



## 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.

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# 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).