

The Inspiration of the Bible

We are so blessed to have the Word of God! While there is always a need to have right understanding of the Bible, at least we can *get* Bibles easily. Especially with growing technology, the Bible and Bible teaching is readily available. However, this was not always so. Amos pointed this out back in *his* day.

Amos 8:11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, **not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:**

Within the first 450 years of Christianity, churches were started, went through persecution, and came under the umbrella of the state. For the *next* 1000 years, the Bible seemed to take a back seat in the churches. It is always pointed out that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Here is the point: when the church had the most *political* power and the least *Bible*, its power corrupted the church. In the West, the church thought it was finally able to subdue the Eastern churches. Due to attacks from the Western Roman Church, the Eastern Roman Empire became weak and fell prey to Islam. The West thought this was a victory, but the unexpected result was for Eastern scholarship to flee to the West. The West, which had neglected the Bible for so long, was now exposed to the original text of the Bible instead of using a faulty Latin translation. We know this as the Renaissance where there was an explosion of learning. What is not so widely known was how this released great interest in the Biblical texts, also. From the Reformation in the 1500s to Fundamentalism of the 1900s, even though we all might be imperfect, the emphasis on the Bible became the spiritual empowerment of the churches. Finally, instead of trying to create a church with worldly power, the churches would now try to bring the Kingdom of God to men's hearts.

Because of the renewed interest in

the Bible during this time, we need to pay earnest heed to 1Peter 3:15-16.

1Pe 3:15-16 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

Specifically, when we give an answer for the hope that we have in Christ, can we *justify* that answer with the Bible? This calls for the ability to defend the Bible as the Word of God, which is what this sermon is about. Many times, people have a general respect for the Bible. As someone gets *interested* in the Bible, it occurs to them that they need to justify that the Bible actually *is* the very Word of God.

We know that the Bible has the greatest truth. With every technical advancement from the Gutenberg press in the 1400s, to the radio, television, the internet, and now to artificial intelligence we have found not only increasing voices but also the increasing corruption of so many voices. We also know that the first recorded temptation Satan gave to man was to twist and doubt the Word of God. As we turn to the Bible, we need to know that it is not just interesting, not just on the same level of other religious texts, not just for you to guess which parts are true, but that it is *all* true and preserved by the mighty hand of God.

If our lives are going to be built upon a book, we had better make sure of that book. If the Bible is not God's inspired Word then it is as valuable as Readers Digest or Dear Abby. Let's look at what we mean when we say that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

1. Significantly different from other "scriptures" -

Many people claim that their

"scriptures" are inspired.

If I told you that a man came into the room carrying an object that had a stem, leaves, and was giving off an aroma that filled the room, would you have enough information to go on to tell me whether the man was carrying a flower or if he was smoking a pipe? If I added on one significant detail — that the object he had had petals — you would know that he was carrying a flower. What makes the difference is a significant detail — the petals.

If I handed you a book and told you that it was written with a certain cadence and rhythm, it made pronouncements about God, it made statements that were attributed to God, and it talked about good and evil, I could be describing the Bible, the Book of Mormon, or the Koran. I would have to add on some kind of significant detail to distinguish the Bible from all other books that had an earthly origin. There would have to be enough significant details to demonstrate that the Bible certainly has an intelligent and powerful source that is worthy of trust.

There are some things in the Bible that the doubters claim they can account for as just stuff that happens in the world. They claim it is not miraculous. For instance, sometimes you win wars and sometimes you lose them. To them, a war won against all odds does not necessarily count as a miracle. However, if a war was won with ten plagues in a row, the parting of a sea, and done for a nation of slaves, then I would have to say the only way to account for that was a miracle. All kinds of false scriptures begin with, "Thus saith the Lord." Just saying that doesn't make it necessarily so. All writings claiming to be scripture would like to add on the imprimatur of a divine utterance. A mere conglomeration of pious statements can be put together by accident having no rhyme or reason. You could put the DNA of a frog and a man into a blender and pour it out into a glass and you wouldn't have a frogman jump out. To have significance, they would have to be able to be put together by design.

The Book of Mormon, the Koran, and all other wannabe scripture are devoid of the divine design of God. Once you strip away the pious sounding statements, there is nothing left that would indicate the touch of the heavenly hand of God.

When you get into a car and start it up, you don't have to understand how carburetors and fuel injectors work. You don't have to understand how generators and alternators work. You don't have to understand how electronic modules or points and condensers work. You just turn the key, shift into gear and the right pedal is for *giddyup* or go, and the left pedal is for *whoa* or stop. You don't have to understand every detail to put your trust in the God of the Bible, you just have to understand enough of the *significant* details. Significant details are those details that demonstrate that only God could have been the Author.

You may reject the obvious conclusion of the details, but you cannot deny the details. You cannot deny the divine origin of the Bible. You cannot deny the power of creation. You cannot deny our need for the love of God. Now, here is where faith comes in. Are you willing to put your trust in some other religious text that *sounds* like the Bible and then end up dying in your sins? Or, are you willing to accept the testimony of an obviously inspired Word that God loves you and exercised His eternal power to take the punishment of your sins?

2. The Bible claims to be given by inspiration -

When men wrote the Bible, they set God's Word down in the context of life. There were not just rules, regulation, and poetry. It recorded the reality of human experience interacting with God. There was argumentation given. But all of it was given by inspiration.

2Sam 23:1-2 Now these *be* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who was* raised up on high, the

anointed of the God of Jacob,
and the sweet psalmist of Israel,
said,

2 The Spirit of the LORD spake
by me, and his word *was* in my
tongue.

2Pet 1:19-21 We have also a
more sure word of prophecy;
whereunto ye do well that ye take
heed, as unto a light that shineth
in a dark place, until the day
dawn, and the day star arise in
your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no
prophecy of the scripture is of
any private interpretation.

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 Ghost.

2Tim 3:16 All scripture *is* given
by inspiration of God, and *is*
profitable for doctrine, for
reproof, for correction, for
instruction in righteousness:

We have to ask, though, what we
even *mean* by *inspiration*. Many times
artists and authors will talk about what
they saw, heard, or experienced *inspired*
them. That is a lesser use of the word,
but if you are into theology, *inspiration*
has a greater use. I will only use the
word *inspiration* in the greater way. The
phrase "inspiration of God" comes from
a Greek word that means *God breathed*.
When man was first created he was just
a pile of chemicals and then God
breathed into him and he became alive as
a person. When we refer to the
Scriptures as inspired we mean that God
breathed His Word into man so that
every word of the Bible was
superintended by God to be accurate,
prophetic, significant. Inspiration, for me
as a preacher, is a reserved word in
theology. The trouble is how you define
inspiration. Some have tried to weaken it
by defining it down. All of these
examples are wrong (except the last
one).

- Natural Inspiration - every great poet is inspired, and every person who has brought a helpful message for mankind is as much a prophet of God as were the Bible writers. This eliminates the supernatural and reduces the Biblical writings to the level of the secular, making them merely human productions to be criticized, and mutilated at will. Natural inspiration is no inspiration at all.
- Degrees of Inspiration - which places different values on portions of Scripture.
- Illumination - writers of the Bible were inspired in the same sense in which Christians of all ages have been inspired; that is the average Christian of today is as much inspired as was Moses or Paul or any Biblical writer. Looking at what preachers across numerous doctrinal persuasions say today, we would be in serious trouble if equal illumination was true.
- Inspired Concepts - God gave thoughts to the writers, and permitted them years afterwards in some cases to express these thoughts in their own words as they might remember them. This view allows for all kinds of errors to be injected into the Word of God.
- Partial Inspiration - the Bible is inspired in spots, "The Bible contains the Word of God." These teachers do not agree as to what portions are and what portions are not inspired. The only thing this view inspires is doubt.
- Occasional Inspiration - human reason and errors are so mixed with the divine that it would be difficult to know what really is the Word of God.
- Plenary, Verbal Inspiration (what we believe) - The word "plenary" means full, complete, entire, extending to every part. Plenary Inspiration teaches that every part of the Bible is inspired, and equally inspired. "Verbal" means pertaining to words. It is the doctrine of superintendence,

or guidance; that is, God so guided in the writing of the books of the Bible that the words are His words in the style of the writers.

— b a s e d o n
<https://biblelineministries.org/false-theories-of-inspiration/>

You can see how important this is. There is a benefit to being able to establish that every word of the Bible is just as God wants it to be. There are definitely hard parts to the Bible. Some point out *supposed* contradictions. Many of them are just people who think they are smarter than they are and their contradictions are easy to dismiss. Others take a little more study. Sometimes you see a supposed contradiction that you just can't figure out. Over time, as you continue to study, you will be surprised how much they are cleared up. Bible study also involves taking what lessons you *can* learn and applying them, which will keep you quite busy. It is as though God in His own timing will reveal the depths of His Word to us as well some surprises about things we never thought we would get.

This is the power of knowing that every word of the Bible is inspired. We might have more than enough to go on to know this, but we can be confident that the passages that escape us are inspired also.

In defending the doctrine of the resurrection to the Sadducees, Jesus quoted from Exodus 3:6, "I *am* the God of Abraham." In this response Jesus' entire argument hinged on the words "I am...." He [then] elaborated: "God is not the God of the dead but of the living." If the words of the Old Testament were not inspired, His argument was useless; but if the very words of the Old Testament were actually inspired, then His argument carried enormous weight. In fact, Jesus' argument hinges on the *present tense* of the statement

Matt 5:17-18 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

The term ["jot"] refers to [a] Hebrew letter...which looks like an apostrophe. The ["tittle" or stroke of the pen] refers to the minute distinction between two Hebrew letters. An equivalent would be the distinction between an O and a Q. Only the little "tail" distinguishes the Q from the O. Jesus emphasized that all the details of the Old Testament writings would be fulfilled down to the very letter.

— Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*

Jesus, by His endorsement of the Old Testament, was also endorsing it as inspired.

3. The argument for inspiration -

The Bible is significantly different than other religious texts because it has God for Its Author. The Bible claims that every word is inspired of God. We can prove that it is inspired of God.

There are those who have a false logic about God that amounts to superstition. They will follow the writings of all religions just in case any of them are right. This was the case Paul dealt with in Athens.

Acts 17:22-23 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, *Ye* men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE

UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

The Athenians had an altar for anyone's god. For good measure, if there was anyone's god they didn't know about, they had an altar and labeled it the UNKNOWN GOD for good measure. God is not just one among many. He is the *only* One who is God. This is the definition of superstition. It is surprising how many young, and also not so young, Christians hold to superstitious values. They will also treat the Bible as a predictor of good or bad luck.

- Bibliomancy: some randomly open the Bible to find guidance or predict the future
- Bible as a Talisman: some carry the Bible or place it in specific locations to ward off evil spirits or bring good luck.
- Bible Verses as Charms: some write down specific Bible verses and carry them, believing they have protective or luck-bringing powers.
- Divine Punishment and Blessings: some people interpret natural disasters or personal misfortunes as direct punishment or rewards from God, often based on selective Bible verses.

We have actual intellectual argumentation to rationally justify our confidence that the Bible is the Word of God. We don't just *assume* that the Bible is inspired *just because* it says it is. The Bible saying that it is inspired is the *starting point*. Now we have to do the work.

There are many proofs about the inspiration of the Bible so I will give my favorite *significant* differences between the Bible and any other religious text.

Biblical accuracy

The Bible is an accurately historical book, not a book of history, just as a biography is not a history book but is historical. It is not a historical novel,

which is a novel using a historical period or event as its backdrop. It is an account of God's work of salvation from the fall of the first Adam to the eternal reign of the second Adam. It covers past present and future history because it is His story. It does not favor a hero or a nation like some ancient king might do to make a monument to himself. It is critical from God's perspective of all who sin, all who repent, all who succeed, and all who fail. Modernists have tried to judge the historical accuracy of the Bible, but have failed.

Scientific accuracy

The Bible is a scientific book, not science textbook. It does not present a set of experiments but its scientific statements can be verified with science. For example:

Job 26:7 He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing.

Isa 40:22 *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

Prophetic accuracy

Prophecy is the most important proof. There are enough prophecies that are hard to understand, but all we need are the easy ones. They were written over the course of 1200 years. They were written by men who had no ability to confer with each other and yet are so amazingly consistent with each other. There is no way for the prophets to have gotten lucky enough to have guessed the future. They are clear and don't have to be interpreted like the enigmatic sayings of Nostradamus. Prophecy can only be explained by God's inspiration.

There are about 300 prophecies just concerning Christ alone in the Old Testament. They cover things like the

virgin birth, Christ's birth in Bethlehem, His suffering and crucifixion, His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and His resurrection.

My favorite example is Psalm 22. I teach this one often enough so people become familiar with it.

Ps 22:1-31 To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.

My God, my God,
why hast thou
forsaken me? *why
art thou so far
from helping me,
and from the
words of my
roaring?*

6 But I *am* a worm,
and no man; a
reproach of men,
and despised of
the people.

7 All they that see
me laugh me to
scorn: they shoot
out the lip, they
shake the head,
saying,

8 He trusted on the
LORD *that* he
would deliver
him: let him
deliver him,
seeing he
delighted in him.

14 I am poured out
like water, and all
my bones are out
of joint: my heart
is like wax; it is
melted in the
midst of my
bowels.

This Psalm was written by David, but not about himself. None of these things happened to David. This is why the end will be so surprising.

This Psalm is understood by the Rabbis of old to be about the Messiah. Jesus quoted this to point the people's attention to see the prediction of the crucifixion of the Messiah.

Jesus by His crucifixion was considered to be as valuable as a worm. He was certainly despised of the people.

The people actually said this concerning Christ.

This is a perfect description of Christ on the cross. None of His bones were broken as might normally have been done.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

28 For the kingdom *is* the LORD'S: and he *is* the governor among the nations.

29 All *they that be* fat upon earth

All of the prophecies were accurate to the detail that not one person could claim to have *all* this done to him. Also, Christ could not have *caused* these to be done to Him. It is this *next* prophecy that is most significant. The Jews normally executed someone by hanging or stoning. It was the Romans who crucified. David did not go through a crucifixion. The only religious figure ever known to have suffered this was Jesus. *They pierced His hands and His feet!* But it doesn't stop there.

The Roman soldiers, on their own, desired the cloth His robe was made out of. Not wanting to tear it apart, they gambled to see who could get it.

In all of this, David exhorts us to praise God.

God rules and people will depend upon what

shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

has just been described as the basis of their salvation.

30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

David removes any doubt about whether this is a prophecy or not. He declares that there will be a *born again* population that *will* serve this Savior. Then, in vs. 31, he affirms it with more clarity. This people will come in the future and witness that this Psalm has been fulfilled.

31 They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

No one could have fulfilled this prophecy. This is only a *sampling* of the clear prophecies about Christ. No one, when it was written, had any idea how the Messiah would fulfill this. It was written in a way that no one could check the boxes of what the Messiah would go through. Not one Bible writer was given the privilege to hold all the pieces of the puzzle. Sometimes they didn't know which things were a piece. Others had other pieces. Only in Christ did all the pieces come together. The only one who could have all the pieces was if they were God, which He did in the Bible.

We in our elitist society, so wise in our modern technology and prideful thinking we have achieved it by pure science without God...we are forgetting God. We putter along in our wonderful society with sophisticated enlightenment. We take pride in ourselves for tolerance of all when all we are doing is equivocating and endorsing mutually contradictory religious sentiments and irreligious beliefs. But the Bible *does* have all the answers because It is the

Word of God.

God gives us more than sufficient prophecies to demonstrate that the whole Bible inspired. The more we study, the more proofs we will see. We have to be *willing* to accept what you are given.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Believing that God exists is actually the easy part. It's too easy to prove the existence of the divine by looking at the prophecies. It might be hard to convince an atheist of his arrogance, but proving God is not hard. The hard part is believing that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. The hard part is easier once you acknowledge Him, but you still have to surrender your will to Him. What will you do?

Amos 8:11, 1Pe 3:15-16

1. Significantly different from other "scriptures"
2. The Bible claims to be given by inspiration - 2Sam 23:1-2, 2Pet 1:19-21, 2Tim 3:16, Matt 5:17-18
3. The argument for inspiration - Acts 17:22-23, 1Tim 4:6-7, Job 26:7, Isa 40:22, Ps 22, Heb 11:6