



Foundations of

FAITH

Why the Bible is God's Word Lesson 6

"The best evidence of the Bible's being the word of God is to be found between its covers. It proves itself." (Charles Hodge) Indeed, were it not for the proof within its pages of the inspiration which it claims for itself, the Bible would never have become the most widely circulated book in the world. Every Christian ought not only to believe the Bible, but he ought also to be able to thoroughly examine the foundation upon which that faith rests. For it we do not know **why** we believe the scriptures are inspired by God's Holy Spirit, our faith in it and in Christ himself may be uprooted by the cynicism and scepticism of adverse Biblical critics.

"Christian evidences" is the term usually applied to the study of reasons for believing in the inspiration of the Bible and the religion of Jesus Christ. Whole books have been written in this field, and it is impossible in the space allotted in this study to more than touch upon these things. The student who would like to study these matters in greater detail should secure one or more of the several fine books which have been written in defence of the Bible. Let us here consider a few of the many reasons for believing in the divine inspiration of the Bible.

MORALITY. The Bible presents the highest standard of morality that the world has ever known. Never has the world known a finer rule than the golden rule. "Therefore all things what ever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7:12) If anyone doubts the superiority of the Christian religion from a moral point of view, let him examine those countries

in which the Bible has had little influence and see the degeneration of man. The moral standard given by Christ are so superior to those of other religions that it is impossible to account for these principles except on the basis that they were divinely revealed.

UNITY. The Bible was written by about forty different authors in three languages over a period of about 1500 years. Yet, its remarkable unity of thought, emphasised by its absence of real contradictions, points to the divine inspiration of its penmen. One common theme runs throughout these books – the redemption of man through the Messiah in accordance with God's eternal purpose. Such a unity would have been impossible apart from inspiration.

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST. No student of history can doubt that Jesus Christ has more profoundly influenced the world's history than any other individual who has ever walked on earth. Yet, he fought no military battles, wrote no books and did not even have a home that he could call his own. How shall we account for this? Only by showing his deity. Where else in history can one find a person so completely unselfish, so unquestionably good, without even the slightest taint of sin to mar his character? Surely this man, who was subjected to every human temptation and suffering, yet without weakening, was no mere mortal man. As one studies the person of Jesus he must conclude that he was the essence of goodness and, if so, then divine. If divine, then the scriptures upon which he placed his approval must be inspired of God.

IMPARTIALITY. The Bible tells us the best of the worst men, and the worst of the best. In this it stands in strong contrast to the literary efforts of fallible human authors. Even the sins of David, “a man after God’s own heart,” are in no way glossed over by the inspired writers. The Bible is concerned with truth, even if this is at the expense of great men of God.

PRESERVATION. No book has ever been subjected to more attacks, both physical and verbal, than the Bible. The persecutions of the Roman emperors resulted in the destruction of many of the hand-made copies of the scriptures, yet the Bible survived. Thomas Paine launched an attack upon the Bible in his **Age of Reason**, asserting that his exposé of its “contradictions” would destroy its influence. Today, few people have read **The Age of Reason**, but still the Bible reigns. The French sceptic Voltaire predicted that in one hundred years the Bible would be a forgotten book found only in museums. When the hundred years were up, Voltaire’s home was occupied by the Geneva Bible Society. In spite of every kind of onslaught, the Bible is still more circulated than any book in the world. Only divine inspiration affords a satisfactory explanation.

SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY. The accuracy of a book does not within itself establish its inspiration. However, any book which is inaccurate cannot be inspired. On the other hand, if the accuracy of the book greatly surpasses anything which we have been given by fallible, human authors, we may correctly present such evidence in support of divine inspiration. In the case of the Bible, we shall show in this lesson that it is scientifically accurate, and in the next that it is historically accurate and, further, that the degree of accuracy is such as to establish its inspiration.

The Bible is not essentially a book of science and it does not employ scientific terminology. It uses the language of the common man. Yet, in those places where it does deal with scientific principles, the Bible has been proved correct. True science and the Bible do not conflict, but some unproved, false scientific theories and some Biblical interpretations do conflict with the truth. For example, the theory of organic evolution contradicts the Bible. But the evolutionary idea is still an unproved hypothesis, not an established scientific fact. Likewise, some have tried to force on the first chapter of Genesis an interpretation regarding the age of the earth which is at variance with the beliefs of many geologists. A close study of this

passage reveals that the Bible does not tell us how old the earth is. We read, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1) Sometime later there came the six days in which God placed the world in its present state, including the creation of the beings in the plant and animal kingdoms. But we are not told how long a time elapsed between “the beginning” and these days. It is impossible for us to find in the Bible any teaching relating to the exact age of the earth. (Incidentally the dates affixed at the top of the pages in certain translations have been placed there by men in recent times, and they were not a part of the inspired writings.)

Let us consider a few of the ways in which the Bible and science have been found in accord. The great English scientist Herbert Spencer once declared that science offers five basic principles – space, time, matter, motion and force. Yet a close study of the first two verses of the Bible reveals that therein these five principles are all revealed. Notice:

“In the beginning..... Time
“God created the heaven..... Space
“and the earth..... Matter
“and the Spirit of God Force
“moved upon the face of the waters”Motion

Job the patient enunciated several scientific truths which only in comparatively recent times science has confirmed. In Job 26:7 we read, “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” In this single verse are two great scientific truths. In the northern heavens there is a vast space in which the most powerful telescopes have been unable to locate any celestial bodies. In every other direction, stars are to be found, but in the north there is an “empty place” as the divine book scientifically records.

Again, Job’s statement clearly shows that the earth is without foundation. “He hangeth the earth upon nothing.” Ptolemy, Aristotle and Plato all thought the earth was a flat disc of land surrounded by a great world river. It was many centuries before scientists confirmed the Biblical truth that the earth is actually hanging upon nothing.

The roundness of the earth is taught in several places in the scriptures. Only in recent times has this fact become general knowledge, although it is asserted in the Bible. In Luke 17:24-36 Jesus speaks of his

second coming. He points out that for some his return would be during the day and for others it would be at night. This establishes that the earth is round, not flat as anciently believed.

Proverbs 8:27 states that God “set a compass (or circle) upon the face of the depth.” Isaiah teaches, “It is he that sits upon the circle of the earth.” (Isaiah 40:22) Both passages affirm that the earth is actually round. Yet for years after these things were written the world’s great scholars believed it was flat. When the truth of the matter was scientifically learned, the Bible, as always, was proved correct.

In Psalm 8:8 David speaks of “the paths of the sea.” This passage led Matthew Fontaine Maury to discover the safest paths of ocean travel. We now know that there are great rivers such as the Gulf

Stream and the Labrador Current which pursue their “paths” across the ocean.

Some have wondered how the children of Israel could survive as they did during their wilderness wandering. The medical laws of Moses afford much of the explanation. These laws of hygiene were far in advance of anything known in that day and clearly point to God as their author.

In the following lessons other Christian evidences will be examined. We will notice the historical accuracy of the Bible in the next lesson. Later, we will study fulfilled prophecy, dividing our examination into two sections – those prophecies which relate to the Messiah, and those which pertain to other predictions. Fulfilled prophecy stands as one of the strongest proofs of the inspiration of the Bible.

TEST ON LESSON 6

Write **true** or **false** after the following statements:

1. It is important to know why we believe the Bible.
2. The study of our reasons for believing the Bible is known as “Christian evidences.”
3. The Bible is full of contradictions.
4. Jesus did extensive writing during his personal ministry.
5. The Bible mentions the mistakes of good men.
6. Voltaire wrote **The Age of Reason**.
7. The Bible always uses scientific terminology.
8. The Bible always agrees with scientific theories.
9. The first chapter of Genesis states the exact chronological age of the earth.
10. Herbert Spencer said that science offers five basic principles – space, time, matter, motion, force.
11. The roundness of the earth is not taught in the Bible.
12. The Bible stated scientific truths before they were learned by scientific study.

List **eight** reasons for believing that the Bible is God's word:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

Underline the phrase which correctly completes each of the following statements:

1. Luke 6:31 records: (a) the golden rule; (b) a proverb of Solomon; (c) the wisdom of Job.
2. I Peter 2:21-23 establishes: (a) the scientific accuracy of the Bible; (b) the unity of the Bible; (c) the pure character of Jesus.
3. Hebrews 4:15 teaches: (a) the impartiality of the Bible; (b) the sinlessness of Jesus; (c) the highest moral standard ever given to man.
4. Job 26:7 teaches that the earth is without foundation and that: (a) the stars move with great precision; (b) there is an empty space in the north; (c) there are paths in the sea.
5. Leviticus 17:14 states the scientific truth: (a) that the life is in the blood; (b) of the law of gravitation; (c) that the earth is round.

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Lesson 6

Answers

These lessons are based on the King James Version, so if you are using another translation the words employed may vary slightly. Sometimes an alternative answer is possible. The following is a useful guide.

Section 1 – T, T, F, F, T, F, F, F, F, T, F, T.

Section 2 – (Order Unimportant)

Morality

Unity

The person of Jesus Christ

Impartiality

Preservation

Scientific Accuracy

Historical Accuracy

Fulfilled Prophecy

Section 3 - 1. (a)

2. (c)

3. (b)

4. (b)

5. (a)

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