

THE BIBLE – GOD’S MESSAGE TO MANKIND

The word “Bible” means “book,” but the Bible is not your ordinary book. Rather, it is the Book of books, because in it and it alone we find the revealed will of God for mankind.

THE BIBLE – A BOOK ABOUT GOD & MAN

Though the Bible’s message touches on many different subjects, basically the Bible is God’s record for man about:

- (1) *Who God is* – the eternally-existent, perfect, almighty Being, the Creator of heaven and earth (Acts 17:24).
- (2) *What God has done for man* – by His grace He made salvation from sin possible for every person (Titus 2:11) through Jesus the Christ (1 John 4:14).
- (3) *What God wants man to do* – The Bible is God’s lamp or light for man’s path (Psalm 119:105), showing us the way that our Creator wants us to live in order that we might please Him and be able to enter into heaven after our life on this earth is over.

THE BIBLE’S BASIC THEME

Every part of the Bible is somehow linked to God’s plan to save man from sin through His Son Jesus. God wants each person to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4), and thus His salvation is not limited to those of any one race or culture, but is available to all people everywhere.

We might say that the overall message of the Bible could be summarized in this statement: “The Christ is coming.” The Old Testament points to the fact that the Christ or Messiah would one day come into the world. The 1st four books of the New Testament (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*) show us that the Christ has already come as man’s *Savior*. Then, the New Testament further reveals that the Christ will come again some day as the *Judge* of all men (Acts 1:11; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE THAT THE BIBLE REALLY IS THE WORD OF GOD?

Please consider a few of the proofs that compel us to believe that the Bible came from God, i.e., that it is God’s revealed message to mankind.

First, *the Bible itself claims to be from God*. “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*” (2 Timothy 3:16). According to this verse, the source of the Bible is none other than God Himself. Literally hundreds of times in the Bible we read, “*Thus saith the Lord,*” or a similar statement. Throughout history many people have attacked or ridiculed the Bible, yet all efforts to show that it is not the word of God have failed miserably.

The harmony and consistent message of the Bible argues strongly for it being the word of the Lord. The Bible was penned by about 35 writers over a period of some 1500-1600 years, but each of these writers was moved by God’s Spirit to write the precise words that the Lord Himself wanted written (2 Peter 2:20,21; 2 Samuel 23:1,2; Ephesians 3:3,5). Yes, God used human beings to write the 66 books of the Bible, yet what those men recorded was not their own thoughts, but rather the will of God.

Those approximately 35 writers of the Bible lived during different periods of history, lived in different areas of the world, had different educational and occupational backgrounds, and in many cases, were never personally acquainted with one another. However, when they wrote the different books of the Bible in which they spoke about countless topics, their message from beginning to end was one of complete harmony, containing no contradictions. Such unity in the message that over thirty people penned shows that it had to have come from one Mind – God’s!

The harmony of the Bible’s message with history and the discoveries of archaeology

also leads us to conclude that it must be the word of God. The Bible mentions endless numbers of nations, cities, and people. Each time that historians or archaeologists have found credible information outside of the Bible that has to do with those nations, cities, and people noted in the Bible, in *every case* what they have found has totally supported what the Bible has said about these topics. Such harmony between the Bible’s historical record and the acknowledged facts of secular history is no accident – we would expect God’s word to be in complete harmony with historical and archaeological discoveries, and it is!

The Bible’s amazing record of fulfilled prophecies is another source of evidence for it being the word of God. Some 700 years before Jesus’ birth, the prophet Isaiah recorded that the huge ancient city of Babylon would be destroyed and would never be inhabited again (Isaiah 13:17-22). Guess what? There is no city of Babylon on the face of the earth today, just as Isaiah said. We wonder how Isaiah knew that would happen?

On another occasion, Isaiah predicted that a virgin woman would bear a son and call his name Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14). The New Testament records that this prediction came true when Jesus was born (Matthew 1:18-25). How did Isaiah know that such a marvelous event would take place 700 years down the road of history?

That same prophet Isaiah foretold that a man by the name of Cyrus, who was yet unborn in the Isaiah’s day but later became king of the Medo-Persian Empire, would assist the Jewish people in returning to their homeland and rebuilding God’s temple in Jerusalem (Isaiah 44:28). Around 350 years after Isaiah made that prediction, Cyrus did just what Isaiah said that he would do (Ezra 1:1-4).

Here is the point of such references: there is no way that Isaiah, by his own power or knowledge, could make the above-noted accurate predictions, naming specific events, people, and

places. His knowledge of such matters must have come from God, for only God can predict the future with 100% accuracy. Fulfilled prophecies are powerful proof that God is the source of the Bible!

Another remarkable fact about the Bible **is its harmony with genuine science**. In fact, not only does the Bible's message harmonize with true science, but in a number of instances the Bible record speaks of scientific truths that were not "discovered" by men of science until hundreds or thousands of years after the Bible recorded them. Such "gems" of science in the Bible include references to living things producing after their own kind (Genesis 1:11,12,21,24), the life of the physical body being in the blood (Leviticus 17:11), the existence of "paths" in the sea (Psalm 8:8), and the note that the stars of the heavens are numberless (Jeremiah 33:22). These and other scientifically accurate statements make us ask: How did the Bible's writers, who were not scientists, come up with such information? The only plausible answer is that their message came from God – yes, the Bible is the word of God!

THE BIBLE ANSWERS MAN'S GREAT QUESTIONS

The Bible is loaded with answers to important questions that men have asked through the ages.

- 1) Where did our universe come from? A: God created heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them in six days (Exodus 20:11).
- 2) Where did mankind come from? A: God created the first man, Adam, from the dust of the earth, then made the first woman, Eve, from Adam's rib (Genesis 2:7,21,22). Man came from God, not monkeys and apes!
- 3) Why is mankind so special? A: Out of all that God created, only man was created in God's image (Genesis 1:26,27). It is because we are made in His image that it is wrong to murder a human being (Genesis 9:6).

- 4) Is man on the same level with animals, i.e., is man a type of animal? A: Note this order: God is above man, and man is above animals. God created only man in His image, then gave man dominion over the rest of what lives on the earth (Genesis 1:27,28).
- 5) How did sin enter into the world? A: The first man and woman broke God's law, and thus sinned, by eating of forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-7).
- 6) Why do men die physically? A: Because they do not have opportunity to eat the fruit from "*the tree of life*" that was in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:22,23), but is now lost.
- 7) What was the earliest religion in man's history? A: In the Bible it is not given a name. The earliest inhabitants of the earth believed in the God of heaven, served the God of heaven, and worshipped the God of heaven. Such examples included Abel, Enoch, and Noah (Hebrews 11:4-7). Idolatry and other forms of man-made religion came much later.
- 8) What is man's purpose while living on the earth? A: Man's basic duty is to fear God and obey His commands (Ecclesiastes 12:13). God's desire for man's life includes more than working, eating, resting, and playing!
- 9) How can man remedy the problem of sin? A: The only way to have sins washed away and be reconciled to God is through the blood of Jesus (Romans 5:6-11).
- 10) What happens after a person leaves this world? Each of us must die a physical death (Hebrews 9:27). One day in the future Jesus will come to raise all men from the dead (John 5:28,29). After that He will judge all people, and each will either enter into eternal life or eternal punishment (Matthew 25:46).

THE BIBLE IS FOR YOU AND ME!

Dear reader, the Bible is God's message to you and me, yea, to every person on the planet. Its message can make us wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15), showing us the

everlasting life that is available through Jesus (John 20:30,31). You and I need to consider its message, accept what it says, and do our best to live by it.

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