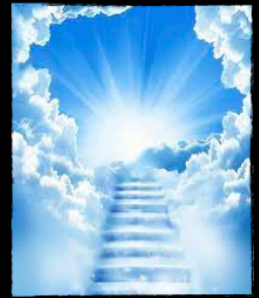
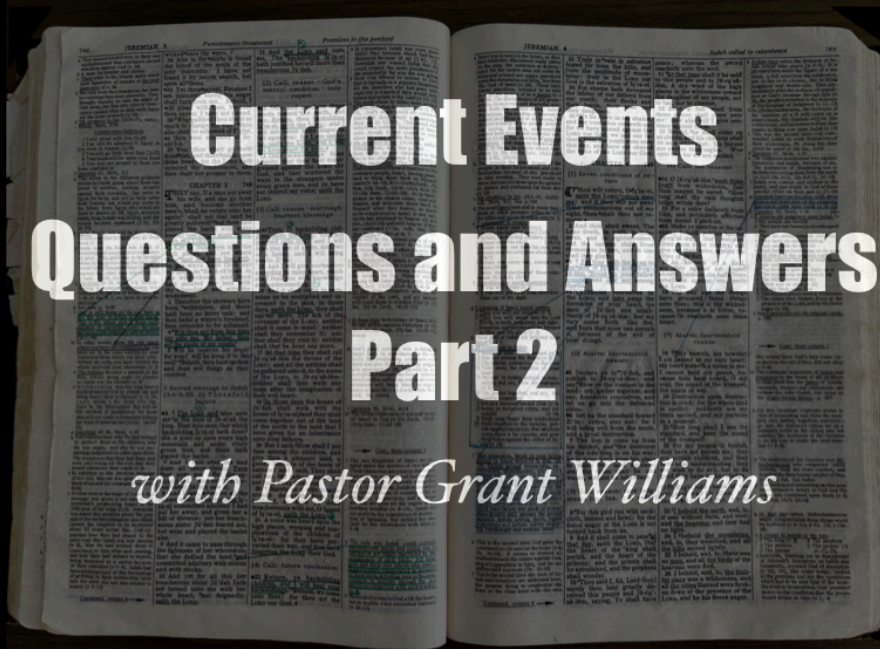


# *Thru the Lens of Scripture*

## **Current Events Questions and Answers Part 2**

*with Pastor Grant Williams*



**Question: Why just the 66 books? Canon of Scripture defined.**

**Answer:** It is important to understand what is meant by *canon of scripture*. A Biblical canon is a set of texts (also called "books") which a particular Jewish and Christian religious community has vetted and regards as part of the Bible. The English word canon comes from the Greek κανών kanōn, meaning "rule" or "measuring stick".

The word "canon" comes from the rule of law that was used to determine if a book measured up to a standard. It is important to note that the writings of Scripture were canonical at the moment they were written. Scripture was Scripture when the pen touched the parchment.

This is very important because Christianity does not start by defining God, or Jesus Christ, or salvation. The basis of Christianity is found in the authority of Scripture. If we cannot identify what Scripture is, then we cannot properly distinguish any theological truth from error.

## **What measure or standard was used to determine which books should be classified as Scripture?**

A key verse to understanding the process and purpose, and perhaps the timing of the giving of Scripture, is Jude 3.

### **Jude 3 KJV**

*3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which **was once delivered unto the saints.***

### **Jude 3 AMPC**

*3 Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you in regard to our common salvation. [But] I found it necessary and was impelled to write you and urgently appeal to and exhort [you] to contend for the faith which was once for all [a]handed down to the saints [the faith which is that sum of Christian belief which was delivered [b]verbally to the holy people of God].*

Since our faith is defined by Scripture, Jude is stating that Scripture was given once, for the benefit of all Christians. There is no hidden or lost manuscripts to be found, there are no secret books only familiar to a select few, and there are no YouTube or “Facebook prophets” who have special revelation outside of God’s Word requiring us to trek up a Himalayan mountain in order to be enlightened? We can be confident that God has not left us without a witness. The same supernatural power God used to produce His Word has also been used to preserve it.

Psalm 119:160 states that the entirety of God’s Word is truth. **Starting with that premise, we can compare writings outside the accepted canon of Scripture to see if they meet the test.** As an example, the Bible claims that Jesus Christ is God (Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1, 2, 14, 20:28; Acts 16:31, 34; Philipians 2:5-6; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1).

Yet many extra-biblical texts, claiming to be Scripture, argue that Jesus is not God. When clear contradictions exist, the established Bible is to be trusted, leaving the others outside the sphere of Scripture.

In the early centuries of the church, Christians were sometimes put to death for possessing copies of Scripture. Because of this persecution, the question soon came up, “What books are worth dying for?” Some books may have contained sayings of Jesus, but were they inspired as stated in 2 Timothy 3:16?

### **2 Timothy 3:16 AMPC**

*16 Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God’s will in thought, purpose, and action)*

### **2 Timothy 3:16 KJV**

*16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

Church councils played a role in publicly recognizing the canon of Scripture, but often an individual church or groups of churches recognized a book as inspired from its writing (e.g., Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27). Throughout the early centuries of the church, few books were ever disputed and the list was basically settled by A.D. 303.

When it came to the Old Testament, three important facts were considered: 1) The New Testament quotes from or alludes to almost every Old Testament book 2) Jesus effectively endorsed the Hebrew canon in Matthew 23:35 when He cited one of the first narratives and one of the last in the Scriptures of His day. 3) The Jews were meticulous in preserving the Old Testament Scriptures, and they had few controversies over what parts belong or do not belong. **The Roman Catholic Apocrypha did not measure up and fell outside the definition of Scripture and has never been accepted by the Jews.**

Most questions about which books belong in the Bible dealt with writings from the time of Christ and forward. The early church had some very specific criteria in order for books to be considered as part of the New Testament. These included: Was the book written by someone who was an eyewitness of Jesus Christ? Did the book pass the “truth test”? (i.e., did it concur with other, already agreed-upon Scripture?). The NT books they accepted back then have endured the test of time and Christian orthodoxy has embraced these for centuries.

Confidence in the acceptance of specific books dates back to the first century recipients who offered firsthand testimony as to their authenticity. **The end-time subject matter of the book of Revelation, and the prohibition (forbidding of) of adding to the words of the book in Revelation 22:18, argue strongly that the canon was closed at the time of its writing (A.D. 95).**

#### **Revelation 22:18 AMPC**

*18 I [personally solemnly] warn everyone who listens to the statements of the prophecy [the [a]predictions and the consolations and admonitions pertaining to them] in this book: **If anyone shall add anything to them, God will add and lay upon him the plagues (the afflictions and the calamities) that are recorded and described in this book.***

#### **Revelation 22:18 KJV**

*18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, **If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:***

There is an important theological point that should not be missed. God has used His Word for one primary purpose—to reveal Himself and communicate to mankind. **Ultimately, the church councils did not decide if a book was Scripture; that was decided when the human author was chosen by God to write.** In order to accomplish the end result, including the preservation of His Word through the centuries, God guided the early church councils in their recognition of the canon.

**The acquisition of knowledge regarding such things as the true nature of God, the origin of the universe and life, the purpose and meaning of life, the wonders of salvation, and future events (including the destiny of mankind) are beyond the natural observational and scientific capacity of mankind.** The already-delivered Word of God, valued and personally applied by Christians for centuries, is sufficient to explain to us everything we need to know of Christ (John 5:18; Acts 18:28; Galatians 3:22; 2 Timothy 3:15) and to teach us, correct us, and instruct us into all righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

**Note:** When reading books, listening to teaching/preaching, attending Bible studies... ask yourself does it line up with the entirety of Scripture? Old and New Testament? Do you ask/discuss someone who you look up to spiritually what they think of an author, book, preacher, teacher, teaching on a specific topic regarding: sin, judgement, righteousness and the things that were foretold that are to come?

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**Question: If a pastor or church is in error regarding: sin, judgment, righteousness and the “things” that were foretold should I leave? Do I stay and point out everything wrong to other attendees?**

**Answer:** Paul addressed this very question several times in the New Testament. Many religious leaders were deceiving people regarding God’s Word. His response was: leave, do not listen to them. The reason?

**Galatians 5:9 AMPC**

*9 A little leaven (a slight inclination to error, or a few false teachers) leavens the whole lump [it perverts the whole conception of faith or misleads the whole church].*

We don’t leave because of friends, the familiar, the convenience... That is why God commands us in His Word to not even eat with people who call themselves followers of Jesus Christ if they keep habitually sinning.

**John 1:1 AMPC**

*1 In the beginning [before all time] was the Word ([a]Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God [b]Himself.*

**Hebrews 13:8 AMPC**

*8 Jesus Christ (the Messiah or the Word) is [always] the same, yesterday, today, [yes] and forever (to the ages).*

**Malachi 3:6 AMPC**

*6 For I am the Lord, I do not change;*

**Matthew 24:5 AMPC**

*5 For many will come in (on the strength of) My name [[a]appropriating the name which belongs to Me], saying, I am the Christ (the Messiah), and they will lead many astray.*

**Matthew 24:11 AMPC**

*11 And many false prophets will rise up and deceive and lead many into error.*

## Galatians 1:1-22 AMPC

1 Paul, an apostle—[special messenger appointed and commissioned and sent out] not from [any body of] men nor by or through [a]any man, but by and through Jesus Christ (the Messiah) and God the Father, Who raised Him from among the dead—

2 And all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace and spiritual blessing be to you and [soul] peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah),

4 Who gave (yielded) Himself up [[b]to atone] for our sins [and [c]to save and sanctify us], in order to rescue and deliver us from this present wicked age and world order, in accordance with the will and purpose and plan of our God and Father—

5 To Him [be ascribed all] the glory through all the ages of the ages and the eternities of the eternities! Amen (so be it).

6 I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly [d]turning renegade and deserting Him Who invited and called you [e]by the grace (unmerited favor) of Christ (the Messiah) [and that you are transferring your allegiance] to a different [even an opposition] gospel.

7 Not that there is [or could be] any other [genuine Gospel], but there are [o b v i o u s l y] some who are troubling and disturbing and bewildering you [[f]with a different kind of teaching which they offer as a gospel] and want to pervert and distort the Gospel of Christ (the Messiah) [into something which it absolutely is not].

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to and different from that which we preached to you, let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

9 As we said before, so I now say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from or contrary to that which you received [from us], let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

10 Now am I trying to win the favor of men, or of God? Do I seek to please men? If I were still seeking popularity with men, I should not be a bond servant of Christ (the Messiah).

11 For I want you to know, brethren, that the Gospel which was proclaimed and made known by me is not man's gospel [a human invention, according to or patterned after any human standard].

12 For indeed I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but [it came to me] through a [direct] revelation [given] by Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

**13 You have heard of my earlier career and former manner of life in the Jewish religion (Judaism), how I persecuted and abused the church of God furiously and extensively, and [with fanatical zeal did my best] to make havoc of it and destroy it.**

**14 And [you have heard how] I outstripped many of the men of my own generation among the people of my race in [my advancement in study and observance of the laws of] Judaism, so extremely enthusiastic and zealous I was for the traditions of my ancestors.**

15 But when He, Who had chosen and set me apart [even] before I was born and had called me by His grace (His undeserved favor and blessing), saw fit and was pleased

16 To reveal (unveil, disclose) His Son within me so that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles (the non-Jewish world) as the glad tidings (Gospel), immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood [did not consult or counsel with any frail human being or communicate with anyone].

17 Nor did I [even] go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles (special messengers of Christ) before I was, but I went away and retired into Arabia, and afterward I came back again to Damascus.

18 Then three years later, I did go up to Jerusalem to become [personally] acquainted with Cephas (Peter), and remained with him for fifteen days.

19 But I did not see any of the other apostles (the special messengers of Christ) except James the brother of our Lord.

**20 Now [note carefully what I am telling you, for it is the truth], I write this as if I were standing before the bar of God; I do not lie.**



**2 Corinthians 11:1-10 AMPC**

*1 I wish you would bear with me while I indulge in a little [so-called] foolishness. Do bear with me!*

*2 For I am [a]zealous for you with a godly eagerness and a divine jealousy, for I have betrothed you to one Husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

**3 But [now] I am fearful, lest that even as the serpent beguiled Eve by his cunning, so your minds may be corrupted and seduced from wholehearted and sincere and pure devotion to Christ.**

**4 For [you seem readily to endure it] if a man comes and preaches another Jesus than the One we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the [Spirit] you [once] received or a different gospel from the one you [then] received and welcomed; you tolerate [all that] well enough!**

**5 Yet I consider myself as in no way inferior to these [precious] [b]extra-super [false] apostles.**

**6 But even if [I am] unskilled in speaking, yet [I am] not [unskilled] in knowledge [I know what I am talking about]; we have made this evident to you in all things.**

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## **Jude AMPC**

1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ (the Messiah), and brother of James, [writes this letter] to those who are called (chosen), dearly loved by God the Father and separated (set apart) and kept for Jesus Christ:

2 May mercy, [soul] peace, and love be multiplied to you.

**3 Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you in regard to our common salvation. [But] I found it necessary and was impelled to write you and urgently appeal to and exhort [you] to contend for the faith which was once for all [a]handed down to the saints [the faith which is that sum of Christian belief which was delivered [b]verbally to the holy people of God].**

4 For certain men (pastors preachers teachers) have crept in stealthily [[c]gaining entrance secretly by a side door]. Their doom was predicted long ago, ungodly (impious, profane) persons who pervert the grace (the spiritual blessing and favor) of our God into lawlessness and wantonness and immorality, and disown and deny our sole Master and Lord, Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).

**5 Now I want to remind you, though you were fully informed once for all, that though the Lord [at one time] delivered a people out of the land of Egypt, He subsequently destroyed those [of them] who did not believe [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely upon Him].**

**6 And angels who did not keep (care for, guard, and hold to) their own first place of power but abandoned their proper dwelling place—these He has reserved in custody in eternal chains (bonds) under the thick gloom of utter darkness until the judgment and doom of the great day.**

**7 [The wicked are sentenced to suffer] just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the adjacent towns—which likewise gave themselves over to impurity and indulged in unnatural vice and sensual perversity—are laid out [in plain sight] as an exhibit of perpetual punishment [to warn] of everlasting fire.**

8 Nevertheless in like manner, these dreamers also corrupt the body, scorn and reject authority and government, and revile and libel and scoff at [heavenly] glories (the glorious ones).

9 But when [even] the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, judicially argued (disputed) about the body of Moses, he dared not [presume to] bring an abusive condemnation against him, but [simply] said, The Lord rebuke you!

**10 But these men revile (scoff and sneer at) anything they do not happen to be acquainted with and do not understand; and whatever they do understand physically [that which they know by mere instinct], like irrational beasts—by these they corrupt themselves and are destroyed (perish).**

11 Woe to them! For they have run riotously in the way of Cain, and have abandoned themselves for the sake of gain [it offers them, following] the error of Balaam, and have perished in rebellion [like that] of Korah!

12 These are hidden reefs (elements of danger) in your love feasts, where they boldly feast sumptuously [carousing together in your midst], without scruples providing for themselves [alone]. They are clouds without water, swept along by the winds; trees, without fruit at the late autumn gathering time—twice (doubly) dead, [lifeless and] plucked up by the roots;

13 Wild waves of the sea, flinging up the foam of their own shame and disgrace; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of eternal darkness has been reserved forever.

14 It was of these people, moreover, that Enoch in the seventh [generation] from Adam prophesied when he said, Behold, the Lord comes with His myriads of holy ones (ten thousands of His saints)

15 To execute judgment upon all and to convict all the impious (unholy ones) of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed [in such an] ungodly [way], and of all the severe (abusive, jarring) things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

16 These are inveterate murmurers (grumblers) who complain [of their lot in life], going after their own desires [controlled by their passions]; their talk is boastful and arrogant, [and they claim to] admire men's persons and pay people flattering compliments to gain advantage.

**17 But you must remember, beloved, the predictions which were made by the apostles (the special messengers) of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).**

18 They told you beforehand, In the last days (in the end time) there will be scoffers [who seek to gratify their own unholy desires], following after their own ungodly passions.

19 It is these who are [agitators] setting up distinctions and causing divisions—merely sensual [creatures, carnal, worldly-minded people], devoid of the [Holy] Spirit and destitute of any higher spiritual life.

20 But you, beloved, build yourselves up [founded] on your most holy faith [[d]make progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher], praying in the Holy Spirit;

21 Guard and keep yourselves in the love of God; expect and patiently wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah)—[which will bring you] unto life eternal.

22 And refute [so as to] convict some who dispute with you, and on some have mercy who waver and doubt.

23 [Strive to] save others, snatching [them] out of [the] fire; on others take pity [but] with fear, loathing even the garment spotted by the flesh and polluted by their sensuality.

24 Now to Him Who is able to keep you without stumbling or slipping or falling, and to present [you] unblemished (blameless and faultless) before the presence of His glory in triumphant joy and exultation [with unspeakable, ecstatic delight]—

25 To the one only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory (splendor), majesty, might and dominion, and power and authority, before all time and now and forever (unto all the ages of eternity). Amen (so be it).

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Remember, the New Testament writers were answering the questions by the church: Did we miss the rapture? Is this the tribulation? What must I do to be ready to escape these “things” or judgements that were foretold? What are the signs of the rapture and when will Jesus set up His Kingdom?

## 2 Peter 2 AMPC

1 But also [in those days] there arose false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among yourselves, who will subtly and stealthily introduce heretical doctrines (destructive heresies), even denying and disowning the Master Who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many will follow their immoral ways and lascivious doings; because of them the true Way will be maligned and defamed.

### **Lascivious defined:**

feeling or revealing an overt and often offensive sexual desire. lewd, dirty lustful, filthy, naughty, suggestive, indecent, depraved, degenerate, loose;

**Note:** Depraved and Degenerate - Romans 1 speaks to this.

As in the Days of Lot - Jesus told us this in Luke

3 And in their covetousness (lust, greed) they will exploit you with false (cunning) arguments. From of old the sentence [of condemnation] for them has not been idle; their destruction (eternal misery) has not been asleep.

4 For God did not [even] spare angels that sinned, but cast them into hell, delivering them to be kept there in pits of gloom till the judgment and their doom.

5 And He spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven other persons, when He brought a flood upon the world of ungodly [people].

**6 And He condemned to ruin and extinction the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, reducing them to ashes [and thus] set them forth as an example to those who would be ungodly;**

**7 And He rescued righteous Lot, greatly worn out and distressed by the wanton ways of the ungodly and lawless—**

**8 For that just man, living [there] among them, tortured his righteous soul every day with what he saw and heard of [their] unlawful and wicked deeds—**

9 Now if [all these things are true, then be sure] the Lord knows how to rescue the godly out of temptations and trials, and how to keep the ungodly under chastisement until the day of judgment and doom,

10 And particularly those who walk after the flesh and indulge in the lust of polluting passion and scorn and despise authority. Presumptuous [and] daring [self-willed and self-loving creatures]! They scoff at and revile dignitaries (glorious ones) without trembling,

11 Whereas [even] angels, though superior in might and power, do not bring a defaming charge against them before the Lord.

12 But these [people]! Like unreasoning beasts, mere creatures of instinct, born [only] to be captured and destroyed, **railing at things of which they are ignorant,** they shall utterly perish in their [own] corruption [in their destroying they shall surely be destroyed],

13 Being destined to receive [punishment as] the reward of [their] unrighteousness [suffering wrong as the hire for their wrongdoing]. They count it a delight to revel in the daytime [living luxuriously and delicately]. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their [a]deceptions and carousing together [even] as they feast with you.

14 They have eyes full of harlotry, insatiable for sin. They beguile and bait and lure away unstable souls. Their hearts are trained in covetousness (lust, greed), [they are] children of a curse [[b]exposed to cursing]!

15 Forsaking the straight road they have gone astray; they have followed the way of Balaam [the son] of Beor, who loved the reward of wickedness.

16 But he was rebuked for his own transgression when a dumb beast of burden spoke with human voice and checked the prophet's madness.

17 These are springs without water and mists driven along before a tempest, for whom is reserved forever the gloom of darkness.

18 For uttering loud boasts of folly, they beguile and lure with lustful desires of the flesh those who are barely escaping from them who are wrongdoers.

19 They promise them liberty, when they themselves are the slaves of depravity and defilement—for by whatever anyone is made inferior or worse or is overcome, to that [person or thing] he is enslaved.

20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through [the full, personal] knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them and are overcome, their last condition is worse [for them] than the first.

21 For never to have obtained a [full, personal] knowledge of the way of righteousness would have been better for them than, having obtained [such knowledge], to turn back from the holy commandment which was [verbally] delivered to them.

22 There has befallen them the thing spoken of in the true proverb, The dog turns back to his own vomit, and, The sow is washed only to wallow again in the mire.

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**Ezekiel 33:1-9 AMPC**

1 And the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

2 Son of man, speak to your people [the Israelite captives in Babylon] and say to them, When I bring the sword upon a land and the people of the land take a man from among them and make him **their watchman,**

**3 If when he sees the sword coming upon the land, he blows the trumpet and warns the people,**

4 Then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet **and does not take warning,** and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

**5 He heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning shall save his life.**

**6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned,** and the sword comes and takes any one of them, he is taken away in and for his perversity and iniquity, but **his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.** 7 So you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at My mouth and **give them warning from Me.**

8 When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, you shall surely die, **and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way,** that wicked man shall die in his perversity and iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand.

9 But if you warn the wicked to turn from his evil way and he does not turn from his evil way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

Does your pastor, teacher, preacher sound the alarm to what is going on that was prophesied? Do they sound the alarm on what you must do to be ready regarding: sin, judgment, righteousness and the “things” that were foretold/that are coming?

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**Isaiah 56:10-12 AMPC**

**10 [Israel's] watchmen are blind, they are all without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; dreaming, lying down, they love to slumber.**

**11 Yes, the dogs are greedy; they never have enough. And such are the shepherds who cannot understand; they have all turned to their own way, each one to his own gain, from every quarter [one and all].**

**12 Come, say they, We will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink! And tomorrow shall be as this day, a day great beyond measure.**

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