

# The Canon of Scripture

## Lesson 1: Evidence That The Bible is the Word of God

### I. Faith To Believe

- a. The only reason the Bible is relevant today, as well as at all other times, is that it is **true**. It claims within itself to come from an all-knowing, all-powerful, personal and the only self-existing God. *Ps 119:160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever.KJV*
- b. If it did not come from the one, true, living God, we could not expect it to be true or **relevant** to all people of all-time.
- c. To be considered to have come from an all-powerful God, a book must meet certain requirements. First, it must be transmitted to us **accurately** from the time it was originally written so that we may have an exact representation of what God said and did.
- d. Also, it must be correct when it deals with **historical** personages and events. A book that confuses names, dates and events has no right to claim it comes from an infallible God.
- e. Furthermore, any relevant revelation from God should be without any **scientific** absurdities which would betray that came by mere human authorship.
- f. If one were to judge the New Testament documents with the same standards or tests applied to any one of the Greek classics, the evidence for **authenticity** is overwhelmingly in favor of the New Testament.
- g. Not only does the New Testament text have far superior evidence for reliability than the classics, but it is also in **better** textual shape than the 37 plays of William Shakespeare, which were written in the 17th century.
- h. In **every** one of Shakespeare's plays, there are gaps in the printed text, where we have no idea what was originally said. This forces textual scholars to make conjectural emendations to fill in the blanks.
- i. With the abundance of existing handwritten copies of the New Testament (more than **25,000**), we know nothing has been lost through the transmission of the text.

### II. It's Amazing Unity

- a. The Bible is unique, different from all other written works, it has **no equal**, there is nothing like it. One of the ways in which this uniqueness is expressed is in its amazing unity.
- b. Here is a book that was written over a **1500** year span; written over 40 generations; written by more than 40 authors, from every walk of life, including kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, scholars, etc.
- c. It was written in different places and at different **times**; written during different moods, some writing from the heights of joy and others from the depths of sorrow and despair.
- d. It was written on three continents; Asia, Africa and Europe. It was written in **three** languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.
- e. The subject matter includes hundreds of controversial topics and yet, the authors spoke with harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation. There is **one** unfolding story: God's redemption of man.

### III. It's Indestructibility

- a. Throughout history, despite **persecution**, ridicule, higher criticism, liberalism, and atheism, Scripture stands unbroken, unshaken, and true.
- b. Scripture remains indestructible in spite of political persecution from the **Roman** emperors, and in spite of religious persecution and attempts to stifle men like Wycliffe and Tyndale from translating the Bible into the language of the common man.
- c. The Bible has shown amazing resilience in spite of philosophical persecution. **Voltaire** once said, "another century and there will not be a Bible on the Earth." Voltaire is dead and the Bible lives on.
- d. Thomas **Paine**, a respected thinker of the American Revolutionary war once said, "I have gone through the Bible and cut down its claims and they will never grow again." And to this day, the Bible continues to be a bestseller in America.

### IV. It's Historical Accuracy

- a. Less than a century ago, an agnostic archaeologist stated that there are "hundreds of historical mistakes" in the Bible. But as advances in the **science** of archaeology made their way into the field, the critics have been stilled.
- b. The Bible is **authenticated** by archaeology. The Garden of Eden has been identified as the cradle of civilization. The flood of Noah's day has shown up in the narrative of every major human culture.
- c. Specific biblical events mentioned in the first five books of the Bible have been **correlated** with early Egyptian history, Babylonian history and Assyrian history as well.

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### V. It's Scientific Accuracy

- a. Although the Bible is primarily a spiritual message from God and not specifically a scientific textbook, all **scientific** statements found in the Scripture must nevertheless be taken literally and at face value.
- b. For example, the Earth is **spherical**. Isaiah 40:22 It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, KJV
- c. The Earth is **suspended** in space. Job 26:7 He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. KJV
- d. The fact that the **stars** are innumerable Genesis 15:5 Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: KJV
- e. The fact that there are mountains and canyons under the **sea**. Jonah 2:5-6 the waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; KJV

### VI. It's Prophetical Accuracy

- a. One of the acid tests of any religion is its ability to **predict** the future and in this area as in all other areas, the Bible reigns supreme. Isa 46:9-10 I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: KJV
- b. The Bible has proven accurate in its prophecies dealing with the nation of **Israel**.
- c. The Bible has demonstrated its accuracy in its prophecies dealing with various **Gentile** nations.
- d. The Bible has proven infallible with regard to prophecies dealing with specific **cities**.
- e. The Bible has been perfectly accurate in dealing with prophecies with particular **individuals**.
- f. The Old Testament lists some **37** basic prophecies concerning the earthly ministry of the anticipated Savior. While upon this earth, Jesus Christ fulfilled each and every one of those 37 predictions.

### VII. It's Universal Influence Upon Civilization

- a. **Western** civilization is founded directly upon the Bible and its teachings.
- b. The world's **calendar** and most of its holidays stem from the Bible.
- c. The Bible has led the advancement of all **fine arts**.
- d. The Bible has produced the systems of **law** of the Western world.

### VIII. It's Care and Copy

- a. As the Talmudic rules for copying the Old Testament attest, no book in history has been **copied** as many times with as much care as has been the word of God.
- b. According to Bible experts, only **one** letter in 1580 in the OT is open to question, and none of these uncertainties would change in the slightest any doctrinal teaching.
- c. Only **400** words of the NT are in question and these textual variations do not affect any doctrinal teaching.

### IX. It's Circulation

- a. Only one half of one percent of all books published survived seven years. 80% of all books are forgotten in one year. At the end of the seventh year of the original 200 only **one** lonely book will survive.
- b. According to the Guinness Book of World Records "The world's best-selling and most widely distributed book is the Bible, with an estimated **2.5** billion copies sold, 1815-1975." No other book in history has been so widely distributed.

### X. It's Life Transforming Power

- a. Untold millions for the last 2000 years have proclaimed their subjective experience of having been **transformed** by the truths of the Bible and the objective reality of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- b. Such claims cannot be denied by even the most disbelieving critic. The Words of God have a life-changing effect upon those who read and **heed** them.
- c. What is **your** experience with the Words of God?