

Divine Origin of the Bible

I was walking one day in the small town of Bradley Beach, NJ and passed an enclosed bookstand on the sidewalk. Two attractively covered books immediately caught my eye. One was titled, "Talk Thru the Old Testament," and the other, "Talk Thru Bible Personalities." A sign was posted, "No need to return books." I thought to myself these books are a gift from our Almighty Father to little ole me. The first book began with an introduction to the Bible and I want to share some of the key points from just those four pages. I would like to start with a scripture which is a quote from Christ our Lord Himself: Matt 4:1-4

1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

There are two fundamental sources of human knowledge: reason and experience. Both are essential to our understanding of the world we live in but both are limited. We are left with crucial unanswered questions often raised such as Where did I come from? Where am I going? Is there any purpose to my existence? Where is history going? Unless there is a third source of knowledge, a source that carries us beyond the limits of reason and experience, there is no hope of finding answers to these basic issues of significance.

The Bible claims to provide this third source of knowledge. Through the Bible we have direct access to divine revelation from a Personal Being Who created all things and is not subject to our limitations as fragile, finite creatures. Through His inspired word Almighty God has revealed Himself and His ways to man.

The Scriptures claim to be completely divine and completely human. God joined with sinful humanity to produce the sinless living Word (Christ) and in a similar sense joined with humanity to produce the inspired written Word (Holy Scripture). The writing styles, personalities, and vocabularies of the biblical writers are distinct, but their collective work is the Word of God.

This process of inspiration is best described by Peter in 2 Pet 1:21

21: 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.

And by Paul in 2 Tim 3: 15-17:

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

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

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

One of many evidences of the Bible's divine origin is uniqueness. Bible means simply, "The Book," but in actuality is comprised of many books in perfect unity. The Bible is a progressive, unified, and self-consistent portrait of God's revelation centering on the person and work of Christ. Produced over a time span of about fifteen hundred years, the Bible traces redemption from Genesis all the way through to the last book in the Bible, Revelation. Century after century men added to this book, unaware for the most part of another author's writings. They often were Spirit inspired as they wrote down words having divine implications they simply could not understand at that time. Peter again states:

1 Pet 1:10-12

10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into..

The backgrounds of more than forty authors of the Bible could not be more diverse. Some like Moses, Isaiah, Paul and Luke were highly educated while others were unschooled fishermen, carpenters, and farmers. The Bible contains writings of freeman and slave, landholders and poor, kings, prophets, musicians, scribes, a physician, a tentmaker, and a tax collector. The Bible was written in the wildernesses, in palaces, prisons, in times of peace and war and its divine library contains prophecy, history, law, poetry, hymns, wisdom literature, stories, biography, letters, parables, philosophy, drama and sermons. Although the writing styles and themes of the Bible are diverse, it is all interwoven into a unified whole.

The Bible is in a fine state of preservation despite persecution, perversion, criticism, abuse and time. The Bible remains by far the most popular book in the world. Portions of the Bible have been translated in over seventeen hundred languages and it has been copied and circulated more extensively than any other literary work. The quality, quantity, and antiquity of its manuscripts have held up to recent archaeological, historical and linguistic evidences which have refuted destructive critical theories in favor of the trustworthiness of Biblical scripture.

Isa 40:8: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Over a quarter of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written and these prophecies stand alone in their detail and accuracy from the divine to the demonic, from eternity past to eternity future. The Bible is locked into space and time in such a way that we can know, with accuracy, where and when its events took place and what signs will be shown before the fulfillment of the

prophecies yet to be accomplished. Here are just three examples of how the Scriptures point to accurate historical time.

Jer 1:1-3:

1 The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:

2 To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

Ezek 1:1-3:

1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

2 In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity,

3 The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.

Luke 3:1-6

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; 4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

God is able to control all events and caused His promises and prophecies to be written hundreds of years before they were fulfilled in Christ. Our Heavenly Father knew even before the foundation of the world that His Son would have to come to earth. He foretold the events of His birth, life, death, resurrection and future coming to furnish firm evidence for us on which to base our belief. Some scholars estimate that there are more than 300 Messianic prophecies in the Bible's Old Testament. The riches of divine revelation embodied in Christ are as measureless as the oceans.

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Luke 18:31 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold , we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

Matt 26:56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

Acts 3:18 – But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

No book other than the Bible has so profoundly influenced the culture and the history of the world. The Bible has been a part of molding and dominating the art, music, morality, law, politics, philosophy and literature of Western civilization. It has not only changed history, but has also changed millions of lives. The Bible's witness to salvation through obedience in Christ has provided hope and purpose for all who have seized its perpetual relevance.

The Bible was designed to change lives in a radical way and is far from being bound culturally or regionally. We must not only respond intellectually to its message but be open to change morally and have a willingness to understand that this is the loving revelation of Almighty God which stands forever.

Heb 4:12-16

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

His word requires our response but many have difficulty in putting the pieces of the Bible together. It is easy to get lost in the legal codes of Leviticus, Deuteronomy and the Old Testament prophets. Without a broad overview, one could miss the harmony, grandeur, and significance of the Bible in its totality. If we limit ourselves to a snippet here and there instead of pursuing a systematic plan of approach to read the Bible through on a regular basis, we will not be able to appreciate the riches of this divine plan of salvation.

Isa 46:9-11

9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, **My counsel shall stand**, and I will do all my pleasure: 11 Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: **yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.**

The dove Noah released from the ark soared across the seas that engulfed the world, found no land, and sought the refuge of the ark. So, man has departed from the truth of the Bible, using wings of independence to seek distant horizons. But like the dove, through the years many have returned to the changeless certainty of God's word following years of aimless flight. As one generation begins to drift from the gospel, the following generation finds its worth anew, clinging to its teachings as though they were the first to discover them.

As the rainbow does not distinguish between the eye of a poor man or a king, the Bible draws people irresistibly to its message. Like the rainbow, the colors of the Bible are many and its spectrum wide, it is one graceful arch of hope over a storm-darkened planet, varied in its appeal and singular in its beauty.

Biblical promises are the same for all who behold them, if only they have the eyes to see.

All Scriptures KJV unless otherwise noted

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