

INSPIRATION, IS THE BIBLE FROM GOD OR MAN?

The evidence clearly declares that God is. The Psalmist wrote, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalms 14:1). The best evidence is from the beauty and complexity of nature. Such beauty could not have just happened. When we view an artistic work, we recognize design and that an artist has been at work. Such complexity could not have just happened. We understand that someone engineered the workings of a watch. Yet, a watch is a mere fraction of the complexity of the universe. Therefore, the Psalmist wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Psalms 19:1). Thus, it is true that God "left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17).

Once we establish the existence of God, that does not necessarily prove that there is any special revelation from God. What is meant by "special revelation" is a book, or something like a book, such as the Bible. Thus, we must give evidence to prove that the Bible is a special revelation of God.

After we establish the Bible is the word of God, that by necessity would exclude any other revelation that claims inspiration of God. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote,

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8-9).

When we prove the Bible is a special revelation of God, we prove the Bible is the only special revelation of God.

The evidences of inspiration are found in two basic categories—internal evidences and external evidences. Internal evidences are proofs found within the Bible. External

evidences are proofs found outside of the Bible. We will examine nine proofs. The first five are internal proofs and the last four are external proofs.

The Bible's Insistent Claims

The Bible is packed full of claims of inspiration. One of the most notable passages is 2 Timothy 3:16-17,

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Also, consider the words of the apostle Peter in 2 Peter 1:20-21,

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

There are many other passages but time and space will not allow (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Ephesians 3:3-5; Galatians 1:12; Hebrews 5:12; Revelation 22:18-19).

The Bible's Scope of Content

Men of all ages, in all cultures, and in all nations have asked the questions of life. The Bible clearly answers these questions and, thus, gives us the scope of its contents.

What is the origin of man?

In Genesis 1:27 Moses answers this question. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

What is the purpose of man?

Wise Solomon answers this question in Ecclesiastes 12:13. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

What is the destiny of man?

This question is answered in Hebrews 9:27. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Also consider the words of Jesus in John 5:28-29.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming,

in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

The Bible's Unity

The Bible is composed of sixty-six books written over a period of sixteen hundred years by more than forty men on one central theme. The theme of the Bible is found in the words of Jesus in John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." The Old Testament points forward to the Savior of mankind while the New Testament points back to the Savior.

The use of prophecies demonstrate the unity of the Bible. For example the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 states, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." That prophecy was written seven hundred years before Jesus Christ was born!

The Bible's Impartiality of its Characters

Great men and even central characters of the Bible are shown to be righteous and yet with terrible sin. Abraham is one example of such character. Abraham is considered to be the father of the faithful. He was so dedicated to God that at the command of God, he was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac through whom the promise of a great nation was given. Yet on another occasion, he and his wife Sarah were going to take matters into their own hands. God had promised them a son and they were too old to bear children. While not trusting in God, Sarah gave her handmaid to her husband to bear a son. Thus, the Bible gives a realistic picture of its principal characters.

The Bible's Scientific Foreknowledge

The Bible is not a science book. However, if the Bible was written by God, whenever and wherever any reference is made to scientific

fact, it must be in agreement. Henry Morris wrote,

"One of the most arresting evidences of the inspiration of the Bible is the great number of scientific truths that have lain hidden within its pages for thirty centuries or more, only to be discovered by man's enterprise within the last few centuries or even years."

An example is found in Isaiah 40:22, "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth..." Columbus is generally attributed with discovering that the earth is round. Yet, this passage was written over two thousand years before Columbus!

The Bible's Circulation

The British in its foreign Bible society publishes one copy of the Bible every three seconds totaling 32,876 Bibles published each day. That figure does not include the International Bible Society, the American Bible Society and other publishers such as Zondervan, Nelson, and Cambridge. A very conservative estimate is that there is a Bible printed every second of every day. Plus, this does not include the many commentaries, word studies, and Bible dictionaries. The Bible is always on the Best Seller's list for it is the most circulated book in history!

The Bible's Translations

The Bible is the most translated book in history. It has been translated over a thousand times. These translations represent over ninety percent of the world's population. Just about anyone can pick up a Bible and read it in their own language. Literary works that have been translated into three or more languages and a million copies printed are considered great literary works. That standard makes the Bible the greatest literary work of all ages.

The Bible's Survival

The Bible has survived through time. There are over thirteen thousand manuscripts or partial manuscripts of the Bible. Four thousand of which are Greek manuscripts dating from the second to the fourth centuries.

The Bible has survived through persecution. Diocletian, a Roman emperor, commanded that the scriptures be burned (303 AD). Yet, just decades later, Eusebius under the dictates of Constantine found fifty Bible in just twenty-five hours. The skeptic Voltaire said the Bible and Christianity would perish within fifty years but he died and the Bible survives. After his death, the Geneva Bible Society used his printing press and his house to produce Bibles.

The Bible has survived through criticism. Bernard Ramm said, "The death keel has sounded a hundred times for the Bible, but the corpse never stays put." The Bible's critics have tried to explain away every aspect of the Bible to destroy its authenticity but the Bible has withstood every attack by its enemies. The Bible is indestructible!

The Bible's Influence

The Bible's influence is seen in literature, speeches, civil laws, politics, and art. An endless number of books, periodicals, and commentaries have been motivated by the Bible. Biblical terms, names, and analogies color our speech. Literally thousands of volumes of art have been stimulated by Biblical themes and characters.

The court has convened. The history of the world has sounded its evidence concerning the inspiration of the Bible. The defense lawyer stands and briefly reviews the arguments and proofs. He summarizes that there is no other such book as the Bible. The jury must decide its verdict. Now, the jury announces its judgment, "The evidence clearly demonstrates that the Bible is the inspired word of God!" ■

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39th Street Church of Christ
15331 East 39th Street
Independence, MO 64055-4240 USA
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by
Chuck Northrop

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