

The Bible is an amazing book. It deserves our attention because it claims to be a message from God. As we read the Bible, from one end to the other we find statements like these: "God spoke all these words," "These are true words of God," and "All Scripture is inspired by God" (Exodus 20:1; Revelation 19:9; II Timothy 3:16). And that is just a few of many such statements. The Bible boldly makes the claim that the Scriptures are the product of people who were "moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:20-21). Those who wrote it claimed that their words were not "taught by human wisdom," but were "taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words" (I Corinthians 2:13). Of course, just because these claims were made does not make them true. But still, a lot of people do believe them. Let's look at a few reasons why.

First of all, the Bible claims to be indestructible. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). Peter said the word of God was "living and abiding," he called it "imperishable" and said that it "abides forever" (I Peter 1:23-25). We must admit that the Bible has taken some pretty hard shots by some real experts through the years. The Roman emperors, Decius (249-251) and Diocletian (284-305), made it a capital offense to be in possession of Christian Scriptures. Yet, the Scriptures survived that age. People chose to die rather than jeopardize their sacred manuscripts. In the Medieval Age, the scriptures were kept from the common people. But even the scourge of death did not stop men like John Wycliffe and William Tyndale from translating the scriptures into the common language of the masses. About 250 years ago, a French atheist named Voltaire boasted he would expose the Bible and that it would be buried in obscurity. Some time after his death, Voltaire's house was purchased by the International Bible Society and used as a warehouse.

Indeed, the Bible's amazing history of survival is impressive. But then, there is also the matter of prophetic accuracy. Time and time again, the prophecies of Bible writers proved to be true. Predictions of the rise and fall of empires came to pass hundreds of years after their utterance, as in Isaiah 13:19-22 and Ezekiel 29:9-15. Minute details of the fate of cities came to pass exactly as predicted, as in Ezekiel 26:1-14. The name of Cyrus, a future ruler of Persia, and his decree to free Israel were predicted 200 years before that empire ever rose to power (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1). During the days of the Babylonian Empire, Daniel foretold the rise of the next three world powers and accurately predicted that the kingdom of God would begin in the days of that last empire (Daniel 2:31-45). Add to these the accurate fulfillment of the prophecies about Jesus and you have another bit of evidence that the Scriptures really were inspired by God.

Not only that, but the Bible has been proven true by archaeology. Unlike other books which claim to be inspired by God, the names and places of the Bible are real and have been proven to be historically correct. The Bible presents a story of historical accuracy. It is about real people and real places which have been discovered and can be visited today.

Also, Bible characters were privy to scientific knowledge unavailable to others for many centuries. Moses was commanded by God to control disease by the use of quarantine, as in Leviticus 13:1-6, a practice which was not known elsewhere until the 17th century. This is just one of many such examples which help us see the hand of God in Biblical inspiration.

The Bible claims to be inspired, it has an impressive history of survival, its prophecies have been amazingly accurate, and details of the Bible story have been proved to be historically correct. All of these bits of evidence cause us to take a second look at the Bible. Its message is timeless and its subject is never out of date, for the nature of sin and the nature of human beings never changes. The words of the Bible have brought comfort and strength to countless readers for centuries. The morals, ethics, and relationships of those who live by its precepts have always been improved. In other words, Bible teaching makes life better for those who put it into practice. Why not give the Bible a chance. Find out what the Bible is really about.

- 1. Exodus 20:1, Revelation 19:9, and II Timothy 3:16 represent a host of other passages which make what extraordinary claim about the Scriptures?
- 2. What does II Peter 1:20-21 and I Corinthians 2:13 reveal about the authors of the Bible?
- 3. List the four characteristics about the Bible mentioned in this "Bible Talk" which make us take a second look at the Bible's claim to inspiration:

- 4. What attempts were made to abolish the Bible in each of the following historical settings:
During the Roman Empire _____
During the Medieval Age _____
During the lifetime of Voltaire _____

- 5. What is impressive about each of the following passages of Biblical prophecy?
Isaiah 13:19-22 _____
Ezekiel 29:9-15 _____
Ezekiel 26:1-14 _____
Isaiah 44:28; 45:1 _____
Daniel 2:31-45 _____

- 6. How has Archaeology contributed to the credibility of Biblical accuracy?
- 7. How did Moses know that quarantine would prevent the spread of diseases? (Lev 13:1-6)
- 8. Give three reasons why the Bible is still a relative book for this generation:
