

# **The Phenomenon Of The Bible**

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Skeptics and unbelievers have used their freedom of speech to say that the Bible is just a collection of foolish myths and ancient tales and ridicule those of us who contend that the Bible is God's complete and final revelation to the human race. Their railings and false accusations have caused many to shrink back from making any bold claims as to faith in the Bible as God's Holy Word. Believers must take the offensive and show incontestable evidence that support our faith in the Holy Scriptures. The unique nature of the Bible demands our attention and eventually will demand an explanation from us.

## **The Moral Purity of the Bible**

The uniqueness of the Bible is seen in many ways. I suggest first of all in the purity of its moral and ethical teaching. Ev-erywhere in the Bible righteousness is commended and sin condemned. Even the heroes of the Bible such as Abraham, David, and Peter are condemned without hesitation when they fell short of the righteousness of God.

Not only that, but the Bible always demands true righteousness of heart, not just the outward appearance of righteousness. See Psa. 51:7; Isa. 1:10-17, and Matt. 5:21-48. Moreover, the Bible does not demand righteousness for traditional or political reasons, but always bases its demand for righteousness on man's relationship to the Holy God who created him.

The moral purity of the Bible is all the more striking when it is compared with the moral condition of the rest of the world at the time the Bible was given. The Egyptians, among whom the Israelites lived as slaves for 400 years, did not even have a word for "sin" in their language. They had words for "mistakes" and "errors," but they simply lacked the understanding necessary to see themselves as sinners. And the Canaanites, the people among whom the Israelites lived for the next 1,000 years, had sunk to the very depths of immorality. They had actually made prostitution a part of their religion. But in the midst of such a culture the Bible proclaimed, "*Thou shalt not commit adultery*" (Ex. 20:14). The presence of such a high moral standard demands an explanation. Clearly it did not come from people who surrounded the Israelites. And there is no reason to think that the Israelites themselves invited such moral purity. Their whole history was one of apostasy from the moral standards of the Bible. There is only one sufficient explanation for the unique moral purity of the Bible. There is an explanation given in the Bible itself. The word of God reveals the moral standard of God and not the morality of men.

## **The Accuracy of The Bible**

Another characteristic which must be evident if we are to believe in the inspiration of the Bible is its historical accuracy. Critics of the Bible constantly portray it as nothing more than an unreliable book of legends and fables. But the fact is, the fundamental trustworthiness of the Bible with regards to its account of the history of the Israelite people and the events of the New Testament has been proved over and over by the careful work of some of the most eminent archeologists and historians in the world.

Some examples of Biblical events confirmed by the work of archeologists include the existence of the Hittite empire, Ex. 31:7 (skeptics used to deny such a nation existed); the reign of Belshazzar in Babylon, Dan. 5:1 (again skeptics used to deny he ever lived); the digging of a water tunnel by Hezekiah in Babylon (2 Kings 20:20 (the tunnel itself has been discovered) Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, 2 Kings 18:13 (Sennacherib's own account has been dug up).

Of course critics of the Bible still find things to object to and will continue to dispute the trustworthiness of the Bible simply because the stories of the bible will never agree with how they, as unbelievers, think things must have happened. But the fact remains that the Bible remains unshaken by the criticisms, and such unworthiness begs an explanation. What explanation to you give?

### **The Unity Of The Bible**

A third area in which the uniqueness of the Bible is seen is by its structure and unity. It is not surprising for a book written by a single man, or even a small group of men, to exhibit a carefully planned unity. But when a book is written by forty different men over a period of 1400 years exhibits such a unified structure, we must ask, how can it be.

The Bible is divided into two parts, the Old and New Testaments, with each corresponding perfectly to the other. The New Testament was predicted in the Old (Jer. 31:31). The Old Testaments contains a promise of salvation. The New contains the fulfillment of that promise.

The Bible begins with the story of man in fellowship with God and enjoying the blessings of God in the Garden of Eden. But man's sin separates him from God, and he is cast out of the garden. The Bible continues to tell of man's inability to free himself from sin and the miserable state he finds himself in, separated from God. Then it tells of God's announcement to Abraham of His intention to turn his descendants into a great nation, and through them to work out His plan for bringing men back into His fellowship and blessing.

From this point on the Bible tells the story of the nation of Israel, how God took her, gave her laws, and prophets in preparation for, and pointing to the day of salvation — the day the promise of Abraham would be fulfilled. Finally, we come to the New Testament and to Jesus, the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, the promised Savior and King. The story of the Bible comes to a climax as Jesus offers Himself on the cross as a sacrifice for man's sins, making it possible for man to be forgiven of his sins and restored to fellowship with God. The Bible then concludes with the promise that those who believe in Jesus and submit to His commands will be in heaven with Him.

That forty different men, writing over a period of 1400 years, could accidentally produce such a story defies human reasoning. There must be another explanation. There must have been one mind behind all their minds and guiding them. And indeed the Bible tells us that mind was the mind of God. "*Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*" (2 Pet. 1:21).

### **The Bible's Effect Upon Man**

The uniqueness of the Bible can be seen in the effect it has upon the hearts of men. Many great works of literature have stirred the imagination of men for some good and evil. But no work has moved so many as the Bible. And no work has had such profound effect for good on the hearts of men, turning us away from sin, and inspiring us with the noblest thoughts we can dare to think. We believe the unique ability of the Bible to penetrate to the very soul of man is powerful testimony that its authority was none other than the God Who created man, and knows what is in man,.

The scriptures thoroughly furnish us unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17). They contain all that God wants us to know, all that He would have us believe and all He would have us be. That which the Scriptures do not furnish is not a part of every good work, and cannot

contribute to man's perfection. That which human wisdom supplies in religion is not a good work; if it was it would be supplied in the Bible.

We believe that the Bible is the unerring Word of God. As a complete and perfect revelation, it demands that we search our hearts and lives, and test our attitude toward that which we believe to be truth. If we are unwilling for the Bible to answer every question, solve every problem, resolve every issue and settle every doubt, then we do not accept it as a perfect revelation and sufficient guide.

If we have the proper attitude toward God's word, we will rule out of our teaching every human doctrine, our own wisdom and judgment, and confine our activities to what is plainly revealed. We will keep our worship and services unadulterated by innovations that men introduce without divine authority.

When we teach the commandments of men our religion is vain. Jesus said, "*But in vain they do worship me teaching for doctrine the commandments of men*" (Matt. 15:9). We depart from the divine pattern, disrespect the realm of God's silence and become guilty of the sin of presumption.

What more could we want than to be guided completely in every good work that God has authorized? The Bible contains all of this! Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into "*all truth*" (John 16:13). When the Holy Spirit finished His work, and the sacred canon of scripture was closed, the work of revealing God's mind and man's duty was finished. All the truth that had to do with men's salvation was finished. We must "*contend earnestly for the faith once delivered*" (Jude 3).

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