



Session 1

The Integrity of the Bible How the Word of God Came to Us

“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.” — Isaiah 40:8

- Four stages show how God has guided His Word from the beginning to our hands today.
- → **God Speaks** → **Writers Record** → **Copies Spread** → **Word Preserved**

1. God Initiated — They Did Not Invent

- The prophets and apostles never claimed to create or imagine God’s message. The initiative always came from God Himself.
- They received, not conceived. The message originated with God (Hebrews 1:1-2)

2. God Spoke in Clear and Personal Ways

God used direct speech, visions, dreams, and inner conviction — all carrying unmistakable divine authority.

- Exodus 33:11 — “The LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.”
- Jeremiah 1:4–5 — “The word of the LORD came to me, saying...”
- Ezekiel 43:11 — “Son of man, write down these words that I speak to you.”
- Galatians 1:11–12 — Paul: “I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.”

3. The Spirit Confirmed the Message

The Holy Spirit gave assurance, understanding, and the words to speak. The prophets and apostles were 'carried along' by the Spirit.

- 2 Peter 1:21 — “Prophets spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”
- John 14:26 — Jesus promised the Spirit would teach and remind the apostles.

4. The Message Bore Divine Authority and Fruit

True revelation carried unmistakable power and moral authority. People recognized that when God spoke, His Word changed hearts and revealed truth.

- Matthew 7:29 — “He taught them as one who had authority.”
- Acts 2:37 — The crowd was cut to the heart by the apostles’ message.

5. God Commanded Some to Write

Writing was part of the divine command, ensuring that God's Word would be remembered and shared.

- Exodus 17:14 — “Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered.”
- Jeremiah 30:2 — “Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you.”
- Revelation 1:19 — “Write, therefore, what you have seen.”

6. The Community Recognized God's Voice

God's people recognized His voice because the message aligned with His character and previous revelations.

- John 10:27 — “My sheep listen to my voice.”
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13 — “You received it not as the word of men, but as the word of God.”

Summary Table

Step	How They Knew	Key Verses
1. Divine Initiative	God started the conversation	Hebrews 1:1–2
2. Clear Encounter	Voice, vision, or command unmistakably divine	Jeremiah 1:4–5; Exodus 33:11
3. Spirit Confirmation	The Holy Spirit carried and guided them	2 Peter 1:21; John 14:26
4. Divine Authority Evident	Truth, power, and fruit confirmed it	Matthew 7:29; Acts 2:37
5. Command to Record	“Write this down” — explicit direction	Exodus 17:14; Revelation 1:19
6. Community Recognition	God's people discerned His voice	1 Thessalonians 2:13; John 10:27

Reflection

The prophets and apostles didn't decide to write holy books — they responded to a holy God. Their obedience to speak and write flowed from a deep awareness that the living God was addressing humanity through them.

- 1 Peter 1:25 — “The word of the Lord endures forever.”
- Psalm 119:89 — “Forever, O LORD, Your Word is firmly fixed in the heavens.”

How Did God Communicate Before the Torah?

A Biblical Response to a Muslim friend

The Bible shows that **God has never left humanity without guidance**. Long before Moses received the Torah, God communicated with His people in **various, direct, and personal ways**. Scripture gives a consistent pattern.

1. Direct Revelation (God Speaking Clearly)

Before the Torah, God often **spoke directly** to individuals. For example:

- **Adam and Eve** — God spoke with them in the garden (Genesis 2:16–17; 3:9–13).
- **Cain** — God warned him directly (Genesis 4:6–7).
- **Noah** — God gave clear, detailed commands about the ark (Genesis 6:13–21).
- **Abraham** — God called him, made promises, and spoke with him repeatedly (Genesis chapters 12; 15; 17; 22).
- **Jacob** — God spoke in dreams and visions (Genesis 28:12–15; 32:30).
- **Joseph** — God guided him through dreams and the ability to interpret them (Genesis 37; 40–41).

Key Point: Before the Torah, **God Himself communicated directly because there was not yet a written revelation**.

2. Dreams and Visions

One of the earliest and most repeated ways God communicated. For example:

- Abraham's vision (Genesis 15:1).
- Jacob's ladder dream (Genesis 28:12).
- Joseph's dreams (Genesis 37:5–11).
- Pharaoh's dreams interpreted by Joseph (Genesis 41).

Old Testament/Tanakh summary: “God speaks... in dreams, in visions of the night” (Job 33:14–16).

3. Angels (Messengers of God)

Before the Torah, angels were also sent with messages. For example:

- Angel to Hagar (Genesis 16:7–13).
- Angels to Abraham and Lot (Genesis 18–19).
- Angel who stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac (Genesis 22:11–12).
- Angel with Jacob (Genesis 31:11–13).

Key Point: Where written Scripture did not yet exist, **God used direct messengers**.

4. God's Moral Law Written on the Human Heart

Even without the Torah, people were accountable because God placed moral awareness within the human conscience.

Key Text: “The work of the law is written on their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness” (Romans 2:14-15).

This explains:

- Why God judged the world in Noah's time (Genesis 6:5).
- Why Cain knew murder was wrong before any written command.
- Why God could hold Sodom and Gomorrah accountable (Genesis 18–19).

Key Point: Humans had **innate moral knowledge** from creation.

5. Patriarchs Served as Family Teachers

Before the Torah, God entrusted His revealed will to **the heads of households** who taught their families. For Example:

- Abraham: “He will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord” (Genesis 18:19).
- Isaac learned from Abraham.
- Jacob learned from Isaac.
- Joseph followed the same God in Egypt.

Key Point: The faith was preserved **orally**, family to family, guided by God's direct revelations.

6. Covenants Before the Torah

God made covenants **before** Moses received the Law. For Example:

- **Covenant with Noah** (Genesis 9).
- **Covenant with Abraham** (Genesis 12, 15, 17).
- **Promise to Isaac and Jacob** (Genesis 26:3–5; 28:13–15).

Key Point: God's relationship with humanity existed long before written Scripture.

7. The Torah Did Not Begin Revelation — It Preserved and Expanded It

Many Muslims sometimes assume that revelation begins only when a prophet receives a book. Biblically, revelation began **with God Himself**, long before any prophet wrote Scripture.

Important distinction:

- **Qur'anic model:** Revelation = a book given to a prophet.
- **Biblical model:** Revelation = God speaking through many ways, culminating in Scripture.

Key Point: The Torah is **the written, covenantal preservation** of what God had always communicated.

Integrity of the Bible — Q&A Cheat Sheet

1. How did the prophets and apostles know it was really God speaking?

Short answer: Because God initiated, and the encounter was unmistakable.

Key points:

- They didn't seek revelation — it came to them.
- The message matched God's known character.
- The Holy Spirit confirmed it.

(Hebrews 1:1–2; Jeremiah 1:4–5; 2 Peter 1:21)

2. How do we know they didn't just make it up?

Short answer: Their message cost them everything.

Key points:

- Prophets suffered for speaking God's word.
- Apostles willingly died for what they saw.
- False prophets gained power—biblical prophets lost it.

3. Why did God use human writers?

Short answer: God works through human lives and languages.

Key points:

- Scripture is fully divine, fully human.
- God supervised without overriding personality.

4. Difference between revelation and inspiration?

Short answer: Revelation = message received; Inspiration = message recorded.

Key points:

- Revelation is God speaking.
- Inspiration ensures accurate writing.

5. What if someone today claims a new revelation?

Short answer: Use Scripture's tests.

Key points:

- Does it match Scripture?
- Does it point to Christ?
- Does it bear the fruit of truth?

6. Why doesn't God speak today like ancient times?

Short answer: He has spoken fully in Christ.

Key points:

- God still guides today.
- Revelation is complete (Jude 3).