

WHY WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE

The captain of a sailing vessel hired a new sailor who had boasted of his experience at sea. Trusting him, the captain one night placed him in charge of the pilot wheel. "Do you see that star straight ahead? That is the North Star. You are to keep the ship going directly towards it. Understand? If anything goes wrong, call me immediately." "Aye, aye, sir; that I will," was the response. The new "pilot" committed two unpardonable errors. He drank some whisky and then fell asleep. When he awoke he looked frantically for his guiding star. He discovered it at his starboard aft, about 130 degrees off the proper course of the ship. In great excitement he rushed to the captain. "Captain, wake up! Give me a new star to steer by; we've gone past the first one." The captain hurried past the half-drunken sailor and turned the ship in time to avoid crashing on the rocks.

The North Star is the most fixed star in the northern hemisphere. It has been used by navigators during all recorded history for true north. Not until the year 7500, according to astronomers, will another star replace it as the pole star. The Bible claims to be more substantial than the North Star! **"For ever, O Lord, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens."** (Ps. 119:89). But like the undependable sailor, some sceptics imagine that they have "progressed" far beyond the Bible. They say that it is outmoded; that it is far behind our modern society. But they have not been able to find a superior substitute for the Bible.

As in all areas of life, we need an authority in spiritual matters. The Christian

believes that the Bible is the only authority in religion. He holds this view because he believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Let us consider some of the reasons why this is his belief.

I) *THE BIBLE CLAIMS TO BE THE WORD OF GOD*

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16). ". . . holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21).

The Bible is either what it claims to be, or else it is one of the greatest frauds ever known. Which do you believe it is?

II) *IT IS REASONABLE TO BELIEVE THAT GOD WROTE THE BIBLE*

The majority of people believe in a God who is good, wise and loving. Is it not reasonable to believe that such a God would give man a guide to show him how to live on this earth? Surely, God would not be a loving God if He left man to grope in the darkness of earth's jungle of sin and ignorance.

Men would not have written it if they could and could not have written it if they would! Men would not have written it because it exposes them as sinners. Men could not have written it because they could not have made its amazing prophecies. (see point on prophecies)

III) *THE BIBLE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE*

Many different groups and individuals have tried to destroy the Bible. It has been attacked by Jews, Gentiles, heathens, kings, scholars, infidels and popes. If men unaided by God had written it, then men could destroy it. Its indestructibility is evidence of its inspiration.

IV) *THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE*

A tree is tested by its fruit. So the Bible can be tested by its influence. Think of the influence of the Bible on the following:

1. *Slavery.* About half of the people were slaves in the Roman Empire. The influence of the Bible ended slavery.

2. *The position of women.* Women were little better than slaves in the ancient world. Wives could be beaten or divorced for no reason at all. But the Bible reveals the true position of woman by the side of man.

3. *Our laws.* The greatest statesmen and lawmakers have been influenced by the laws of the Bible. Freedom has flourished where the influence of the Bible has been known.

4. *Literature.* The great writings of men such as Milton, Dante, Browning, Tennyson, Scott and Shakespeare abound with Biblical references. Try to imagine the loss to our literature if all such references were removed.

5. *Education.* Many of the greatest centres of learning were founded by Bible-believing men. The Bible has promoted learning and freedom of speech.

6. *Art and Music.* The great paintings of Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and countless other artists were inspired by this Book. The same can be said for the music of such composers as Handel, Bach and Haydn.

No other book has had such an influence on mankind. Why has the Bible been the fountainhead of civilization? Is it not because the eternal God inspired the writing of its pages?

V) *THE UNITY OF THE BIBLE*

Although it is bound within one cover, the Bible is not just one book but a collection of sixty-six books. Forty writers had a part in its composition. Sixteen hundred years passed between the writing of the first and last books. Yet the Bible is united in its purpose, facts, doctrine and story. The harmonious sound of a great symphony orchestra implies the work of a composer. A beautiful structure of steel and

concrete implies the work of an architect. The amazing unity of the Bible implies the work of God.

VI) THE AMAZING PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE

A scoffer was ridiculing the prophecies of the Bible, saying they were all written after the events they claimed to foretell. A Christian replied, "There is one prophecy you'll have to admit was written before its fulfilment." "What's that?", asked the scoffer. ". . . there shall come in the last days scoffers . . ." (2 Pet. 3:3), was the reply.

But this scoffer was wrong in his argument. There is historical evidence that the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek 280 years before Christ. Thus the many prophecies made in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament could not possibly have been written after their fulfilment.

Twenty-five prophecies, written in the Old Testament from 500 to 1,000 years before their fulfilment, were all fulfilled literally in one twenty-four hour period covering Christ's last sufferings. Many of these predictions were fulfilled by pagans who knew nothing of them, or by powerful foes of Christ who would not knowingly fulfil one verse of Scripture concerning Jesus of Nazareth.

1. **Christ was to be sold for thirty pieces of silver.** Zech. 11:12; Matt. 26:14-15.
2. **He was to be betrayed by a friend.** Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Matt. 26:47-50.
3. **The money obtained was to be cast to the potter.** Zech. 11:13; Matt 27:3-10.
4. **His disciples were to forsake Him.** Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:56; Mark 14:27.
5. **He was to be accused by false witnesses.** Ps. 35:11; Ps. 109:2; Matt. 26:59,60.
6. **Jesus' face was to be smitten and spat upon.** Isa. 50:6; Matt. 26:67
7. **He was to be dumb before His accusers.** Isa. 53:7; Matt. 27:12-14.
8. **He was to be wounded and bruised.** Isa. 53:5; Matt. 27:26.
9. **He would die under judicial sentence.** Isa. 53:8; Matt. 27:1-26.
10. **His hands and feet were to be pierced.** Ps. 22:16; Lk. 23:33; Jn. 20:25.
11. **He was to be crucified with thieves.** Isa. 53:12; Mark 15:27,28.
12. **He was to pray for His persecutors.** Ps. 109:25; Isa. 53:12; Lk. 23:34.
13. **The people were to shake their heads at the Crucified One.** Ps. 22:7; Ps. 109:25; Matt. 27:39.
14. **The people were to ridicule Him.** Ps. 22:7,8; Matt. 27:42,43.
15. **The people were to be astonished.** Ps. 22:17; Isa. 52:14; Lk. 23:35.
16. **His garments were to be parted and lots cast for His vesture.** Ps. 22:18; Jn. 19:24.
17. **He was to cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"** Ps. 22:1; Matt. 27:46.
18. **They were to give Him gall and vinegar.** Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:34; Jn 19:29, 30.
19. **He was to commit Himself to God.** Ps. 31:5; Luke 23:46.
20. **His friends were to stand afar off.** Ps. 38:22 Luke 23:39.
21. **His bones were not to be broken.** Ps. 34:20; John 19:33,36.
22. **His side was to be pierced.** Zech. 12:10; John 19:34,37.
23. **His heart was to be broken.** Ps. 22;14; John 19:34.
24. **Darkness was to cover the land.** Amos 8:9 Matt. 27:45.
25. **He was to be buried in a rich man's tomb.** Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60.

It has been estimated that the chance of all these prophecies happening together by accident is one in 33,000,000. And these are only 25 out of about 333 prophecies made about Christ!!

The Bible contains many prophecies which were fulfilled in history. Here are a few examples: (1) **The destruction of the great city of Tyre.** Ezek. 26:3-14. (2) **Great slaughter to take place in Sidon.** Ezek. 28:20-23. (3) **Egypt no longer to be a world**

power. Ezek. 29:12-15. (4) Babylon to be destroyed. Isa. 13:19-21. (5) The history of the Jews foretold. Deut. 28:37; 49-68. Isa. 53:1-3; Hosea 3:4.

VII) THE BIBLE IS CREDIBLE

1. It is historically accurate. Archaeological studies are continually confirming the truth of the Bible. Dr. Nelson Glueck, distinguished Jewish archaeologist said "no archaeological discovery has ever been made that contradicts or controverts historical statements in Scripture."

2. It is scientifically accurate. When someone suggests a contradiction between the Bible and science, ask two questions: 1. Does the Bible really teach this? 2. Does science really teach this?

Conclusion: Many more reasons could be given for faith in the Bible. Daily reading, combined with prayer, will reveal the inspiration of the Bible to each individual.

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