy scriptures, Genesis through Malachi, not an original; there were corrupt copies out there, "Timothy didn't have those though"; Peter calls Paul's epistles scripture

L19

Inspiration and Holiness Lodged in the Copies *Rules of the Masoretes; II Timothy 3, Luke 4, Matthew 22, Psalm 19, Daniel 10, II Peter 1*

Lodged in the Copies

- Preservation takes place through copies and especially the multiplicity of copies; on the testimony of the majority the minority can be set aside and additions, deletions and rewordings recognized
- Holiness and inspiration are lodged in the copies, not only in the autographs — something the modern phase vehemently denies, holding that these things only apply to the original manuscripts
- Textual criticism is a valid science and has been an ally of the Word of God, but the foundation it has always stood on has been changed over "the past two hundred, three hundred years"

The Rules of the Masoretes

- To show the diligence and meticulous nature of copying, the lesson goes over the Rules of the Masoretes, which concern the Masoretic Hebrew text; what most people read about was going on around 500 AD to about 1000 AD
- The Masoretes' copying practice did not originate with them; it was in existence a long time beforehand and has been handed down
- Parchment from the skin of clean animals, prepared by a Jew only; each column "no less than forty-eight lines and no more than sixty"; ink none other than black, made according to a prescribed recipe
- Rule four: no word or letter written from memory — the scribe must have an authentic copy before him and pronounce aloud each word; the lesson turns to Ezra 7, where Ezra "copied the exact words," and Jeremiah 36, Baruch writing down the words from Jeremiah's mouth
- Rule five: the scribe reverently wipes his pen before writing the word for God and washes his whole body before writing the name Jehovah. There was also a standardization for the shape of the Hebrew letters, and rules about the size of spaces between letters and words
- A completed copy had to be checked by another within thirty days or be destroyed; one mistake condemned a sheet, three mistakes on a sheet the whole copy; every word and every letter was counted and recorded

Timothy's Copies (II Timothy 3)

- The modern phase says the verses declaring inspiration and holiness are true only of the original manuscripts, yet the word autographs is never once used — "It's men who come along and assume that must be the case"
- Timothy did not have the original manuscripts of Genesis through Malachi — not even a first generation copy; inspiration and holiness are lodged in the copies and are "not the exclusive province of the original manuscripts"

The Lord Reads From a Copy (Luke 4; Matthew 22)

- In Luke 4 the Lord reads Isaiah from a copy, not the original manuscript; He calls it scripture and corrects none of it — "that copy of Isaiah is holy and inspired"
- In Matthew 22 the Lord knew the Sadducees had God's words in a book;

preserved in the copies, “they’re still God’s word, they’re still God-breathed, they’re still inspired”

Copies in Psalm 19, Daniel 10 and II Peter 1

- David’s copy of the law is “perfect, converting the soul” (Psalm 19:7); what Gabriel calls “the scripture of truth” is in Daniel’s copies; Peter turns the remnant over to the prophecy in their copies — “a more sure word of prophecy”

L20

A Brief Historical Synopsis of Preservation *Proverbs 22: the Certainty of the Words of Truth; the Masoretes; Majority and Minority Manuscripts*

The Certainty of the Words of Truth (Proverbs 22)

- The lesson puts together a brief historical synopsis of the doctrine of preservation and the attacks of the policy of evil, pulling out highlights of what the class examined in the two books
- Proverbs 22 sets forth the certainty concept — “the certainty of the words of truth”; where preservation is denied, as in the modern phase, words are set forth as sure but cannot be said to be certain

The Basic Tenet and the Policy of Evil

- The basic tenet: divine preservation is through multiplicity of copies, not the original manuscripts, in the Hebrew and in the Greek — not because men decided it, but “by divine design”
- Multiplicity of copies supplies the practical needs of the saints in Israel’s program and the body of Christ; the policy of evil tampers only with a minority, and the majority witness contains the preserved word of God
- The policy of evil adds, deletes and rewords so that uncertainty about exactly what God has said is produced; on that foundation false doctrines, misapplications and misunderstandings can be built

Textual Criticism as an Ally: the Masoretes

- Textual criticism has historically always been an ally of divine preservation and a tool for God’s use, “up until about 300 years ago”; the Masoretes were custodians who preserved Genesis through Malachi for God’s program with Israel
- Resident within the Masoretes’ rules was a sound textual criticism — critical in handling and copying the text, not criticizing it in a bad sense; counting every word and letter and destroying known mistakes are examples

Copies in the Dispensation of Grace

- The mechanics of preservation would not change in the dispensation of grace — multiplicity of copies is the issue — while the policy of evil availed itself of a few copies and tampered with them
- Against the modern argument that the earlier manuscripts should be the best, a lack of early manuscripts in the majority class is “a natural and expected thing”
- In Genesis 3 the basic principles of Satan’s attack upon the Word of God are outlined by the very words that come out of his mouth; God’s warnings — don’t add, don’t take away — are recorded in Deuteronomy 4 and 12, Proverbs 30, and Revelation 22

The Manuscript Evidence: Majority and Minority

- There is “over fifty-two hundred pieces of manuscript evidence” in the Greek;

the majority is “well over ninety percent” and mathematically “approaches ninety-nine percent”; a minority, “under two percent,” disagrees with it and amongst themselves

- B, Vaticanus, is named as a prominent manuscript in the minority class, and Aleph, called Sinaiticus, which differs from B; the Septuagint is part of that minority, and there is also the Samaritan Pentateuch; the textual differences are attributed to men like Origen, Justin Martyr, Tatian and Clement of Alexandria
- Origen, who lived from about 184 AD to 245 AD, taught that the Genesis account of Adam and Eve was not true; he taught such things verbally before he got hold of a text, and textual tampering took place
- From Scrivener (middle to late 1800s): the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected “originated within a hundred years after it was composed”; Keith says the design of the small number of corrupt copies is to produce uncertainty, and “that house that was established for the purpose of that is the Roman Catholic Church”

L21

Rationalism, Five New Tenets, Westcott and Hort *Manuscript Evidence, the Textus Receptus, the King James Version of 1611 and Two Kinds of Bibles*

Two Lines of Text: The Manuscript Evidence

- The figures given: “Over fifty-two hundred” Greek manuscripts, “ninety-nine percent” in the majority class testifying to the same thing, and “less than two percent” corrupt copies, headed up by B and Aleph, the Vaticanus and the Sinaiticus
- In the Old Testament the minority includes the Septuagint Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures and the Samaritan Pentateuch; the minority is “about a handful” compared with the great majority

The Minority Rejected Historically

- The minority manuscripts have always been rejected by the “church in general” throughout this dispensation of grace; the issue has been sticking with the majority witness, rejecting the minority witness and destroying them
- Vaticanus and Sinaiticus would not exist but for the storehouse and citadel of the Roman Catholic Church; Tischendorf found Sinaiticus in the middle 1800s in a pile of materials that was going to be burned

English Bibles and the Textus Receptus

- From about the late 1300s, early 1400s the Bible began to be translated into the European languages; Wycliffe translated it into English, and everything seemed to culminate in the King James Version of 1611
- Each translator was also a textual critic; in the King James Version a recognition of divine preservation and the successful handling of the policy of evil came to be lodged in the English language
- Some work was done by two brothers, who stuck with the majority text and called it the Textus Receptus — “the text received commonly or received by all”; today often the traditional or majority text

Rationalism Changes Textual Criticism

- Especially at the beginning of the 1700s something began to change in textual criticism: theologians began to look at the Bible from a rationalistic perspective and to question the truth of divine preservation

- Rationalism subjected the Bible's claims to human reasoning, human viewpoint the final judge, approaching it like an original of Homer or Plato — yet normal transmission of any old human writing "isn't going to apply to the Bible"

Traditional Textual Criticism vs. the New Tenets

- Traditional textual criticism, in effect from Moses on, holds there is a policy of evil and that the modus operandi for divine preservation is multiplicity of copies
- The modern phase sets down five basic tenets: no divine preservation; no policy of evil; inspiration and holiness only for the autographs, if at all; the Masoretic text and Textus Receptus not faithful representations; and the reconstruction of the autographs as its goal

Westcott and Hort and Two Kinds of Bibles

- Giving precedence to Vaticanus and Sinaiticus as closest to the originals, the modern phase reached a climactic point in about 1881 under Westcott and Hort, whose new Greek text was set up as a rival to the Textus Receptus
- Since 1881 there have been two kinds of Bibles: the King James Version is the only English Bible published that is the product of traditional textual criticism; the Revised Version of 1881 and over one hundred translations since are products of the new tenets
- The Westminster Confession's writers (about 1646) believed they had the preserved Word of God kept pure in the King James Bible; Westcott and Hort deny any superintending supernatural care and any policy of evil

L22

The Preserved Word of God in English *Additions, Deletions and Rewordings; Telltale Examples in Mark 1, Matthew 5 with Mark 3, and Hebrews 3*

Two Kinds of Bibles

- The modern phase, recapped: it denies divine preservation and a policy of evil, limits inspiration and holiness to the autographs, says the traditional texts are not faithful representations, and aims at reconstruction of the autographs
- The King James Version was the Bible in English until Westcott and Hort's rival Greek text came out in 1881; it alone sticks with the traditional tenets, while every English translation since 1881 except it stands for the new tenets
- C.H. Dodd, director of the translation for the New English Bible, doesn't even believe that the Bible is God's word, "much less therefore preserved" — saying things beyond what Westcott and Hort were saying
- The great mass of differences between the King James Version and other English translations is not another way of saying it in English — "the text from which it's translated is a different text"

Additions, Deletions and Rewordings

- In Genesis 4:8 the NIV has an additional sentence not in the King James Version, having rejected the Masoretic Text for a handful of differing Hebrew manuscripts — added "on the conjecture that it made sense"
- In Hosea 13:9 a rewording makes the text say the exact opposite of the King James Version; Israel brought it upon themselves, but in God is their help — His Jehovahness. "One's right, and one's wrong"
- In Job 19 Job understands that the resurrection of his body is involved, even though he dies and worms destroy this flesh; a rewording to being without the

flesh is “not the issue of resurrection at all,” and on these verses Origen talked about reincarnation

- Matthew 1:25 in the King James Version has “her firstborn son,” meaning there are others; the NIV has simply a son because Vaticanus, the primary manuscript of the modern phase, doesn’t say it that way
- The NASV brackets John 7:53–8:11, yet only a very small percentage of the 1% of extant manuscripts omit it; I John 5:7’s testimony of the three members of the Godhead is completely deleted in the minority
- In Mark 16 you “gotta wonder whether that addition is supposed to be there or not” — that produces uncertainty, “and that’s all the policy of evil’s after”; those behind the corrupt copies rejected Paul’s unique authority and apostleship and weren’t rightly dividing the Word of truth

Telltale Examples

- Mark 1:2 in the King James Version says prophets plural, quoting Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3; the NIV, NASV and RSV say Isaiah the prophet — “This difference is an outright lie” — and “God didn’t breathe that out”
- Matthew 5:22 in the new translations deletes “without a cause,” so the Lord, angry in Mark 3:5, condemns Himself as a lawbreaker; yet the law “condemned anger without a cause”
- Hebrews 3:16, about Israel coming out of Egypt, says in the NIV the exact opposite of the King James Version and “tells a lie” — “Joshua and Caleb didn’t”

The Preserved Word of God in English

- Only one Bible is the production of divine preservation with proper textual criticism — the King James Version, “the preserved, inerrant, infallible word of God for you and I in the English language”; the others support the policy of evil’s goal of uncertainty

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Israel’s Program vs. the Body of Christ Today

Genesis through Acts and Hebrews through Revelation were Israel’s program, and Romans through Philemon is for us in this dispensation of grace; right division is the recognition of the placement of those mystery-truth epistles between Acts and Hebrews. Hebrews through Revelation deal with what is yet to come when God resumes and fulfills His program with Israel; the things written in the Revelation don’t pertain to what’s going on in the dispensation of grace. In Paul’s epistles you have everything God wants communicated to you as a member of the church, the body of Christ. Hebrews 4:12–13 is not exclusive to Israel’s program; it applies to us also, because aspects of God’s Godness never change regardless of the dispensation.

God’s Words vs. Man’s Words

The words on the page of the Bible are not man's words nor the product of human imagination; from authorship to penmanship it is God through and through. Paul knew when he spoke, and when he wrote, that it was the Word of God.

Original Manuscripts vs. Copies

The modern phase of textual criticism applies inspiration and inerrancy only to the original manuscripts; but the doctrine of inspiration applies to more than the autographs. Timothy possessed copies, yet they are called holy and God-breathed; holiness and inspiration are lodged in the copies. The original manuscripts are not essential to knowing God's Word; God vested preservation in the multiplicity of copies.

Canonicity vs. Preservation

Having covered the canonicity issue, you have confidence in the fact that the 66 books of the Bible you possess are the completed word of God; in dealing with the doctrine of preservation the study deals now with words, phrases, individual verses and portions of books. Not everything that's inspired God wants in the book, but everything God wants in the book He sees to it gets in the book.

The Majority vs. the Minority of Copies

The policy of evil adds, deletes and rewords, but it can only grab hold of a minority of copies; by the testimony of the majority, certainty as to what God said is had. According to Lesson 21, a majority of manuscripts approaching 99% testify to an agreement with themselves, against a small number of corrupt copies produced by the policy of evil. The modern phase gives preference to a minority of witnesses — the exact reversal of the principle of preservation.

Traditional Textual Criticism vs. the Modern Phase

God set up the science of textual criticism, and it has always been, up until especially the last two hundred, three hundred years, an ally of the Word of God; now it denies preservation and the adversarial challenges and attacks upon the Word of God, and when those two pillar concepts are denied, it is an opponent and a tool of the adversary. The first two new tenets of the modern phase: there is no divine preservation, and there is no policy of evil against the written word of God. Since 1881 there have been two kinds of Bibles; only the King James Version is the production of divine preservation in cooperation with proper textual criticism.

Key Scripture References

Genesis 3:1	Satan's first recorded words question what God had really said, setting the stage for altering the meaning of what God said
Exodus 31:18; 32	Moses deliberately broke the tables — an original manuscript — and God is not upset

Deuteronomy 4:1–2; 12:32	Do not add, do not diminish — the warning is given because it's easy to add or to delete
Deuteronomy 17:14–20	The Lord wanted the king to write him a copy, not deal with the original manuscript; every day of his life he's to read in it
Deuteronomy 31:9, 24–26	Written down and delivered over to the divinely designated custodians of the word of God: the beginning of the process of preservation
Psalm 12	The Lord's words are pure words, kept and preserved from this generation for ever
Psalm 19:7	David's copy of the law was perfect, because it is God's words and truth
Psalm 33:6	The word is the breath of His mouth; His Word carried the power of His omnipotence
Psalm 119:89	The hub of the Psalm: the whole issue of design started in eternity past when God's Word was settled in heaven
Psalm 138:2	God magnified His word above all His name; the written word is the repository of truth
Proverbs 22:20–21	Written so as to know the certainty of the words of truth
Isaiah 30:8	The prophet's words written in a book for the time to come
Isaiah 55:10–13	God's word accomplishes what it said; Israel's deliverance and kingdom, yet to operate
Jeremiah 30:1–2	Write all the words in a book, for a time to come
Jeremiah 36	A dictation principle in verse 4; the king destroys the original manuscript; many like words were added
Daniel 10:21	The scripture of truth Daniel had before him were copies
Amos 8:11–12	The famine of hearing the words of the Lord: the silence of God in the third installment, an internal safeguard by which the books of the Apocrypha are dismissed
Malachi 3:16	A book of remembrance with the names of the remnant of Israel
John 10:34–36	Called gods unto whom the word of God came; the Lord is the Word of God Himself
John 17:17	The Lord declares where the truth is to be found
Romans 16:25–26	The scriptures of the prophets: the New Testament prophets copying Paul's epistles
I Corinthians 2:13	The Holy Ghost chose the words Paul spoke and wrote
Galatians 3:8	The scripture foresaw: Scripture thought of as equal with God; what worked out in time was already settled back there
Colossians 1:23–27	Fulfilling the word of God by the written record, with the capstone doctrines about this dispensation of grace
I Thessalonians 2:13	Paul knew when he spoke, and when he wrote, that it was the Word of God
II Timothy 3:14–17	Timothy's copies are called holy and God-breathed
Hebrews 4:12–13	His word and His eyes, part of His Godness — applies to us because His

	Godness never changes
II Peter 1:19–21	To the remnant: no prophecy of private interpretation; the more sure word of prophecy
Revelation 20:12	The books and the book of life — none of them the Bible — must be preserved intact
Revelation 22:18–19	For the day of the Lord in Israel's resumed program; demands the very words be preserved