

**Introduction:**

1. The Bible is the best-selling book of all-time! It is a book that has truly captivated the hearts and minds of people for a very long time. But where does it come from? Does it come from God? Or, is the Bible no different than a Spider Man comic book?
2. Is the Bible a book of fact or fiction? Let's explore this important question further.

**The Lesson:****I. The Bible claims to be inspired.**

- A. The Bible claims to come from a source higher than the mind of men, even though men did write down the words of the Bible on parchment paper. Nearly 4000 times in this book, the Bible makes this claim, Jeremiah 1:1-2; Hosea 1:1; Joel 1:1; Amos 1:1; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Peter 1:3; 3:16; Galatians 1:11-12; Hebrews 4:12.
- B. The Bible claims to come from God, and because that is what it claims, then that means there can be no middle ground when it comes to this issue.
  1. The Bible can't just be a "good book." Either the claim that the Bible does come from God and it needs to be taken seriously; or, it is a lie and needs to be thrown away.
  2. Just because the Bible claims to come from God doesn't make it so. There are a lot of books out there that claim to come from God. But why should we believe that the Bible actually does? Let's now explore some evidence.

**II. The unity of the Bible's message.**

- A. All of the books in the Bible are telling one important story. That has to do with the most important person in the history of the world - Jesus Christ.
  1. The whole Bible is about Jesus being the Son of God and Savior of the world. Amazingly it never (not one time) contradicts on that story!
  2. That is really powerful when you really stop and think about it.
    - a. The Bible was not written by one man, but instead it was written by 40 different men.
    - b. They wrote the Bible over a period of 1500 years.
    - c. It was originally written in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek).
    - d. Many of those who wrote didn't know each other.
    - e. They lived in different times and in different parts of the world.
    - f. They had different occupations (shepherds, politicians, tax-collectors, fishermen, kings, tent-makers, cupbearers).
    - g. They wrote the Bible in a variety of different genres (law, poetic, prophetic, gospel, etc).
- B. Despite all of these things, the writers never contradict when it comes to the story of Jesus!
  1. Just based on this, there has to be something special about this book.
  2. Someone of a higher source was telling them what to write, 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21.
- C. In fact, beyond there being no contradictions when it comes to the message of Jesus, there are no contradictions in the Bible period. Any alleged contradictions can be resolved with study, understanding the context, and a careful consideration of other passages. The Bible is flawless!

**III. The power of fulfilled prophecy.**

- A. In the Bible you have things predicted before they occurred.
  1. Daniel predicted the rise of specific world kingdoms, Daniel 2:36-45.
  2. 150 years in advance, Isaiah predicted that Cyrus would restore the Jews back to their homeland, Isaiah 44:28-45:1.
  3. There are also accurate predictions about Tyre, Ezekiel 26-28, Antiochus Epiphanes, Daniel 11, the fall of people of Nineveh (the book of Nahum), and the destruction of Jerusalem Matthew 24.
- B. The most powerful prophecies have to do with Jesus the Messiah. There are at least 100 prophecies that can be clearly applied to Jesus!
  1. He would be born in the city of Bethlehem, Micah 5:2.
  2. He would come through the tribe of Judah, Genesis 49:8-10.
  3. He would be born into the family of King David, 2 Samuel 7:12-13.
  4. He would be born of a virgin, Isaiah 7:14.

5. John the Baptist would prepare the way for Him, Isaiah 40:3-4.
  6. He would suffer and die a horrific death, Isaiah 53.
  7. He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver and how He would enter in Jerusalem mounted on a colt, Zechariah 9:9; 11:12-13.
  8. He would spend some time in Egypt as a child, Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15.
  9. His enemies would insult Him, divide up His garments, kill Him, but eventually He would be raised from the dead, Psalms 22:7-8, 18; 16:8-11.
- C. This is just a sampling of some of the prophecies that are made concerning Jesus in the Old Testament, and are clearly shown as being fulfilled by Him in the New Testament.
1. Dead Sea Scrolls prove that all of the prophecies pertaining to Jesus were made at least 100 years in advance! The Septuagint proves that they were made at least 250 years in advance!
  2. How could these men know all of these things about Jesus hundreds of years in advance? It had to be because God was revealing this information to them, 2 Peter 1:21.

#### IV. The Bible is consistent with science, history, and archeology.

- A. The Bible is consistent with what we can observe and test in the natural world.
1. See Genesis 1:26. Life only comes from life!
  2. See Genesis 1:11. Everything produces after its kind!
- B. The Bible is right about the history it records, Luke 2:1-3; 3:1-2.
- C. As archeologists swarm around the Bible lands today, they find all kinds of things that confirm the things of the Bible.
1. Millar Burrow of Yale University has said, "On the whole...archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the scriptural record."
  2. Joseph Free writes, "Archaeology has confirmed countless passages which had been rejected by critics as unhistorical or contrary to known facts."
  3. Examples of this include the finding of the altar that King Jeroboam set up in Dan; the underground water tunnel constructed by King Hezekiah; where the pool of Siloam was located that we can read about in John 9. They also found tablets with inscriptions that confirm the existence of people like David, Belshazzar, and Pontius Pilate.
  4. We would expect that from a book that is supposed to be from God.

#### V. Jesus verifies the Bible.

- A. So often, I will encounter Christians who say that they are followers of Jesus, but they don't believe everything found in the Bible.
1. That is not how Jesus viewed the Bible! Jesus held the Bible in high esteem. Jesus verified that every part of it was inspired by God, Matthew 15:1-4; Luke 24:27, 44-45.
  2. Throughout His ministry, He alludes to the stories of Noah, Sodom and Gomorrah, Jonah in the belly of the fish, and Naaman being healed of leprosy, Adam and Eve and even the talking serpent, Matthew 12:41; 19:3-8; 24:37-38; Luke 4:27; 17:28-32.
  3. When it comes to the NT, Jesus said that the writers would be inspired by the Holy Spirit, John 16:12-15.
- B. We need to care about what Jesus said about the Bible because of who He is.
1. If you just take the Bible as a historical document alone and add to it the materials we have outside the Bible, you will easily conclude that Jesus did exist, was rejected by the Jews, crucified by the Romans, buried in the tomb of rich man, and was raised from the dead.
  2. When you take the time to honestly evaluate the evidence, I believe it is clear, that all of these things are historical facts. This means that when it comes to Jesus His opinions about the Bible matters; they carry a lot of weight.

#### Conclusion:

1. If we believe in Jesus, then we must also believe that the Bible is a book of fact.
2. But in addition to believing the Bible is a book of fact, we also have to obey it, Matthew 15:3; James 1:22-25. If we fail to obey what it says, then the information in it really does us no good.