

By Winkie Pratney

The Bible isn't like any other book that's ever been written. The claims of the Bible are unlike any other book - it's not a human book! God called His Word living. But unless you have a rock-solid commitment to truth, the Bible won't change your life - it will only be so many words in a sea of words.

Many of the Eastern thought forms use Scripture. They use it to capture people's hearts. That's because the Bible is so powerful you can't ignore it. God has built life into His Word, and all of the strong cults rip it off. They steal bites out of the Bible and use it. They use the truth of it to try, to justify the lies they tell. Just the fact that pieces taken out of context are powerful enough to draw men's hearts should tell you what the whole Word, used under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, can do!

Some Credentials

Here are some facts that will be valuable for anyone with an open heart. Now, you don't have to throw your mind away in order to believe these facts, but if you don't want to believe, nothing will convince you. Mark Twain said, "It's not the things I don't understand in the Bible that bother me, it's the things I do understand!" This accurate insight exposes the real reason most people are afraid to study the Scriptures. They're afraid they might meet the Author, and they know they're not ready to do that...

So what are this book's credentials? I could say to you, "I've just written a book and it's the Word of God. It's a great book... took me a whole year to write it." And you would have every right to say, "Prove it!" In the various world religions, there are 30 or 40 books, each one claiming to be a superior revelation. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:35)

The Bible doesn't attempt to defend its inspiration. You won't find any verse that says, "This book is really true, so you better believe it!" But here is an interesting thing: Genesis opens with the words, "God said" nine times in the first chapter. The statement, "Thus says the Lord" appears 23 times in the last Old Testament book Malachi. So you have "God says" from Genesis to Malachi. "The Lord spoke" appears 560 times in the first five books of the Bible and at least 3800 times in the

whole of the Old Testament! Isaiah claims at least 40 times that his message came directly from the Lord; Ezekiel, 60 times; and Jeremiah, 100 times! And the Lord Jesus quoted from at least 24 different Old Testament books - that's right, He just quoted.

In the mid-1700s Voltaire, one of the most influential writers of his day, held a copy of the Bible in his hand and stated that within 100 years from his time, Christianity would be swept from existence and would pass into history. What's hilarious is that merely 50 years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society used his house and press to print and distribute stacks of Bibles! They even made his house their headquarters! God has an incredible sense of humor!

Could You Write The Bible?

Say you were going to write a book, and this was how you had to write it: For a start find 40 different writers - totally different writers. Get some who are highly educated, even doctors - then get some farmers. Go dig a guy off a ranch somewhere and say, "I'd like you to help me write a book." Then find some fishermen. Go down to the wharf and find a couple of guys from San Francisco and say, "Hey! listen help me write a book." And they say, "Sure, fine... we'll help you." And then you get all of them to write on the following things: religion, poetry, ethics, science, philosophy, the creation of the universe and where it's going - and ask them to throw in a few things about where they think it will all end.

Next, you need to collect all that information, and then... oh, by the way, you have to separate these people so they can't communicate by phone or telegraph... only possibly word of mouth, passed down over the years. Ah yes, years... you collect all this stuff over about one and a half thousand years, and compile the whole thing in one book. What would you have? I know what you'd have - you'd have the most motley junk you've ever seen in your life, with people totally contradicting each other! I suggest you take a biology textbook from 60 years ago, and compare it with one today. And that's just 60 years! But that's not what you have when you read your Bible. The more you read this book, the more you see the incredible unity of it. Because the more you get into it, the more incredibly detailed it is, and you find there are not 40 people who wrote it, but One Person.

The Bible: Your Science Book

The Bible is scientifically accurate. The God of the Bible is the God who created the universe. True science and Scripture will always agree - they both have the same Author! No statement in the Scriptures is scientifically incorrect. Science can tabulate the "what," analyze the "how," and probe for the "why," but it can't tell us the "where from," nor the reason for which the universe exists. It can't say who you are or why you are here. It can tell us what we're able to do, but not what we ought to do.

At the same time the Bible was written, people thought the world was flat and held up by three elephants. Big elephants. Someone asked, "What holds the world up?" Another said, "Three elephants." Then someone ventured to ask, "And what holds up the elephants?" Someone answered, "A big tortoise." And so the early sciences grew.

Now, listen to what God said. Remember, this wasn't written in the last hundred years, or even the last thousand. This comes from over 2500 years ago... "Have you not known? Have you not heard? ... Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sits upon the circle of the earth." (Isaiah 40:21-22) The word "circle" is the word "sphere" in Hebrew. Also, "He stretches out the north over empty space, and hangs the earth on nothing." (Job 26:7) Well, so much for elephants!

There are many other astounding scientific facts in Scripture, presented centuries before it became part of man's "knowledge."

Argument Melts Down

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up." (II Pet. 3:10) This very verse was used nearly a century ago to prove that the Bible couldn't have been divinely inspired because, "How could there be a fire big enough to burn the whole world? Silly fisherman!" It took over two more generations for science to catch up to what God had spoken through Peter, that an atomic reaction could actually melt the basic building blocks of matter itself. God was prophesying how the world would end.

In fact, two verses later we find these words, "...the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!" (vs. 12) Do you know what the word "destroy" is? It's a Greek word that literally means to untie. That's an atomic physics statement from a fisherman! These and countless other examples show us how the Lord has hidden unsurpassed knowledge and wisdom in His Word.

Lots Of Lucky Guesses?

If there's one thing the Bible dares to do, that no other book in the world does, it's to accurately predict the future. God can arrange the situations and circumstances of history to bring about patterns laid down before the foundation of the world. The outline of many of these patterns is revealed in the Bible.

There are about 3,856 verses directly or indirectly concerned with prophecy in Scripture - about one verse in six tells of future events! God's challenge to the world is "Prove Me now - I am the Lord... I will speak, and the word that I speak shall come to pass." (See Jer. 28:9; Ezek. 12:25, 24:14) Buddhists, Confucianists, and Muslims have their own sacred writings, but in them the element of prophecy is obviously absent. The destruction of Tyre, the invasion of Jerusalem, the fall of Babylon and Rome - each were accurately predicted in the Bible and fulfilled to the smallest details.

In the brief life of Jesus alone we see over 300 fulfilled prophecies. The odds that these would all coincide by accident in one person are laughable. By the laws of chance, the conservative odds of even just 48 of those prophecies being fulfilled by one man are one in 10¹⁵⁷. (That's 1 followed by 157 zeros!!!) Let me try to give you an idea of how immense this number is.

We'll take a very small object, let's say an electron. (Electrons are so small that if you lined them up, it would take 2½ quadrillion of them to equal one inch.) Now let's go back to our figure of 10¹⁵⁷. If you tried to put this many electrons into a big pile, it would be 10,000,000,000 times larger than the universe as we know it - which scientists calculate to be 6,000,000,000 light-years across. (A light-year is the distance that light will travel in one year, moving at the speed of 186,000 miles per second.)

Now, take just one electron out and color it red. Stir it back into this pile for a hundred thousand years with all the others. Then blindfold a man and send him in to pick it out - first time! Impossible? These would be the same odds that one man would live and die according to only 48 of the prophecies about the Messiah, if it were only an accident. The Scriptures specifically predict events and happenings that are as modern as tomorrow's news release.

No Other Conclusion

You can put any test you like on this book and nothing is even in the same category, not even in the same class. It's not just a book - it is God who has spoken in history, and that's why He says that His word is "living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12) Only the 66 books of the Scriptures bear this divine seal. No other work of man in any language even faintly resembles the intricate structure and design of the Bible. The fact remains - only an infinite mind could have devised this Book of books.

The Bible is a book with a universal message for all men. It's the only volume that a child and scholar may find equal delight in. Its simple, life-related principles can work in any country,

transcending barriers of culture and race to bring peace, love, joy, and forgiveness. Only the Bible can make bad men good inside, transforming the rebel into the saint.

The greatest proof of the Bible is the difference its message can make in your life. If you haven't done so - will you ask God the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of His power to your heart through its pages? But pray honestly, "God, I don't know if this is Your Word or not, but if it is and You can help me, please show Yourself to me as I read," and God will meet you in a living demonstration of His reality.

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