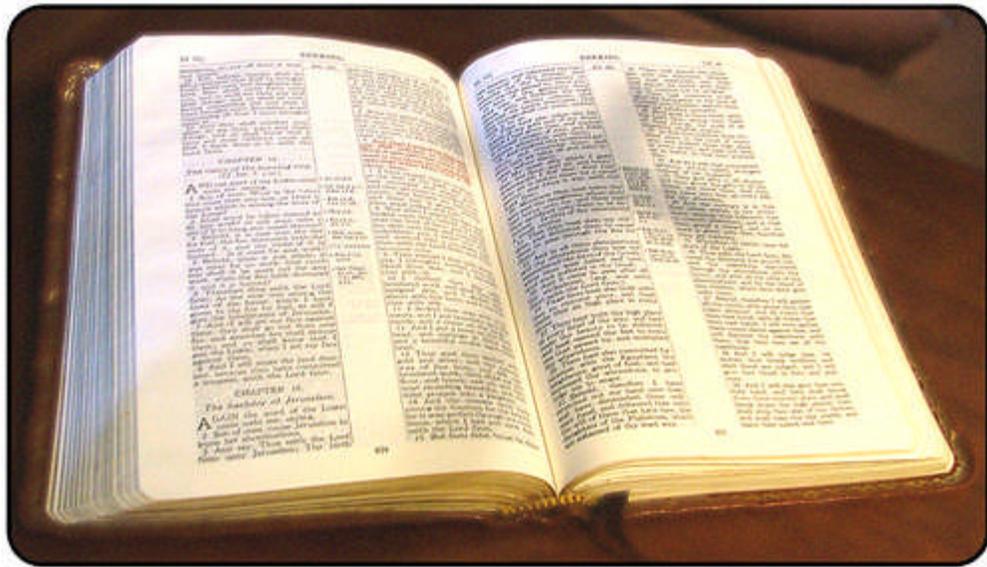


The Bible - Our God Breathed Book

A Student's Study Guide

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell



The Bible – Our God Breathed Book
Notes Extracted From
WILLMINGTON’S GUIDE TO THE BIBLE

by

Dr. H. L. Willmington

Student’s Study Guide

by

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Chapter 1

Revelation and the Bible

Divine Revelation

Everybody knows the *Bible* has been and continues to be the world's bestseller, but not everybody knows just how this amazing book came down to us today. It *could* have happened this way. At some early ecumenical "*Scripture session*," a group of prophets and priests got together in Jerusalem to write a religious best seller. A committee was soon formed which assigned the books, appointed the authors, and arranged for all other details. Upon completion, the publicity chairman commissioned the Palestinian Press to print up the first one million copies.

We said it *could* have happened that way. But of course it did not. God used three wonderful methods as he carefully carved out that most blessed of all books, the *Bible*. These three "*tools of the Trinity*" are referred to as *revelation*, *inspiration*, and *illumination*. Each of the tools were used beginning with revelation.

Sometime around 1400 BC God began to quietly call forty men and women into his presence. He did not call them in all at once. In fact it took Him nearly fifteen centuries to complete the job. God spoke the burden of His great heart in simple but sublime language to those chosen forty. With a holy hush they heard God tell of creation and corruption, of condemnation, justification, sanctification, and glorification. Weighty words, indeed. When God had finished, the first tool in carving out the *Bible* was set aside. *Revelation* had occurred.

With the first step completed, God began to carefully guide each of the chosen human vessels in his assigned writing task. Each of the forty was dealt with individually. Job, a rich farmer, wrote differently than Amos, a poor farmer. The words of the educated Paul were more complicated on occasion than those of the uneducated John or Peter. But in the end they all carried with them the divine approval of heaven itself. Finally, the last scribe laid down his pen. The angels watched as their Creator laid aside the second tool in the making of His manuscript. *Inspiration* has taken place.

Soon many thousands of men and women joined the ranks of those original forty and begin their assigned task of taking God's story of grace and glory to the uttermost parts of the earth. As they did, untold multitudes were stopped in their tracks, convinced in their hearts and saved from their sins. The secret power that accomplished all of this is called illumination. *Illumination* continues to take place by the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. To summarize thus far, God used three tools to produce the *Bible*.

- God used *revelation*, which refers to the way the *Scriptures* come to us from God. Man hears that which God wants written.

- God used *inspiration*, which refers to the way man wrote down that which God wanted written.
- God used *illumination* which refers to the way man receives the light of that which God has written so there is proper understanding concerning the divine will.

The Process of Receiving the Bible

With these three concepts in mind the process of how the *Bible* came into existence can be considered in detail. We know God spoke to man, but how did He speak? The answer is given in Hebrews 1:1-2. “*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*” The *Bible* informs us God spoke to the fathers and prophets in many ways. A careful examination of the *Bible* reveals at least seven different modes of communication.

First, God often spoke to men through angels.

- Angels reassured Abraham of the birth of Isaac and later informed him of God’s decision to destroy Sodom (Gen. 18).
- Angels warned Lot to flee Sodom before the awful destruction took place (Gen. 19).
- The angel Gabriel explained to Daniel the nature of the judgement to come upon Israel (Dan. 9:21-27).
- Gabriel informed Zacharias he would have a son who would become the forerunner of Christ (Luke 1:11-20).
- Gabriel informed Mary that God had chosen her as His vessel for Christ’s birth (Luke 1:26-37).
- Angels announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds (Luke 2:8-14).
- An angel announced the resurrection of Christ to some women (Matt. 28:5-7).
- An angel directed Philip to the seeking eunuch (Acts 8:26).
- An angel directed Peter out of a Roman prison (Acts 12:7-10).

Second, as God spoke to men through angels so He spoke through a loud audible voice.

- God spoke directly to Adam (Gen. 3:9-19).

- God spoke directly to Noah (Gen. 6:13-21).
- God spoke directly to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3).
- God spoke directly to Moses (Ex. 20:1-17).
- God spoke directly to Joshua (Josh. 1:1-9).
- God spoke directly to Samuel (1 Sam. 3:1-14).
- God spoke directly to Nathan, about David (2 Sam. 7:4-16).
- God spoke directly to Elijah (1 Kings 17:2-4).
- God spoke directly to Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4, 5).

Third, God spoke to men through nature.

- *Psalms 19:1-3 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*

Fourth, God once spoke to a man through the mouth of a donkey.

- *Numbers 22:28 And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?*

Fifth, God spoke to men through dreams. On a number of occasions God chose this method.

- Joseph was able to interpret the dreams of his fellow prisoners (Genesis 40:1-23).
- Jacob received the confirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant in a dream (Gen. 28:12).
- Solomon received both wisdom and a warning in a dream (1 Kings 3:5; 9:2).
- Joseph in the *New Testament* received three messages in three dreams to assure him of Mary's purity (Matt. 1:20); to command him to flee to Egypt (Matt. 2:13); and to ordering him to return to Palestine (Matt. 2:19-22).

- The wise men were warned of Herod's evil intentions in a dream (Matt. 2:12).

Sixth, God spoke to men through visions. *Unger's Bible Dictionary* defines a vision as, "A supernatural presentation of certain scenery or circumstances to the mind of a person while awake." It may be noted that many great truths in the Scriptures were related to men through this unique method.

- Jacob was instructed in a vision to go to Egypt (Gen. 46:2).
- David was warned of judgment in a vision (1 Chron. 21:16).
- Isaiah saw God's holiness in a vision (Isa. 6:1-8).
- Daniel saw the great Gentile powers rise and fall in a vision (Dan. 7, 8).
- Daniel saw the glories of Christ in a vision (Dan. 10:5-9).
- Daniel saw the rise and fall of Alexander the Great in a vision (Dan. 8).
- Ezekiel saw the re-gathering of Israel in a vision (Ezek. 37).
- Ananias was ordered to minister to Saul in a vision (Acts 9:10).
- Cornelius was instructed to send for Peter in a vision (Acts 10:3-6).
- Peter was ordered to minister to Cornelius in a vision (Acts 10:10-16).
- Paul was ordered to Macedonia in a vision (Acts 16:9).
- Paul was comforted at Corinth in a vision (Acts 19:9).
- Paul was comforted at Jerusalem in a vision (Acts 23:11).
- Paul viewed the glories of the third heaven in a vision (2 Cor. 12:1-4).
- The Apostle John received the book of Revelation in a vision.

Seventh, God spoke to men through Christophanies. A Christophany is a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Christ. Some theologians have seen a number of these appearances in the Old

Testament, believing that the term “*the Angel of the Lord*,” is actually another name of Christ. If this is true, the following examples of Christophany communication could be submitted.

- The Angel of the Lord wrestled with Jacob (Gen. 32:24-30).
- The Angel of the Lord redeemed Jacob from all evil (Gen. 48:16).
- The Angel of the Lord spoke to Moses from the burning bush (Ex. 3:2).
- The Angel of the Lord protected Israel at the Red Sea (Ex. 14:19).
- The Angel of the Lord prepared Israel for the Promised Land (Ex. 23:20-23; Ps. 34:7; Isa. 63:9; 1 Cor. 10:1-4).
- The Angel of the Lord commissioned Gideon (Judge 6:11).
- The Angel of the Lord ministered to Elijah (1 Kings 19:7).
- The Angel of the Lord reassured Joshua (Josh. 5:13-15).
- The Angel of the Lord saved Jerusalem (Isa. 37:36).
- The Angel of the Lord preserved three Godly Hebrew men (Dan. 3:25).

In summary it is the belief of the Church that God has spoken to men. He communicated His revelation to at least forty human authors over a period of 1,500 years in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) and on three continents (Africa, Europe and Asia). God has spoken to men through the following ways.

- ❖ Angels
- ❖ Direct verbal communication
- ❖ Nature
- ❖ Animals
- ❖ Dreams
- ❖ Visions
- ❖ Christophanies

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 1

Revelation and the Bible

1. List the three tools of the Trinity in bringing the *Bible* into existence.

Answer.

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2. Define revelation.

Answer.

3. Define inspiration.

Answer.

4. Define illumination.

Answer.

5. List four of the seven modes of communication by God to man.

Answer.

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6. In which century did God begin the process of having individuals write His *Word*?

Answer.

7. List the three languages God used to write His Word.

Answer.

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8. About how many authors did God use to write His Word?

Answer.

9. About how long did it take for the *Bible* to be written?

Answer.

Personal Reflection

Do you have an angel story to share? Have you ever sensed you were in the presence of an angel or an angel had come to help you in a given situation?

Scripture References for Chapter 1

- Hebrews 2:1-2
- Genesis 18:1-33
- Genesis 19:1-38
- Genesis 40:1-23
- Daniel 9:21-27
- Luke 1:11-20
- Luke 1:26-37
- Luke 2:8-14
- Matthew 28:5-7
- Acts 8:26
- Acts 12:7-10
- Genesis 3:9-19
- Genesis 6:13-21
- Genesis 12:1-3
- Exodus 20:17
- Joshua 1:1-9
- 1 Samuel 3:1-14
- 2 Samuel 7:4-16
- 1 Kings 17:2-4
- Jeremiah 1:4,5

- Psalm 19:1-3
- Number 22:28
- Genesis 28:12
- 1 Kings 3:5
- 1 Kings 9:2
- Matthew 1:20
- Matthew 2:13
- Matthew 2:19-22
- Matthew 2:12
- Genesis 46:2
- 1 Chronicles 21:16
- Isaiah 6:1-8
- Daniel 7,8
- Daniel 10:5-9
- Daniel 8
- Ezekiel 37
- Acts 9:10
- Acts 10:3-6
- Acts 10:10-16
- Acts 16:9
- Acts 19:9
- Acts 23:11
- 2 Corinthians 12:1-4
- Genesis 32:24-30
- Genesis 48:16
- Exodus 3:2
- Exodus 14:19
- Exodus 23:20-23
- Psalm 34:7
- Isaiah 63:9
- 1 Corinthians 10:1-4
- Judges 6:11
- 1 Kings 19:7
- Joshua 5:13-15
- Isaiah 37:36
- Daniel 3:25

Chapter 2

Divine Inspiration

Having discussed various possibilities and ways God may have employed in the giving of His revelation to the human authors, attention can be turned to consideration of the next major step, that of inspiration. The ears have heard the message, but how will the fingers react? What is involved in transferring the voice of God into the vocabulary of man? Five areas can be examined along this particular line. But before we do this, let us define the word itself. The term “*inspiration*” is found but once in the New Testament. This occurs in 2 Timothy 3:16. Here Paul says, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God...*” The Greek word is *theo-pneustos*, and literally means, “*God-breathed*.” As might be expected not everyone would agree as to how inspiration should be explained. Various theories of inspiration have been offered.

The Natural Theory. This theory argues that the *Bible* writers were inspired in the same sense that William Shakespeare was inspired. In other words, that spark of divine inspiration that supposedly is in all men simply burned a little brighter in the hearts of the *Bible* writers. This theory of inspiration is totally rejected by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:16 which says that “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*” Peter wrote, “*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation*” (2 Pet. 1:20). Whatever creative genius God may grant to some to paint, preach, build, or write, that talent is different from the special movement of God to record His thoughts.

The Mechanical Theory. This theory contends that God coldly and in a wood like manner dictated the *Bible* to His writers as an office manager would dictate an impersonal letter to his secretary. But that cannot be the case. The *Bible* is the story of divine love, and God is anything but mechanical or cold concerning this subject. The Holy Spirit did not violate the limits of the writer’s vocabulary. This fact is reflected in the fact that the educated Paul uses many specialized Greek words, while the less educated John employs more common language. But God equally inspired both writings for “*All Scripture is God-breathed*” (2 Tim. 3:16.). The Presbyterian theologian Dr. Charles Hodge has a good comment on this topic. “*The Church has never held what has been stigmatized as the mechanical theory of inspiration. The sacred writers were not machines. Their self-consciousness was not suspended; nor were their intellectual powers superseded. Holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It was men not machines; not unconscious instruments, but living, thinking, willing minds, whom the Spirit used as His organs...The sacred writers impressed their peculiarities on their several productions as plainly as though they were the subjects of no extraordinary influence.*” (Systematic Theology, Vol. I, p. 157).

The Content or Concept Theory. This theory maintains that only the main thought of a paragraph or chapter is inspired. This theory is immediately refuted by many biblical passages beginning with Matthew 5:18. “*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*” Then there is 2 Samuel 23:1,2, which says, “*Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man*

who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” One reason for embracing the content or concept theory is a fear that the *Bible* might be proven to be in error on certain facts regarding geography, history or science. But there is no need to worry about that. The *Bible* has never been proven to be in error on any given point of substance.

The Partial Theory—that only certain parts of the Bible are inspired. This of course is the position of the liberal theologian who would cheerfully accept those portions of the *Bible* which deal with love and brotherhood, but quickly reject the passages dealing with sin, righteousness, and future judgment. But let it be said that heaven and hell are like up and down—you can not have one without the other. Paul refutes the partial theory in 2 Timothy 3:16. In his textbook, *A Dispensational Theology*, Dr. Charles F. Baker writes: “A certain bishop is purported to have said that he believed the *Bible* to have been inspired in spots. When asked for his authority for such a statement, he quoted Hebrews 1:1, stating that this meant that God spoke at various times in varying degrees. Thus, some spots were fully inspired, others were only partially inspired, and still others were not inspired at all. The bishop was embarrassed when a layman asked: ‘How do you know that Hebrews 1:1, the one Scripture upon which you base your argument, is one of those fully inspired spots?’” (p. 38). The whole *Bible* loses the confidence of the reader if only select spots were inspired.

The Spiritual-Rule-Only Theory. This says the *Bible* may be regarded as our infallible rule of faith and practice in all matters of religious, ethical, and spiritual value, but not in other matters such as historical and scientific statements. This is pious nonsense. Consider the following: Here is a pastor greatly beloved by his congregation. How would this man of God feel if only his “moral” and “spiritual” statements made in the pulpit were accepted by his members? How would he react when the members would smile and take lightly any scientific or historical statements he might make? The fallacy of the spiritual-rule-only theory is that any book, or man, whose scientific or historical statements are open to question, can certainly not be trusted in matters of moral and spiritual pronouncements! This theory is soundly refuted by Jesus himself in John 3:12. “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?”

The Plenary-Verbal Theory. This theory insists that that all (plenary) the very words (verbal) of the *Bible* are inspired by God. This view alone must be the correct one for the Christian Church to embrace. There are many Scriptural reasons to do so.

- *Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*
- *2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

- *John 17:8. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee and they have believed that thou didst send me.*
- *John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*

Concerning the issue of inspiration, the *Scriptures* are not silent on the topic. The *Bible* strongly claims its writings are from God. Compiling a few choice texts, we discover the following.

The prophet thought up no *Old Testament Scripture* on his own.

- *2 Peter 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

The Holy Spirit gave all *Old Testament Scriptures* as he moved upon men.

- *2 Peter 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

This Spirit-breathed inspiration was given in many ways.

- *Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.*

Once it was given, this inspired writing could not be broken or shaken down, is exact in all details, down to the smallest stroke and letter and would abide forever.

- *John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken. 1 Peter 1:25 25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*
- *Matthew 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*
- *1 Peter 1:25 But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

The Old Testament writers did not always understand the nature of everything they wrote about. They did not completely understand the details of Christ's suffering. They did understand that the mysteries would be clearer to a generation other than theirs.

- *Luke 10:23 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: 24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*
- *1 Peter 1:10-12 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. When it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did,*
- The four Gospels were given by inspiration of God. *Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets. 2 Peter 3:2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:*

Paul believed God inspired his writings.

- *1 Corinthians 2:4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. 1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. 1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

Paul used the Holy Spirit's words to explain the Holy Spirit's facts.

- *1 Corinthians 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

Paul's writings were received through a special revelation from Christ.

- *Galatians 1:11-12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Paul's writings were to be read by all.

- *Colossians 4:6 Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man. 1 Thessalonians 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.*

Peter believed God inspired his writings.

- *2 Peter 3:2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.*

Peter believed Paul's writings were inspired.

- *2 Peter 3:15-16 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

John believed his writings were inspired. John warned that if anyone added to his words, God would add horrible plagues to him and that if anyone subtracted from his words, God would remove his name from the Holy City.

- *Revelation 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

What are the implications of inspiration?

As one carefully considers the subject of inspiration the following nine conclusions can be noted.

- **First, plenary-verbal inspiration does not teach that all parts of the Bible are equally important, but only those that are equally inspired.** For example, Judges 3:16 is obviously not as important as John 3:16, but both these verses were inspired by God. *“But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh” (Judges 3:16). “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).*

- **Second, plenary-verbal inspiration does not guarantee the inspiration of any modern or ancient translation of the Bible, but deals only with the original Hebrew and Greek languages.**
- **Third, plenary-verbal inspiration does not allow for any false teaching, but it does on occasion record the lie of someone.** For example, Satan distorts the truth and lies to Eve (Gen. 3:4). Therefore we have an accurate record of the devil's words. As one reads the Bible, he must carefully distinguish between what God records and what he sanctions. Thus, while lying, murder, adultery, and polygamy are to be found in the Word of God, the God of the Word never approves them.
- **Fourth, plenary-verbal inspiration does not permit any historical, scientific, or prophetic error whatsoever.** While it is admitted that the *Bible* is not a textbook on science, it is nevertheless held that every scientific statement in the Scriptures is absolutely true.
- **Fifth, plenary-verbal inspiration does not prohibit personal research.** The New Testament writer Luke begins his Gospel account with the following words: *Luke 1:1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,*
- **Sixth, plenary-verbal inspiration does not deny the use of extra-biblical sources.** Here several examples come to mind.
 - ❖ On at least two occasions, Paul quotes from heathen authors. *Acts 17:28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Titus 1:12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.*
 - ❖ Jude quotes from an ancient Hebrew book, one not included in the *Bible*. *Jude 14-15 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

- Seventh, plenary-verbal inspiration does not overwhelm the personality of the human author.** The *Bible* writers experienced no coma-like trances as do some mediums during a séance, but on the contrary, always retained their physical, mental, and emotional powers. Various passages testify to this. *Isaiah 6:1-11* *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. 4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. 6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. 8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. 9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. 10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. 11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate (cf. Daniel 12).*
- Eighth, plenary-verbal inspiration does not exclude the usage of pictorial and symbolic language.** This is to say the Holy Spirit does not demand we accept every word in the *Bible* in a wooden and legalistic way. For example, a case could not be made that God has feathers like a bird, by referring to Psalm 91:4. Here the thought is simply that the persecuted believer can flee to his heavenly Father for protection and warmth.
- Ninth, plenary-verbal inspiration does not mean uniformity in all details given in describing the same event. Here an Old Testament and a New Testament example come to mind.
- Old Testament example:** The wicked reign of King Manasseh is vividly described for us in two separate chapters. These are 2 Kings 21:1-18 and 2 Chronicles 33:1-20. In 2 Kings we read only of his sinful ways, but in 2 Chronicles we are told of his eventual prayers of forgiveness and subsequent salvation. The reason for this may be that God allowed the author of 2 Kings to describe the reign of Manasseh from an earthly standpoint (even though he inspired the pen of the author), while he guided the pen of the author of 2 Chronicles to record Manasseh's reign from a heavenly viewpoint. God alone, of course, knows true repentance when he sees it coming from the human heart.
- New Testament example:** There are four different accounts concerning the superscription on the cross at Calvary.

Matthew says, “*This is Jesus the King of the Jews*” (Mt. 27:37).

Mark says, “*The King of the Jews*” (Mark 15:26).

Luke says, “*This is the King of the Jews*” (Luke 23:38).

John says, “*Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews*” (John 19:19).

The entire title probably read, “*This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.*”

- **Plenary-verbal inspiration assures us that God included all the necessary things he wanted us to know, and excluded everything else (2 Tim. 3:15-17).**

What is the Importance of Inspiration?

Of the three tools involved in the making of our *Bible*, inspiration is the most important. This is true because of the following.

It is possible to have inspiration without revelation. We have already seen how Luke carefully checked out certain facts concerning the life of Christ and was then led to write them on paper.

- *Luke 1:1-4 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.*
- *1 John 1:1-4 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*

It is possible to have inspiration without illumination. Peter tells us the *Old Testament* prophets did not always understand everything they wrote about. But without inspiration, the *Bible* falls.

- *1 Peter 1:11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.*

Is Inspiration Still Going on Today?

Has God inspired the writing (or will he someday) of a sixty-seventh book of the *Bible*? For nearly twenty centuries now, evangelical Christians everywhere have held to the belief that when John the apostle wrote Revelation 22:21 and wiped his pen, inspiration stopped. Furthermore, it is generally believed his warning not to add to or subtract from his book included not only the book of Revelation, but also the entire *Bible*. (See Rev. 22:18, 19.) It is of utmost importance that this is clearly understood, else the following tragic conclusions take place. If inspiration is still going on today, then one is forced to admit the following.

- God could have inspired the wicked writings of cult leaders (such as a Joseph Smith, or a Mary Baker Eddy, or a Charles Russell, or a Herbert W. Armstrong).
- Perhaps the Church still does not possess all the details concerning the plan of salvation, details vital to escape hell and enter heaven.
- God has allowed millions of devoted and faithful Christians to believe a horrible lie for some 2000 years.

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 2

Divine Inspiration

1. How many times is the term inspiration used in the *New Testament*?

Answer.

2. Explain the Natural Theory of inspiration.

Answer.

3. Explain the Mechanical Theory of inspiration.

Answer.

4. Explain the Content or Concept Theory of inspiration.

Answer.

5. Explain the Partial Theory of Inspiration.

Answer.

6. Explain the Spiritual-Rule-Only Theory of inspiration.

Answer.

7. The Plenary-Verbal Theory of inspiration.

Answer.

8. True or false. The *Bible* strongly claims its writings are from God.

Answer.

9. Did Paul believe his writings were inspired?

Answer.

10. Did Peter believe Paul's writings were inspired?

Answer.

11. Did Peter believe his own writings were inspired?

Answer.

12. True or false.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory teaches that all parts of the *Bible* are equally important.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory guarantees the inspiration of every modern and ancient translation of the *Bible*.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory allows for false teaching.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory permits historical, scientific, and prophetic error.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory does not prohibit personal research.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory denies the use of extra-biblical sources.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory does not overwhelm the personality of the human author.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory excludes the usage of pictorial and symbolic language.

Answer.

- Statement. The Plenary-Verbal Inspiration Theory demands uniformity in all details given in describing the same event.

Answer.

- Statement. Plenary-verbal inspiration assures us that God included all the necessary things He wanted us to know, and excluded everything else.

Answer.

13. Is inspiration important in Christian theology?

Answer.

14. Is inspiration still going on today?

Answer.

Chapter 3

Divine Illumination

Having argued that without inspiration no Scripture ever would have been written it can now be argued that without illumination no sinner would ever be saved! Illumination is that method used by the Holy Spirit to shed divine light upon all seeking souls as they look into the *Word of God*. Illumination is from the written word to the human heart. Why is this third step of divine illumination necessary? Why cannot sinful man simply read and heed the biblical message without divine aid?

- **Divine illumination is necessary because of natural blindness.** Paul writes, “*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*” (1 Cor. 2:14).

Our Lord also commented on this during his earthly ministry: “*And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven*” (Matthew. 16:16, 17).

- **It is necessary because of satanic blindness.** Again we note the sober words of Paul: “*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not...*” (2 Cor. 4:3, 4).
- **It is necessary because of carnal blindness.** *Hebrews 5:12-14 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

What are the practical results of illumination?

- Sinners are saved. *Psalm 146:8 “The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind...” Psalm 119:130 “The entrance of thy words giveth light...”*
- Christians are strengthened. *1 Peter 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” 1 Corinthians 2:10 “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit...” 2 Corinthians 4:6 “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of knowledge...” Psalm 119:105 “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*

The Implications of Illumination are Practical

- Because the mind of the natural man is darkened, and blinded, the Holy Spirit must first shine truth upon the heart.
- Because the mind of the converted man is sluggish he must pray and seek for spiritual understanding. Illumination is not automatic. God has never promised to reveal precious and profound biblical truths to any believer who will not search the Scriptures for himself. Note the following admonitions. *Matthew 4:4 “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” John 20:31 “But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God...” Acts 17:11 “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily...” 2 Timothy 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 1 Peter 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye might grow thereby.”*

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Illumination

The Holy Spirit often seeks out the aid of a believer in performing His task of illuminating the hearts of others.

- The Holy Spirit used Philip to speak to the Ethiopian eunuch. *Acts 8:30, 31, 35 “And Philip ran hither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me...Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.”*
- The Holy Spirit used Paul to minister to the Jews at Thessalonica. *Acts 17:2 “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.”*

- Paul used Aquila and Priscilla to minister to Apollos. *Acts 18:26* “*And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.*”
- The Holy Spirit used Apollos to minister to the Jews at Corinth. *Acts 18:28* “*For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.*”

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 3

Divine Illumination

1. List three reasons why divine illumination is necessary.

Answer.

-
-
-

2. List two practical results of illumination.

Answer.

-
-

3. Why must the Holy Spirit first shine truth upon the heart?

Answer.

4. Is illumination automatic or something that is certain to happen?

Answer.

5. What does the Holy Spirit use in performing the task of illumination?

Answer.

Chapter 4

Different Views of the Bible

The View of Israel

In spite of her sin and sorrows, Old Testament Israel held steadfast in the belief that her thirty-nine holy books were indeed the very Word of God. Even though one of her kings would attempt to burn it (Jer. 36), the nation as a whole would continue to believe it. The following words of Moses beautifully summarize Israel's position concerning the Word of God: "*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates*" (Deut. 6:4-9).

The View of the Early Church

During the third, fourth, and fifth centuries the church held no less than 184 councils, not to deal with civil rights, ecology problems, or political ills, but to deal with any and all heresy that would dare tamper with the pure Word of God.

The View of Agnosticism

In the book, *A Guide to the Religions of America*, Dr. Bertrand Russell makes the following statement: "*An agnostic regards the Bible exactly as enlightened clerics regard it. He does not think that it is divinely inspired; he thinks its early history legendary, and no more exactly true than that in Homer; he thinks its moral teaching sometimes good, but sometimes very bad. For example: Samuel ordered Saul, in a war, to kill not only every man, woman, and child of the enemy, but also all the sheep and cattle. Saul, however, let the sheep and cattle live, and for this we are told to condemn him. I have never been able to admire Elisha for cursing the children who laughed at him, or to believe (what the Bible asserts) that a benevolent Deity would send two she-bears to kill the children.*"

The View of Liberalism

Probably the most famous liberal of the twentieth century was the late Harry Emerson Fosdick. He has written the following words which typify the liberal attitude: "*When one moves back to the Scriptures with a mind accustomed to work in modern ways he finds himself in a strange world....Knowing modern astronomy he turns to the Bible to find the sun and the moon standing still on the shadow retreating on a sundial. Knowing modern biology he hears that when Elisha had been so long dead that only his bones were left, another dead body, thrown into the cave*

where he was buried, touched his skeleton and sprang to life again, or that after our Lord's resurrection many of the saints long deceased arose and appeared in Jerusalem. Knowing modern physics he turns to the Bible to read that light was created three days before the sun and that an axe-head floated when Elisha threw a stick into the water. Knowing modern medicine he finds in the Scripture many familiar ailments, epilepsy, deafness, dumbness, blindness, insanity, ascribed to the visitation of demons... We live in a new world. We have not kept the forms of thought and categories of explanation in astronomy, geology, biology, which the Bible contains. We have definitely and irrevocably gotten new ones..."

The View of the Cults

In general it may be said that the major cults and sects of Christianity give lip service to the Bible; nevertheless they look upon the writings of their various founders as equal if not superior to the *Scriptures*. For example, the Christian Scientist was founded by Mary Baker Eddy; (1821-1910). George Channing, an international Christian Science lecturer and practitioner, writes the following. *"Each person, of any religion, can find what is satisfying to him as the spiritual meaning in the Bible. But Christian Scientists feel that Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy's Book, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, offers the complete spiritual meaning of the Bible. They believe that this full meaning would not have been available to them without Mrs. Eddy's discovery."* The Jehovah's Witnesses was founded by Charles Taze Russell; (1851-1916). Mr. Russell calmly announces in the opening pages of his *Studies in the Scriptures* that it would be far better to leave the Bible unread but read his comments on it than to omit his writings and read the *Bible*. Mormonism was founded by Joseph Smith; (1805-1844). This cult teaches that the *Book of Mormon*, first printed in 1830, must be regarded on an equal basis with the Bible.

The View of the Roman Catholic Church

Rome believes that the church is the divinely appointed custodian of the Bible and has the final word on what is meant in any specific passage. It accepts the apocryphal books as a part of the inspired Scriptures. Rome's position on the Bible could be diagrammed as a triangle, with the Pope at the top, and the Bible and church tradition at the bottom.

The View of Mysticism

Those holding this view lean heavily upon that divine *"inner light"* to reveal and guide them into all truth. Thus the personal experiences, feelings, etc., of an individual are looked upon as vital to discovering divine truth along with the Word of God itself.

The Position of Neo-Orthodoxy

Neo-orthodoxy is a view made popular by the German theologian Karl Barth in his *Epistle to the Romans* first published in 1918. This position holds that the *Bible* may well contain the *Word of God*, but that, until it becomes such, it is as dead and uninspired as any other ancient or modern historical book might be. Thus the *Bible* is not to be viewed as objective, but subjective in nature. It is only the *Word of God* as it *becomes* the *Word of God* to an individual. Neo-orthodoxy would thus view the first eleven chapters as *"religious myths."* This term is defined as a *"conveyer of*

theological truth in a historical garb, but which theological truth is not dependent upon the historicity of the garb itself for its validity.”

The View of Neo-Evangelicalism

In the latter part of 1957, one of the leaders of this position wrote the following: *“The New Evangelicalism in the latest dress of orthodoxy or Neo-orthodoxy is the latest expression of theological liberalism. The New Evangelicalism differs from Fundamentalism in its willingness to handle the social problems which Fundamentalism evaded. There need be no dichotomy between the personal gospel and the social gospel...The New Evangelicalism has changed its strategy from one of separation to one of infiltration...The evangelical believes that Christianity is intellectually defensible but the Christian cannot be obscurantist in scientific questions pertaining to the Creation, the age of man, the Universality of the flood and other moot biblical questions.”*

The Position of Orthodoxy

This view holds that the *Bible* alone is the illuminated, inspired revelation of God and is therefore the sole ground of authority for believers. Orthodoxy claims the *Bible* is objective in nature and proclaims not a social gospel, but a sinner gospel. According to this view, whenever there is a clear contradiction between the *Bible* and any assumed “*fact*” of history or science, it is that “*fact*” which must give way to the *Bible*, and not the reverse. This was the view of the Old Testament writers concerning the Old Testament.

- Moses. *Exodus 4:10-12 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. 11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the LORD? 12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.*
- Samuel. *1 Samuel 8:10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.*
- Joshua. *Joshua 23:14 And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.*
- David. *2 Samuel 23:2-3 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. 3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*

- Isaiah. *Isaiah 1:10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. Etc (Jer. 1:6-9; Ezek. 3:10-12; Dan. 10:9-12; Joel 1:1; Amos 3:1; Obad. 1:1; Jonah 1:1; Micah 1:1; Nahum 1:1; Hab. 2:2; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1; Mal. 1:1).*

It should be remembered that the *Old Testament* refers to itself as the *Word of God* some 3,808 times, which is why the *New Testament* writers were convinced the Old Testament was of divine origin. The *New Testament* writers refer to at least 161 *Old Testament* events and quote from over 246 *Old Testament* passages. Some of these events and passages are as follows:

- Creation (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3)
- Man made in God's image (Gen. 1:26; 1 Cor. 11:7)
- God resting (Gen. 2:2, 3; Heb. 4:4)
- The institution of marriage (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6)
- The fall (Gen. 3:6-8; Rom. 5:12-19)
- The murder of Abel (Gen. 4:8; 1 Jn. 3:12)
- Enoch's translation (Gen. 5:21-24; Heb. 11:5)
- The ark of Noah (Gen. 6:14-16; 7:1-12; Luke 17:26, 27; 2 Pet. 3:6)
- The call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1; Heb. 11:8)
- The meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 7:1-4)
- The destruction of Sodom (Gen. 19; Matt. 11:24; Luke 17:32)
- Isaac's birth (Gen. 19:20; Gal. 4:23)
- The offering up of Isaac (Gen. 22:10; Heb. 11:17-19)
- The burning bush (Ex. 3:2; Luke 20:37; Acts 7:30)
- The Exodus (Ex. 12-14; Acts 7:36; Heb. 11:29; 1 Cor. 10:1)

- The giving of manna (Ex. 16:15; John 6:31)
- The giving of the law (Ex. 20; Gal. 3:19)
- The serpent of brass (Num. 21:8, 9; John 3:14)
- Elijah and the drought (1 Kings 17; Luke 4:25; Jas. 5:17)
- The healing of Naaman (2 Kings 5:14; Luke 4:27)
- Daniel in the lion's den (Dan. 6:22; Heb. 11:33)
- Jonah in the belly of the fish (Jonah 1:17; Matt. 12:40; 16:4)

***Some of the Old Testament passages
referred to in the New Testament are as follows:***

- *“Be ye holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44; 1 Pet. 1:16).*
- *“I will never leave thee nor forsake thee” (Josh. 1:5; Heb. 13:5).*
- *“Be ye angry and sin not” (Ps. 4:4; Eph. 4:26).*
- *“There is none righteous, no not one” (Ps. 14:1; Rom. 3:10).*
- *“Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth” (Prov. 3:12; Heb. 12:6).*
- *“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Isa. 25:8; Rev. 21:4).*
- *“Death is swallowed up in victory” (Hosea 13:14; 1 Cor. 15:54).*
- *“I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh” (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17).*
- *“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32; Rom. 10:13).*
- *“The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof” (Ps. 24:1; 1 Cor. 10:26).*

- “My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord” (Prov. 3:11; Heb. 12:5).
- “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Ps. 118:26; Matt. 21:9).
- “Charity covereth a multitude of sins” (Prov. 10:12; 1 Pet. 4:8).
- “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel” (Isa. 52:7; Rom. 10:15).

***This was the view of the New Testament
writers concerning the New Testament.***

- Peter’s testimony. *2 Peter 3:2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:*
- Paul’s testimony. *1 Corinthians 2:4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 1 Corinthians 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. 1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*
- John’s testimony. *Revelation 22:18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*
- James’ testimony. *James 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. James 4:5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*
- Jude’s testimony. *Jude 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

***Certainly the Lord Jesus Christ believed
the Old Testament was the Word of God.***

- Our Lord began his ministry by quoting from the *Old Testament*. Compare Matthew 4:4, 7, 10 with Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:13, 16.

- Our Lord ended his ministry by quoting from the *Old Testament*. Five of his last seven statements on the cross were lifted from the pages of the *Old Testament*. Compare:
 - ❖ Luke 23:34 with Isaiah 53:12

 - ❖ Luke 23:43 with Isaiah 53:10, 11

 - ❖ Matthew 27: 46 with Psalms 22:1

 - ❖ John 19: 28 with Psalms 69:21

 - ❖ Luke 23: 46 with Psalms 31:5

- Our Lord preached one of his first public messages from an Old Testament text. *Luke 4:16-19 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. Isaiah 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.*

- Our Lord informed the Pharisees they erred, “*not knowing the scriptures.*” *Matthew 22:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*

- Our Lord justified his own actions by referring to the *Old Testament*:
 - ❖ When he ate on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8).

 - ❖ When he healed on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:10-21).

- ❖ When he cleansed the Temple (Matt. 21:13).
- ❖ When he accepted the praise of the crowds at his triumphal entry (Matt. 21:16).
- Our Lord believed in the history of the *Old Testament*. He referred to—
 - ❖ Creation (Mark 10:6).
 - ❖ Noah's ark (Matt. 24:38).
 - ❖ Lot's wife (Luke 17:32).
 - ❖ Destruction of Sodom (Luke 17:29).
 - ❖ Jonah and the fish (Matt. 12:40).
 - ❖ The Queen of Sheba and Solomon (Matt. 12:42).
 - ❖ The repentance of Nineveh (Matt. 12:41).
 - ❖ Naaman the leper (Luke 4:27).
 - ❖ Elijah and the widow (Luke 4:25, 26).
 - ❖ Moses and the serpent (John 3:14).
 - ❖ The first marriage (Matt. 19:5-7).
 - ❖ The blood of Abel (Luke 11:51).
 - ❖ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. 22:31, 32).
 - ❖ The burning bush (Luke 20:37).
 - ❖ The wilderness manna (John 6:31).
 - ❖ The murder of Zacharias (Matt. 23:35).

Our Lord said the law would be fulfilled (Matt. 5:18) and the Scriptures could not be broken (John 10:35). In concluding this section it may be said that every single *Old Testament* book is either directly or indirectly referred to in the *New Testament* (with the possible exception of the Song of Solomon). About half of the great sermons in the book of Acts are composed of verses taken from the *Old Testament*. Peter's twenty-three-verse sermon at Pentecost takes twelve of these verses from the *Old Testament* (Acts 2:14-36). Stephen's forty-eight-verse message is completely *Old Testament* in nature (Acts 7:2-50). Paul's first recorded sermon occurring in Acts 13:16-41 is twenty-six verses long and, of these, fifteen are from the *Old Testament*.

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 4

Different Views of the Bible

1. What view did Israel hold concerning the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament?

Answer.

2. Why did the early church hold councils?

Answer.

3. What is the view of agnosticism in regards to the *Bible*?

Answer.

4. What view does the liberal theologian have with respect to the *Bible*?

Answer.

5. Describe the view of the cults towards the *Bible*.

Answer.

6. How does the Church of Rome treat the Scriptures?

Answer.

7. Describe the view of Mysticism in relationship to the Bible.

Answer.

8. What is the position of Neo-Orthodoxy in regard to *Scripture*?

Answer.

9. Is the view of neo-evangelicalism progressive in its gospel expression?

Answer.

10. Is the orthodox position of the Scriptures the most conservative of all the views?

Answer.

11. About how many times does the Bible refer to itself as the Word of God?

Answer.

Chapter 5

Analogs of the Bible: What the Bible is Like

The Bible is Like a Mirror

The Bible is called a mirror because it reflects the mind of God and the true condition of man.

- *James 1:23-25 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

The Bible is Like a Seed

The Bible is called a seed because, once properly planted, it brings forth life, growth, and fruit.

- *1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*
- *James 1:18 "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."*
- *Matthew 13:18-23 "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

The Bible is Like Water

The *Bible* is called water because of its cleansing, quenching, and refreshing qualities.

- *Psalms 42:1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*
- *Psalms 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.*
- *Proverbs 25:25 As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.*
- *Isaiah 55:10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.*
- *Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”*
- *Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*
- *Revelation 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

The Bible is Like a Lamp

The *Bible* is called a lamp because it shows us where we are now, it guides us in the next step, and it keeps us from falling.

- *Psalms 119:105 “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*
- *Proverbs 6:23 “For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.”*
- *2 Peter 1:19. “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.”*

The Bible A Sword

The *Bible* is called a sword because of its piercing ability, operating with equal; effectiveness upon sinners, saints, and Satan. Of the various armor pieces mentioned in Ephesians 6:11-17, all to be worn by the believer, the only offensive piece is the “*sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*”

- *Hebrews 4:12* “*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*” (Heb. 4:12).
- *Ephesians 6:17* “*And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*”

The Bible is Like Precious Metals

The *Bible* is referred to as precious metals because of its desirability, its preciousness, its beauty, and its value.

- *Psalms 119:27* “*Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea above fine gold.*”
- *Psalms 12:6* “*The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.*”

The Bible is Like Milk and Meat which are Nourishing Foods

- *1 Peter 2:2* “*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*”
- *Hebrews 5:12-14* “*For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*”

The Bible is like Bread

John 6:51 “*I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*”

The Bible is like Honey

- *Psalm 19:10 “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.”*

The Bible is Like a Hammer

The Bible is referred to as a hammer because of its ability to both tear down and build up.

- *Jeremiah 23:29 Is not my word like as a fire? Saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*
- *Acts 9:4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*
- *Jude 20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.*

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 5

Analogies of the Bible: What the Bible is Like

1. Why is the *Bible* like a mirror?

Answer.

2. In what way is the *Bible* like a seed?

Answer.

3. Why is the *Bible* called water?

Answer.

4. How is the *Bible* like a lamp?

Answer.

5. In what way is the *Bible* like a sword?

Answer.

6. Why is the *Bible* likened to precious metals?

Answer.

7. How is the *Bible* like nourishing food?

Answer.

8. How is the Bible like a hammer?

Answer.

Chapter 6

The Bible and Human Reason

God gave us our minds and desires that we should use them! This is seen in two classic passages, one directed to the unsaved, the other to the saved. Isaiah 1:18 says, *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”* Paul said in Romans 12:1,2 *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

However, there are times when God desires us to submit our human reasoning to Him. Note the following admonition in Proverbs 3:5-7. *“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.”*

Often our reasoning is as the thinking of Naaman, who when asked to take a sevenfold bath in Jordan’s muddy waters, angrily replied, *“Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper”* (2 Kings 5:11).

But Elisha did not do so. Often God’s ways are different from our ways. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”* (Isa. 55:8, 9).

Christ: The Head of the Church

The *New Testament* abounds with passages that declare Christ the Head of the Church.

- *Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,*
- *Ephesians 2:19-20 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;*
- *Ephesians 4:15-16 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

- *Ephesians 5:23-30 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*
- *Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*
- *Colossians 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*

The Savior, it must be remembered, gave birth to the Church, and not the other way around (Matt. 16:18). Therefore the Christian must look to the *Bible* and not to any earthly religious structure for final instruction. Sometimes even those local churches mentioned in the *Bible* itself were grievously wrong. Note the following description of *New Testament* churches, some of which were started by Paul himself.

The church at Ephesus. *“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent” (Rev. 2:4, 5).*

The church at Pergamos. *“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth” (Rev. 2:14-16).*

The church at Thyatira. *“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols” (Rev. 2:20).*

The church at Sardis. *“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: For I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee” (Rev. 3:1-3).*

The church at Laodicea. *“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent”* (Rev. 3:15-19).

Tradition

In this atomic and space age where change occurs at rocket speed, many have come to appreciate some of our beautiful traditions of the past. And rightly so! But traditions, like changes, can be wrong. If a thing was in error when it began, it is still in error regardless of the centuries that separate it from us today. Often in the past, hurtful *“traditions of the fathers”* had crept into the church of the living God. Our Savior himself was grieved over some harmful Jewish traditions. Note his words in Matthew 15:6, *“ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.”* Later Paul would warn also of this. *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ”* (Col. 2:8).

Popes and Preachers

Even the godliest pastors are, after all, only finite men fully capable (apart from God’s grace) of the vilest sins. This is true of popes as well.

Feelings and Experiences

At times Christians fall into error because they *“feel led”* to do or say certain things. However, we must learn that at times our feelings can be treacherous and totally untrustworthy. The psalmist often spoke of this.

- *Psalm 27:17 “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.”*
- *Psalm 42:5 “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.”*
- *Psalm 77:1-10 “I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made*

diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever? And will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.”

- *Palm 116:11 “I said in my haste, All men are liars.”*

This is not only the case with our feelings, but also our experiences. One of Job’s three “*friends*,” Eliphaz, based all his advice to the suffering Job on experience (Job 4:12-16). He is later severely rebuked by God himself for doing this (Job 42:7). Thus, as valuable as personal experience may be, it is no substitute for the revealed *Word of God*. Listed are the various functions of this authoritative book called the *Bible*.

- It upholds. *Psalms 119:116 Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.*
- It orders steps. *Psalms 119:133 Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.*
- It produces joy. *Psalms 119:162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.*
- It strengthens. *Psalms 119:28 My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word. 1 John 2:14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.*
- It gives hope. *Psalms 119:74 They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.*
- It gives light. *Psalms 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*
- It gives understanding. *Psalms 119:169 Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word.*
- It shows God’s will. *Isaiah 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*
- It builds up. *Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*

- It produces fruit. *John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*
- It convicts of sin. *Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*
- It converts the soul. *James 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. 1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*
- It cleanses the conscience. *John 15:3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*
- It consecrates life. *John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
- It corrects the wrong. *2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*
- It confirms the right. *John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.*
- It comforts the heart. *Psalms 119:50 This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.*

Because of this, the child of God is to respond to this authoritative book in the following ways.

- Read it. *Deuteronomy 31:11 When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 1 Thessalonians 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.*
- Heed it. *Psalms 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. 1 Timothy 4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*
- Share it. *Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

- Desire it. *1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*
- Preach it. *2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*
- Rightly divide it. *2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
- Live by it. *Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*
- Use it. *Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*
- Suffer for it, and if need be, die for it. *Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

In summary, the child of God is to *know* His word in his head, *stow* it in his heart, *show* it in his life, and *sow* it in the world.

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 6

The Bible and Human Reason

1. List seventeen functions of the Bible?

Answer.

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2. List nine ways the child of God can respond to the Bible.

Answer.

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Chapter 7

Proofs that the Bible is the Word of God

The Amazing Unity of the Bible

That the Bible is a unity is a fact no honest reader can deny. In the preface of most Bibles, the thirty-nine Old Testament and twenty-seven New Testament books are listed in two parallel columns down the page. But a more accurate way would be to place the entire sixty-six collection in a clock-like circle, with Genesis occupying the first minute past twelve, Exodus the second, Leviticus the third, and so on. Finally, the book of Revelation would be placed on the number twelve, right next to Genesis. It is simply thrilling how these two books, Genesis the first and Revelation the last, perfectly dovetail together in a unity only God could create. For example:

- In Genesis we read: *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”* (Gen. 1:1).

In Revelation we read: *“I saw a new heaven and a new earth”* (Rev. 21:1).
- In Genesis we see described the first Adam and his wife Eve in the Garden of Eden, reigning over the earth (1:27, 28).

In Revelation we see described the last Adam and his wife, the Church, in the City of God, reigning over the entire universe (21:9).
- In Genesis, we are told: *“and the gathering of the waters called the seas”* (1:10). In Revelation we are told: *“and there was no more sea”* (21:1).
- In Genesis God created the day and the night, the sun and moon (1:5, 16).

In Revelation *“there shall be no night there”* (22:5). *“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof”* (21:23).
- In Genesis the tree of life is denied to sinful man (3:22).

In Revelation the tree of life *“yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations”* (22:2).
- In Genesis man hears God say: *“Cursed is the ground for thy sake”* (3:17).

In Revelation man will hear God say: *“and there shall be no more curse”* (22:3).
- In Genesis Satan appears to torment man (3:1).
- In Revelation Satan disappears, himself to be tormented forever (20:10).

- Genesis the old earth was punished through a flood (7:12).
- In Revelation the new earth shall be purified through a fire (2 Pet. 3:6-12; Rev. 21:1).
- In Genesis, man's early home was beside a river (2:10).
- In Revelation, man's eternal home will be beside a river— *“and he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb”* (22:1).
- In Genesis the patriarch Abraham weeps for Sarah (23:2).

In Revelation the children of Abraham will have God himself wipe away all tears from their eyes (21:4).

- In Genesis God destroys an earthly city, wicked Sodom, from the sands (ch. 19).

In Revelation God presents a heavenly city, New Jerusalem, from the skies (21:1).

- Genesis ends with a believer in Egypt, lying in a coffin (50:1-3).
- Revelation ends with all believers in eternity, reigning forever (21:4).

This unity is achieved in spite of the long period of time involved in its writing. More than fifteen centuries elapsed between the writing of Genesis and Revelation. Nearly 400 years elapsed between the writing of Malachi and Matthew. This unity is achieved in spite of the many authors (some forty) and their various occupations (approximately nineteen). *“The Lord gave the Word: great was the company of those who published it”* (Ps. 68:11).

- Moses was an Egyptian prince.
- Joshua was a soldier.
- Samuel was a priest.
- David was a king.
- Esther was a queen.
- Ruth was a housewife.
- Job was a rich farmer.
- Amos was a poor farmer.
- Ezra was a scribe.
- Isaiah was a prophet.
- Daniel was a prime minister.
- Nehemiah was a cupbearer.
- Matthew was a tax collector.
- Mark was an evangelist.

- Luke was a physician.
- John was a wealthy fisherman.
- Peter was a poor fisherman.
- Jude and James probably were carpenters.
- Paul was a tentmaker.

This unity is achieved in spite of the different geographical places where the Bible was written.

- In the desert (Ex. 17).
- On Mt. Sinai (Ex. 20).
- In Palestine (most).
- In Egypt (Jeremiah?).
- On the Isle of Patmos (Revelation).
- In Babylon (Daniel).
- In Persia (Esther).
- In Corinth (1 and 2 Thessalonians).
- In Ephesus (Galatians?).
- In Caesarea (Luke?).
- From Rome (2 Timothy).

This unity is achieved in spite of the many different styles of its writing.

- As history.
- As prophecy.
- As biography.
- As autobiography.
- As poetry.
- As law.
- In letter form.
- In symbolic form.
- In proverb form.
- In doctrinal form.

Let us imagine a religious novel of sixty-six chapters which was begun by a single writer around the sixth century AD. After the author has completed but five chapters, he suddenly dies. But during the next 1000 years, up to the sixteenth century, around thirty amateur “*free-lance*” writers feel constrained to contribute to this unfinished religious novel. Few of these authors share anything in common. They speak different languages, live at different times in different countries, have totally different backgrounds and occupations, and write in different styles.

Let us furthermore imagine that at the completion of the thirty-ninth chapter, the writing for some reason suddenly stops. Not one word is therefore added from the sixteenth until the twentieth century. After this long delay it begins once again when eight new authors add the final twenty-seven chapters.

With all this in mind, what would be the chances of this religious novel becoming a moral, scientific, prophetic, and historical unity? The answer is obvious—not one in a million. And yet this is the story of the Bible.

Its Indestructibility. The story is told of a visitor who toured a blacksmith shop. Viewing heaps of discarded hammers but only one huge anvil, he asked: “*How often do you replace your anvil?*” With a smile the owner replied, “*Never! It is the anvil that wears out the hammers, you know!*” So it is with the Word of God. The hammers of persecution, ridicule, higher criticism, liberalism, and atheism have for centuries pounded out their vicious blows upon the divine anvil, but all to no avail. There they lie, in rusting piles, while the mighty anvil of the *Scriptures* stands unbroken, unshaken, and unchipped.

Its indestructibility in spite of political persecutions (from the Roman Emperors). In AD 303, Emperor Diocletian thought he had destroyed every hated Bible. After many tireless years of ruthless slaughter and destruction, he erected a column of victory over the embers of a burned Bible. The title on the column read: “*Extinct is the Name of Christian.*” Twenty years later, the new Emperor Constantine offered a reward for any remaining Bibles. Within twenty-four hours no less than fifty copies were brought out of hiding and presented to the king.

Its indestructibility in spite of religious persecutions. As seen through the persecutions by Roman Catholic popes. Almost without exception, the early popes opposed the reading and translating of the Bible. In 1199, Pope Innocent III ordered the burning of all Bibles. As seen through the persecutions leveled against John Wycliffe and William Tyndale. Of all the heroes in church history, no two other names are so closely associated with the Word of God as the names of Wycliffe and Tyndale. The very mention of these two men was no doubt sufficient to turn the devil livid with rage. It is therefore no surprise to read of the vicious attacks leveled against them.

John Wycliffe (c.1330-1384). Wycliffe lived at a time (the early part of the fourteenth century) when the burning question was: Who shall rule England, the king or the pope? Wycliffe believed the best way to break the grievous yoke of Romanism would be to place the Bible into the hands of the common people. This he did by translating (for the first time in history) the complete Bible into English. He then organized and sent forth a group of preachers (called the Lollards) to teach the Word of God all across England.

On December 28, 1384, while conducting a service in the Lutterworth Church, he was suddenly stricken with paralysis and died three days later. After his death, those who hated his Bible translation activities said the following things about Wycliffe:

“John Wycliffe, the organ of the devil, the enemy of the Church, the confusion of the common people, the idol of heretics, the looking glass of hypocrites, the encourager of schism, the sower of hatred, the storehouse of lies, the sink of flattery, was suddenly struck by the judgment of God... that mouth which was to speak huge things against God and against His Saints or holy church, was miserably drawn aside... showing plainly that the curse which God had thundered forth against Cain was also inflicted upon him.” [From the mouth of a Monk]

‘That pestilent wretch John Wycliffe, the son of the old serpent, the forerunner of Antichrist, who had completed his iniquity by inverting a new translation of the Scriptures.’” (H. S. Miller, Biblical Introduction, p. 329)

One would almost conclude the Savior had this in mind when he spoke the following words: *“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me” (Jn. 16:1-3).*

One final quotation from Miller’s book seems appropriate here: *“In 1415, the Council of Constance which consigned John Hus and Jerome of Prague to a cruel death, demanded that the bones of the notorious heretic Wycliffe...be taken out of the consecrated ground and scattered at a distance from the sepulchre. Thirteen years later (1428), 44 years after his death, Pope Clement VIII, ordered no further delay; the grave was torn up, the coffin and skeleton borne down to the bank of the River Swift, a fire was kindled, the bones were burned, and the ashes thrown into the river. In the words of Thomas Fuller, so often quoted: ‘The Swift conveyed them into the Avon, the Avon into the Severn, the Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over.’” (pp. 329, 330)*

William Tyndale (1484-1536). Tyndale was one of the greatest translators of God’s Word who ever lived. He was born in England, and so skilled in seven languages (Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, and Dutch), that whichever he might be speaking one would believe that language was his native tongue. Our own King James Version is practically a fifth revision of Tyndale’s, and it retains many of the words and much of the character, form, and style of his version. In 1525, he printed the first copy ever produced of the New Testament in English. His overall goal in life was perhaps best expressed through a statement he made in 1521: *“I defy the Pope and all his laws; if God spares my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know...the Scripture.”*

In 1529, an amusing and thrilling event happened in England and Europe concerning the *Word of God*. Tyndale had been driven from England and had fled to Germany, but had continued producing New Testaments and slipping them back into England. One day, the Bishop of London (Bishop Tunstall) mentioned to a British merchant, a man named Packington and a secret friend of Tyndale, his desire to buy up all copies of the *New Testament*. Said Packington,

'My Lord, if it be your pleasure, I can buy them, for I know where they are sold, if it be in your Lord's pleasure to pay for them. I will then assure you to have every book of them that is imprinted.' Said the Bishop, *'Gentle master Packington, do your diligence and get them; and with all my heart I will pay for them whatsoever they cost you, for the books are erroneous...and I intend to destroy them all, and burn them at St. Paul's Cross.'*

Packington then came to Tyndale and said, *'William, I know that thou art a poor man, and hast a heap of New Testaments and books by thee, by the which thou hast endangered thy friends and beggared thyself; and I have now gotten thee a merchant, which with ready money shall dispatch thee of all that thou hast, if you think it so profitable to thyself.'*

'Who is the merchant?' asked Tyndale.

'The Bishop of London,' answered Packington.

'Oh, that is because he will burn them.'

'Yes, marry, but what of that? The Bishop will burn them anyhow, and it is best that you should have the money for enabling you to imprint others instead.'

'I shall do this,' said Tyndale, *'for these two benefits shall come thereof: First, I shall get money to bring myself out of debt, and the whole world will cry out against the burning of God's Word; and Second, the overplus of the money that shall remain to me shall make me more studious to correct the said New Testament, and so newly to imprint the same once again, and I trust the second will be much better than ever was the first.'*

So the bargain was made. The bishop had the books, Packington had the thanks, and Tyndale had the money. Later, a man named Constantine was being tried as a heretic, and the judge promised him favor if he would tell how Tyndale received so much help in printing so many Testaments. He replied, *'My Lord, I will tell you truly: It is the Bishop of London that hath helped, for he hath bestowed among us a great deal of money upon the New Testaments to burn them, and that hath been, and yet is, our chief help and comfort.'*" (Biblical Introduction, p. 334)

Again, to quote from Miller's textbook: *"On Friday, October 6, 1536, Tyndale was executed. By the Emperor's laws, only Anabaptists were burned alive, so he escaped that fate. He was led out and permitted to engage in a few moments of prayer. With fervent zeal and a loud voice he cried, 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes!' Then his feet were bound to the stake, the iron chain was fastened around his neck, with a hemp rope loosely tied in a noose, and fagots and straw were heaped around him. At a given signal the rope was tightened, and Tyndale was strangled to death. Then the torch was applied, and the body was quickly consumed."* (Pp. 338, 339)

Its indestructibility in spite of philosophical persecution. Here several cases come to mind:

Voltaire (1694-1788). He once said, “*Another century and there will be not a Bible on the earth.*” The century is gone, and the circulation of the Bible is one of the marvels of the age. After he died, his old printing press and the very house where he lived was purchased by the Geneva Bible Society and made a depot for Bibles. On December 24, 1933, the British Government bought the valuable Codex Sinaiticus from the Russians for half a million dollars. On that same day, a first edition of Voltaire’s work sold for eleven cents in Paris bookshops.

Thomas Paine (1737-1809). He once said, “*I have gone through the Bible as a man would go through a forest with an axe to fell trees. I have cut down tree after tree; here they lie. They will never grow again.*” Tom Paine thought he had demolished the *Bible*, but since he crawled into a drunkard’s grave in 1809, the *Bible* has leaped forward as never before.

Joseph Stalin (1879-1953). This bloody butcher took over all of Russia at the death of Lenin in the late twenties. From this point on until his death in the fifties, Stalin instituted a “*ban the Bible*” purge from the USSR such as had never been witnessed before. This miserable man literally attempted to wipe the *Word of God* and the God of the Word from the Russian minds. Did he succeed? A recent poll taken in Russia shows that today more people than ever believe in God and his *Word*.

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 7

Proofs that the Bible is the Word of God

1. How many books are in the OT and how many are in the NT?

Answer.

2. List 10 authors of the *Bible* and what each did.

Answer.

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Or

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3. List 5 geographical places where the *Bible* was written.

Answer.

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4. List 5 styles of writing found in the *Bible*.

Answer.

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OR

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5. In what three ways has the *Bible* been placed under persecution?

Answer.

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6. What did John Wycliffe believe was the best way to break the grievous yoke of Romanism?

Answer.

7. In 1525 what did William Tyndale accomplish?

Answer.

8. What is the French infidel Voltaire famous for saying?

Answer.

9. How did Thomas Paine die?

Answer.

10. Did Stalin succeed in purging Russia of the *Bible*?

Answer.

Chapter 8

More Proofs that the Bible is the Word of God

Its Historical Accuracy

Less than a century ago, the agnostic took great glee in sneeringly referring to the “*hundreds of historical mistakes*” in the Bible. But then came the science of archaeology and with each shovel full of dirt the sneers have become less visible, until today they scarcely can be seen. When one thinks of historical scholarship and the Bible, three brilliant scholars come to mind. These three are:

Sir William Ramsey (b. 1851—). For many years Ramsey was professor of humanity at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. He was, in his time, the world’s most eminent authority on the geography and history of ancient Asia Minor (Turkey today). In his zeal to study every available early document concerning that period and area, he undertook an intensive research of the *New Testament* book of *Acts* and also the *Gospel of Luke*. This study, however, was approached with much skepticism. At that time he penned the following description of the book of Acts: “...*a highly imaginative and carefully colored account of primitive Christianity.*”

But after many years of intensive study, this scholar, who began an unbeliever, became a staunch defender of the *Word of God*. The absolute historical accuracy of Luke’s writings, even in the minutest details, captured first his brain and then his heart. Ramsey authored many books, but one of his better known is entitled: *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament*. Ramsey’s overall opinion of the Bible is perhaps best seen in the following quote: “*I take the view that Luke’s history is unsurpassed in regard to its trustworthiness...you may press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historian’s and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment.*”

William F. Albright (1891-1971). One of the greatest and most respected oriental scholars who ever lived was William F. Albright. He writes the following concerning the *Bible* and his historical findings: “*The reader may rest assured: nothing has been found to disturb a reasonable faith, and nothing has been discovered which can disprove a single theological doctrine...We no longer trouble ourselves with attempts to ‘harmonize’ religion and science, or to ‘prove’ the Bible. The Bible can stand for itself.*” (Robert Young, *Young’s Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, p. 51)

Robert Dick Wilson (b. 1856). Probably the most qualified *Old Testament* linguist of all time was Robert Dick Wilson. He was born in 1856 and took his undergraduate work at Princeton University, graduating in 1876. He then completed both the MA and the Ph.D. After this, he spent two years at the University of Berlin in further postgraduate studies. Wilson taught Old Testament courses at Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh and returned to Princeton where he received international fame as a Hebrew scholar without peer. He was perfectly at home in over forty ancient Semitic languages. Dr. Wilson writes the following about himself:

*“If a man is called an expert, the first thing to be done is to establish the fact that he is such. One expert may be worth more than a million other witnesses that are not experts. Before a man has the right to speak about the history and the language...of the Old Testament, the Christian Church has the right to demand that a man should establish his ability to do so. For forty-five years continuously, since I left college, I have devoted myself to the one great study of the Old Testament, in all its languages, in all its archaeology, in all its translations, and as far as possible in everything bearing upon its text and history. I tell you this so that you may see why I can and do speak as an expert. I may add that the result of my forty-five years of study of the Bible has led me all the time to a firmer faith that in the Old Testament we have a true historical account of the history of the Israelite people; and I have a right to commend this to some of those bright men and women who think that they can laugh at the old-time Christian and believer in the Word of God...I have claimed to be an expert. Have I the right to do so? Well, when I was in the Seminary I used to read my New Testament in nine different languages. I learned my Hebrew by heart, so that I could recite it without the intermission of a syllable...as soon as I graduated from the Seminary, I became a teacher of Hebrew for a year and then I went to Germany. When I got to Heidelberg, I made a decision. I decided—and did it with prayer—to consecrate my life to the study of the Old Testament. I was twenty-five then; and I judged from the life of my ancestors that I should live to be seventy; so that I should have forty-five years to work. I divided the period into three parts. The first fifteen years I would devote to the study of the languages necessary. For the second fifteen I was going to devote myself to the study of the text of the Old Testament; and I reserved the last fifteen years for the work of writing the results of my previous studies and investigations, so as to give them to the world. And the Lord has enabled me to carry out that plan almost to a year” (David Otis Fuller, *Which Bible?* pp. 40, 41).*

Authenticated by Archaeology

Halley’s Bible Handbook lists some 112 examples. *Unger’s Bible Handbook* lists 96. A summary of both these lists would include the following, all given to prove the historical accuracy of the Bible.

- The Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:8-14). Archaeology has long established that the lower Tigris-Euphrates Valley in Mesopotamia (where Eden was located) was the cradle of civilization.
- The Fall of man (Gen. 3:1-24). Many non-Hebrew cultures record this event. It is found in the Babylonian tablet called the Temptation Seal, in the Assyrian Archives, referred to as the Adam and Eve Seal, and in the Egyptian Library of Amenhotep III.
- The longevity of early mankind (Gen. 5:1-32). The oldest known outline of world history is the Weld-Blumdel Prism, written around 2170 BC. This outline includes a list of eight pre-flood rulers. The shortest reign was said to have been 18,600 years, while the longest covered a period of 43,200 years. Of course this was gross exaggeration, but the point is that the historical root for all this may be found in the Genesis account which does accurately state that Methuselah did indeed live to be 969 years of age.

A common objection to this and other so-called legends would claim that early mankind simply invented myths of their ancestors doing things they wished they could have done. But the fallacy of this argument may be demonstrated by the fact that there is no ancient legend of a nation or tribe of flying men, in spite of the fact that all men everywhere have always longed to soar into the skies.

- The universal flood (Gen. 6:1–9:29). There is so much evidence concerning the flood in Noah’s day that one scarcely knows where to start. It can be demonstrated that, without exception, every major human culture has a flood tradition. Especially is this true in the ancient Babylonian civilization, as seen by their Epic of Gilgamesh. If the author may be allowed a personal illustration here, I am acquainted with a New Tribes missionary named Rod Wallin. Some years ago Rod began his work among a primitive people in the highlands of New Guinea. He was the first white man ever to set foot in that area. Many years were spent learning their difficult language. He then discovered to his astonishment that these natives had a detailed flood tradition.
- The Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9). Over two dozen ancient temple towers in Mesopotamia called ziggurats have been excavated.
- Abraham’s birthplace (Gen. 11:27-31). World-famous archaeologist C. L. Wooley’s excavation in 1922-34 in Mesopotamia has made Ur of the Chaldees one of the best-known ancient sites of all times. When Abraham left Ur in 2000 BC the city was at the height of its splendor as a commercial and religious center. (See also Josh. 24:2.)
- Abraham’s visit to Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20). Due to space problems, many of the following *Old Testament* events which have been authenticated by archaeology will simply be alluded to and not expanded upon.
- Abraham’s battle with the kings in Genesis 14.
- The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18-19). William Albright found at the Southeast corner of the Dead Sea great quantities of relics of a period dating between 2500 and 2000 BC., with evidence of a dense population which for some reason ceased abruptly around 2000 BC. The evidence indicated an earthquake and an explosion.
- Joseph and Potiphar’s wife (Gen. 39). There is an Egyptian story entitled “*A Tale of Two Brothers*” which may have for its foundation the events related in Genesis 39.
- The Seven-year famine (Gen. 41:46-57).
- Israel’s entrance into Egypt (Ex. 1:1-6).

- The episode of the bricks without straw (Ex. 1:11; 5:7-19).
- Moses' birth (Ex. 2:10).
- The death of Pharaoh's firstborn (Ex. 12:29).
- The Exodus (Ex. 12:1–14:31).
- The fact of Rahab's house located on Jericho's wall (Josh. 2:15).
- The fall of Jericho (Josh. 6:1-27). The archaeologist Garstang found evidence that Jericho was destroyed about 1400 BC. (about the date given to Joshua) and that the walls had fallen flat, outward, and down the hillside. This was extremely unusual, for had the city been captured the usual way, its walls would have been pushed inward by the ramming weapons of that day. He also found the layer of ashes left by Joshua's fire. *Joshua 6:24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.*
- Deborah's victory of the Canaanites (Judges 4:23, 24; 5:19).
- Saul's reign (1 Sam. 9:1–31:13).
- David's conquests (2 Sam. 1:1–24:25).
- Solomon's gold (1 Kings 14:25, 26).
- Solomon's stables (1 Kings 9:19; 10:26-29). The Oriental Institute has found the ruins of his stables with their stone hitching-poles and mangers.
- Solomon's copper furnaces (1 Kings 7).
- Solomon's navy (1 Kings 9).
- Jeroboam's calves (1 Kings 12:25-33).
- The Egyptian Shishak and his invasion (1 Kings 14:25-28).
- The building of Samaria by Omri (1 Kings 16:24).

- The rebuilding of Jericho (1 Kings 16:34).
- Ahab's house of ivory (1 Kings 22:39).
- Jezebel's cosmetic box (2 Kings 9:30). The actual saucers in which she mixed her cosmetics have been found in Samaria among the ruins of Ahab's ivory house.
- The Assyrian captivity of northern Israel (2 Kings 15:29).
- The tunnel of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:3, 4).
- Manasseh's reign (2 Kings 21:1-15).
- Esther's palace (Est. 1:2).
- The Babylonian captivity of Judah (2 Kings 25).
- The reign of Belshazzar (Dan. 5).
- The fall of Babylon (Dan. 5).
- The edict of Cyrus (Ezra 1:2, 3; 2 Chron. 36:22, 23).
- The repentance of Nineveh in Jonah's day (Jonah 4). History has shown that during the reign of Shalmaneser II (the King of Nineveh in Jonah's time), there was a sudden religious movement which resulted in a change from the worship of many gods to that of one God whom they called Nebo. Nebo was probably the Assyrian name for the Hebrew *Elohim* (Gen. 1:1). It would seem that in earlier days he had been worshiped as the supreme and only God. To the worship of this God the nation now returned.

Its Scientific Accuracy

It has previously been discussed in this study that although the Bible is primarily a spiritual message from God and not specifically a scientific textbook, all scientific statements found in the Scriptures must nevertheless be taken literally and at face value. Actually the Bible contains far more specific scientific statements than one might realize. Some of these precepts would include the following.

- The fact that the earth is spherical. Some seven centuries BC the Hebrew prophet Isaiah wrote: "*It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth...*" (Isa. 40:22). While it is true that a few Greek philosophers did postulate this as early as 540 BC, the common man held the earth

to be flat until the introduction of the compass and the fifteenth-century voyages of Columbus and Magellan.

- The fact that the earth is suspended in space. The book of Job is thought to be one of the oldest in the Bible, written perhaps earlier than 1500 B.C. At this time one of the most advanced “scientific” theories concerning the earth was that our planet was flat and rested securely upon the back of a gigantic turtle who was slowly plodding through a cosmic sea of some sort. But note the refreshing (and accurate) words of Job: “*He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing*” (Job 26:7). All this was not known by the scientists of the world until the writings of Sir Isaac Newton in AD 1687.
- The fact that the stars are innumerable. Nearly twenty centuries BC, God spoke to Abraham one night and said: “*Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be*” (Gen. 15:5). Abraham must have at first wondered about this. God was promising him to be the founder of a nation whose descendants would be as uncountable as the stars. But Abraham could count the stars. There they were—a little under 1200 visible to the naked eye. Was his future nation to be limited to this number? Although we are not told so, he must have reasoned that perhaps there were “*a few more*” up there that he couldn’t see. And he would not be disappointed, for today scientists tell us there are probably as many stars in the heavens as there are grains of sand on all the sea shores of the world. In fact, in a previous conversation with Abraham, God used this very comparison: “*And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered*” (Gen. 13:16). Thus does the Bible describe the heavens. (See also Jer. 33:22; Heb. 11:12.) But what about the scientific opinion of that day? As late as AD. 150 the famous astronomer Ptolemy dogmatically declared the number of the stars to be exactly 1,056.
- The fact that there are mountains and canyons in the sea. As recently as a century or so ago, the ocean’s volume and size was viewed as a watery bowl, which sloped from the coastline gently downward toward the middle, where it was deepest. It then was thought to proceed upward to the other side. Of course we now know this to be totally untrue. Some of the highest mountains and deepest canyons are located on the floor of the Pacific Ocean. In fact, the deepest hole yet found is the Marianas Trench, just off the Philippines; it is over seven miles deep. But long before ocean science discovered this, the Bible graphically described it. During one of his songs of deliverance, David spoke of the canyons of the sea (2 Sam. 22:16), and a backslidden prophet described the submerged mountains during the world’s first submarine trip. (See Jonah 2:6.)
- The fact that there are springs and fountains in the sea. Shortly after World War II, research ships discovered many underwater volcanoes. The number is estimated today to be at least 10,000. Further research by Dr. William W. Rubey of the U.S. Geological Survey has shown the present rate of water increase from underwater volcanic outlets to be 430 million tons each year. The earth’s heat drives the entrapped water from underground molten rock and forces it out through one of these natural openings. This interesting fact is vividly described in at least three Old Testament passages. (See Gen. 7:11; 8:2; Prov. 8:28.)

Genesis 7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

Genesis 8:2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.

Proverbs 8:28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep.

- The fact that there are watery paths (ocean currents) in the sea. In his booklet *Has God Spoken?* Author A. O. Schnabel writes the following: “*David said in Psalms 8:8 that God had subjected all things to men, including: ‘Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.’ The Hebrew word ‘paths’ carries the literal meaning of ‘customary roads.’*”

Matthew Fountaine Maury is called ‘*The Pathfinder of the Seas.*’ This American is the father of today’s oceanography and responsible for the establishment of Annapolis Academy. A statue of Maury stands in Richmond, Virginia—charts of the sea in one hand, and Bible in the other. Until Maury’s efforts there were no charts or sailing lanes. One day during a temporary illness, his eldest son was reading to him from the Bible, and read Psalms 8:8. “*The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.*”

Maury stopped him and said, ‘*Read that again.*’ After hearing it again, he exclaimed, ‘*It is enough—if the Word of God says there are paths in the sea, they must be there, and I am going to find them.*’ Within a few years he had charted the sea-lanes and currents. His *Physical Geography of the Sea* was the first textbook of modern oceanography.” (p. 38)

- The fact of the hydrologic cycle. This would include precipitation, evaporation, cloud construction, movements of moisture by wind circuits, etc.

Job 26:8 He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

Job 36:27-28 For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof: 28 Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly.

Job 37:16 Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

Job 38:25-27 Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; 26 To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness,

wherein there is no man; 27 To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

Psalms 135:7 He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.

Ecclesiastes 1:6-7 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirlleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. 7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

- The fact that all living things are reproduced after their own kind. Genesis 1:21 “And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.” Genesis 6:19 “*And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.*”

For hundreds of years scientists followed the spontaneous generation theory of Aristotle (350 BC). They believed eggs of all lower animals (insects, etc.) were formed out of rotting substance. Frogs and other small sea life, they thought, had their origin in slime pools. In fact, it was not until 1862 that Louis Pasteur proved once for all that there was no such thing as spontaneous generation. Then, in 1865, a monk named Johann Mendel demonstrated even more forcibly the rigid laws of heredity. But one could learn all this in the first few chapters of the Bible.

The facts involved in health and sanitation. Moses gave the great law in the *Bible*, of course, who established hundreds of rules to govern health and sanitation. Moses grew up in the court of Pharaoh, spending the first forty years of his life there.

About this time a famous ancient medical book called *The Papyrus Ebers* was being written in Egypt. Because of Egypt's role in the world at that time, this work soon achieved fame as the official standard for its day. Actually it was filled with quack cures, old wives' tales, and practically every false superstition of its day. In his book *None of These Diseases*, author S. McMillen writes:

“Several hundred remedies for diseases are advised in the Papyrus Ebers. The drugs include ‘lizard’s blood, swine’s teeth, putrid meat, stinking fat, moisture from pig’s ears, milk goose grease, asses’ hoofs, animal fats from various sources, excreta from animals, including human beings, donkeys, antelopes, dogs, cats, and even flies.’” (p. 11)

The point of all the above is simply this—Moses was well acquainted with all the medical knowledge of his day. Yet in all his writings and proven remedies concerning health and sanitation, he never once even indirectly refers to the false “cures” found in the *Papyrus Ebers*.

Let us now examine what he did prescribe for the health of marching Israel.

1. Concerning sickness. Moses gave comprehensive laws concerning sickness. These included laws for those having leprosy or cases with open sores. He thus laid down rules for the recognition of infected individuals, for quarantine or isolation, and concerning the uncleanness of anything touched by these people. In other words, Moses recorded laws comparable to modern health and sanitation practice in most civilized countries today. Again, to quote from *None of These Diseases*:

“For many hundreds of years the dreaded disease leprosy had killed countless millions of people in Europe. The extent of the horrible malady among Europeans is given by Dr. George Rosen, Columbia University professor of Public Health: ‘Leprosy cast the greatest blight that threw its shadow over the daily life of medieval humanity. Not even the Black Death in the fourteenth century...produced a similar state of fright...’

What did the physicians offer to stop the ever-increasing ravages of leprosy? Some taught that it was brought on by eating hot food, pepper, garlic and the meat of diseased hogs. Other physicians said it was caused by malign conjunctions of the planets. Naturally, their suggestions for prevention were utterly worthless... What [finally] brought the major plagues of the Dark Ages under control? George Rosen gives us the answer: ‘Leadership was taken by the church, as the physicians had nothing to offer.

The church took as its guiding principle the concept of contagion as embodied in the Old Testament... This idea and its practical consequences are defined with great clarity in the book of Leviticus... once the condition of leprosy had been established, the patient was to be segregated and excluded from the community. Following the precepts laid down in Leviticus the church undertook the task of combating leprosy... It accomplished the first great feat... in methodical eradication of disease.’” (p. 13)

2. Concerning sanitation. Two quotes from Dr. McMillen are helpful here: *“Up to the close of the eighteenth century, hygienic provisions, even in the great capitals, were quite primitive. It was the rule for excrement to be dumped into the streets which were unpaved and filthy. Powerful stenches gripped villages and cities. It was a heyday for flies as they bred in the filth and spread intestinal disease that killed millions.*

Such waste of human lives that could have been saved if people had only taken seriously God’s provision for freeing man of diseases! With one sentence the Book of books pointed the way to deliverance from the deadly epidemics of typhoid, cholera, and dysentery: ‘You shall set off a place outside the camp and, when you go out to use it, you must carry a spade among your gear and dig a hole, have easement, and turn to cover the excrement’ (Deut. 23:12, 13, Berkeley).” (p. 15)

Dr. McMillen goes on to say that until the beginning of this century there was a frightful mortality rate in the hospitals of the world due to infection caused by doctors not washing their

hands. In the maternity ward alone of the world-famous Vienna Medical Center Hospital, one out of every six women died due to infection. McMillen then writes:

“Such mortality would not have occurred if surgeons had only followed the method God gave to Moses regarding the meticulous method of hand washing and changing of clothes after contact with infectious diseases...The Scriptural method specified not merely washing in a basin, but repeated washings in running water, with time intervals allowed for drying and exposure to sun to kill bacteria not washed off.” (pp. 17, 18)

3. Concerning circumcision. Some final thoughts from McMillen are extremely appropriate here. In the third chapter of his book he discusses the astonishing scarcity of cervical cancer among Jewish women. Medical science has now attributed this blessing to the rite of circumcision practiced by Jewish males. This simple operation prevents the growth of cancer producing *Smegma bacillus* which during physical relations can be transferred from the uncircumcised male to the female. McMillen then writes:

“There is one final but remarkably unique fact about the matter of circumcision. In November, 1946, an article in The Journal of The American Medical Association listed the reasons why circumcision of the newborn male is advisable. Three months later a letter from another specialist appeared in the same journal. He agreed heartily with the writer of the article on the advantages of circumcision, but he criticized him for failing to mention the safest time to perform the operation. This is a point well taken. L. Emmett Holt and Rustin McIntosh report that a newborn infant has a peculiar susceptibility to bleeding between the second and fifth days of life....It is felt that the tendency to hemorrhage is due to the fact that the important blood-clotting element, Vitamin K, is not formed until the fifth to the seventh day....A second element which is also necessary for the normal clotting of blood is prothrombin....It appears (based on data from the science of Pediatrics) that an eight-day old baby has more available prothrombin than on any other day in its entire life. Thus one observes that from a consideration of Vitamin K and prothrombin determinations the perfect day to perform a circumcision is the eighth day.” (pp. 21-23)

Keeping all this in mind, one simply marvels at the accuracy of the Book when the following passage is read: *“And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed” (Gen. 17:9-12).*

Personal Reflection

Describe your reaction to discovering the historical and scientific accuracy of the *Bible*.

Chapter 9

Prophecy and the Bible

The Bible has a Supernatural Element The Prophecies of Scripture are Accurate

One of the acid tests of any religion is its ability to predict the future. In this area (as in all other areas) the Bible reigns supreme. One searches in vain through the pages of other sacred writings to find even a single line of accurate prophecy. Some seven centuries BC the Hebrew prophet Isaiah wrote: “*Let them...shew us what shall happen...or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods...*” (Isa. 41:22, 23). The Church is willing to face that great challenge. We now consider the amazingly accurate prophecies under various categories.

Prophecies Dealing with the Nation Israel Prove the Bible to be True

- **Israel would become a great nation.** *Genesis 12:1-3 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*
- **Her kings would come out of the tribes of Judah.** *Genesis 49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*
- **She would spend 400 years in Egypt.** *Genesis 15:13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.*
- **The nation would suffer a civil war.** *1 Kings 11:31 And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee.*
- **The nation would spend seventy years in Babylon.** *Jeremiah 25:11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 29:10 For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.*

- **She would return (in part) to Jerusalem after the seventy years.** *Daniel 9:1-2 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; 2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.*
- **Israel would eventually be scattered among the nations of the world.** *Deuteronomy 28:25 The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. Deuteronomy 28:64 And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. Leviticus 26:33 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.*
- **Israel would become a byword among these nations.** *Deuteronomy 28:37 And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.*
- **Israel would loan to many nations, but borrow from none.** *Deuteronomy 28:12 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.*
- **Israel would be hounded and persecuted.** *Deuteronomy 28:65-67 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: 66 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: 67 In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.*
- **Israel would nevertheless retain her identity.** *Leviticus 26:44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. Jeremiah 46:28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.*
- **Israel would reject her Messiah (Isa. 53).**

- **Because of this, her enemies would dwell in her land.** *Leviticus 26:32 And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*
- **Jerusalem would be destroyed.** *Luke 19:41-44 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, 42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. 43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, 44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Luke 21:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.*

Prophecies dealing with Various Gentile Nations

- **Edom.** Esau, Jacob's brother, was the founder of the nation Edom (see Gen. 36). Years after his death, Edom refused to help Israel, the nation founded by Jacob (see Num. 20) and actually delighted in persecuting God's people. Because of this, God pronounced doom upon Edom. According to various biblical prophecies: their commerce was to cease, their race was to become extinct and their land was to be desolate.

Jeremiah 49:17-18 Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.18 As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

Ezekiel 35:3-7 And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. 4 I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD. 5 Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end: 6 Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee. 7 Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth.

Malachi 1:4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

All this has taken place in spite of her unbelievably strong fortified capital, Petra. In A.D. 636 Petra was captured by Mohammed, and shortly after this Petra and Edom drop from the pages of history.

- **Babylon.** Babylon was the first of four world powers mentioned in Daniel 2:31-43 and 7:1-8. Daniel prophesied the demise of mighty Babylon, as did Isaiah (13:17-19) and Jeremiah (51:11). This literally happened on the night of October 13, 539 BC, when Darius the Median captured the city by diverting the course of the Euphrates River which had flowed under the walls of the city. (See Dan. 5.)
- **Media-Persia.** One of the most remarkable passages on prophecy is found in Daniel 8:1-7, 20, 21, written beside a river in 551 BC. In a vision Daniel is told of a series of battles that would not take place until some 217 years later. Here the prophet describes for us the crushing defeats of Darius III (here pictured as a ram) by the Greek Alexander the Great (symbolized as a he-goat). This took place in three derisive battles—Granicus, in 334 BC.; Issus, in 333 BC; and Gaugamela, in 331 BC.
- **Greece.** In this same chapter, Daniel predicts the dissolution of the Greek empire (upon the death of Alexander) into four smaller and separate powers, each ruled over by one of his generals (Dan. 7:6; 8:8, 20, 21). This happened in exact detail in 301 BC. after Alexander died of a raging fever at the age of thirty-three in Babylon.
- **Rome.** In Daniel 2:40, 41 we read: *“And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter’s clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided...”*

Here Daniel rightly predicted that Rome, the fourth kingdom (which would come into power between the times of Nebuchadnezzar and Christ) should be *“as strong as iron.”*

And so Rome was. By 300 BC. Rome had become a major power in the Mediterranean world. By 200 BC, she had conquered Carthage, her arch-enemy. In 63 BC, the Roman general Pompey entered Jerusalem. Daniel noted in his prophecy, however, that, *“The kingdom shall be divided.”* This, of course, happened in AD 364.

- **Egypt.** Some 600 years before Christ, the prophet Ezekiel wrote: *“...The word of the Lord came unto me, saying... set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations” (Ezek. 29:1, 2, 15).*

The history of Egypt is, of course, one of the oldest in recorded Western civilization. The country was united into a single kingdom about 3200 BC and was ruled by a succession of dynasties down to the time of Alexander the Great, who conquered Egypt in 332 BC. We note that Ezekiel does not predict the disappearance of Egypt, as he did concerning Edom (35:3-7), but simply the demise of Egypt. The prophecy was that Egypt would be cut short and never again become a world power. This prophecy has been fulfilled to the last letter.

Prophecies Dealing with Specific Cities Prove the Bible to be the Word of God

- **Tyre.** Ezekiel's prophecy in chapter 26 concerning the city of Tyre is surely one of the greatest in the entire Bible. Tyre was actually two cities, one on the coastline, some sixty miles northwest from Jerusalem, and the other on an island, a half-mile out in the Mediterranean Sea. In this prophecy, Ezekiel predicts:
 - ❖ The Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, was to capture the city.
 - ❖ Other nations would later participate in Tyre's destruction.
 - ❖ The city was to be scrapped and made flat, like the top of a rock.
 - ❖ It was to become a place for the spreading of nets.
 - ❖ Its stones and timber were to be laid in the sea (Zech. 9:3, 4).
 - ❖ The city was never to be rebuilt.

Has all this taken place? Consider the following historical facts: Ezekiel wrote all this around 590 BC. Some four years later, 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar surrounded the city of Tyre. The siege lasted thirteen years and in 573 BC the coastal city was destroyed. But he could not capture the island city. During the next 241 years the island city of Tyre dwelt in safety and would have doubtless ridiculed Ezekiel's prophecy concerning total destruction.

But in 332 BC Alexander the Great arrived upon the scene and the island city was doomed. Alexander built a bridge leading from the coastline to the island by throwing the debris of the old city into the water. In doing this he literally scraped the coastline clean. (Some years ago an American archaeologist named Edward Robinson discovered forty or fifty marble columns beneath the water along the shores of ancient Tyre.)

After a seven-month siege, Alexander took the Island City and destroyed it. From this point on, the surrounding coastal area has been used by local fishermen to spread and dry their nets.

Tyre has never been rebuilt in spite of the well-known nearby freshwater springs of Roselain, which yield some 10,000 gallons of water daily.

- **Jericho.** In the sixth chapter of Joshua we see described the fall of Jericho's walls and the subsequent destruction of the city. Immediately after this, Joshua makes an amazing threefold prophecy about this fallen city:
 - ❖ that Jericho would be rebuilt again by one man;
 - ❖ that the builder's oldest son would die when the work on the city had begun.
 - ❖ and that the builder's youngest son would die when the work was completed. *Joshua 6:26 And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.*

Joshua uttered those words around 1450 BC. Did all this happen? Some five centuries after this, in 930 BC, we are told: That a man named Hiel from Bethel rebuilt Jericho. That as he laid the foundations, his oldest son, Abiram, died. That when he completed the gates, his youngest son, Segub, died. (See 1 Kings 16:34.)

- **Nineveh (Nahum 1-3).** During the time of Jonah, God had spared the wicked city of Nineveh by using that Hebrew prophet (after an unpleasant submarine trip) to preach repentance. But the city had soon returned to its evil ways. So around 650 BC another prophet, Nahum, predicted the complete overthrow of Nineveh.

At the time of this prophecy, Nineveh appeared to be impregnable; her walls were one hundred feet high and broad enough for chariots to drive upon. The city had a circumference of sixty miles and was adorned by more than 1,000 strong towers.

In spite of all this, the city fell, less than forty years after Nahum's prophecy. An alliance of Medes and Babylonians broke through her walls during August of 612 BC, after a two-month siege. The victory was due in part to the releasing of the city's water supply by traitors within. The destruction was so total that Alexander the Great marched his troops over the desolate ground which had once given support to her mighty buildings, and never knew there had once been a city there.

- **Jerusalem** (Mt. 24:1, 2; Lk. 19:41-44; 21:20-24). Jesus himself uttered these sad words. He predicted Jerusalem would be destroyed, her citizens would be slaughtered, and her Temple would be completely wrecked, with not one stone left upon another.

This all literally happened less than forty years later. In February of AD 70, the Roman general Titus surrounded Jerusalem with 80,000 men to crush a revolt that had begun some five years back. In April of that year he began the siege in earnest. Conditions soon became desperate within the city walls. Women ate their own children, and grown men fought to the death over a piece of bird's dung for food! Finally, in September of the same year, the walls were battered

down and the slaughter began. When the smoke had cleared, over a half-million Jews lay dead. A number of these had been crucified by Titus. Eventually the Temple was leveled and the ground under it plowed up, just as our Lord had predicted.

Prophecies Dealing with Particular Individuals

- **Josiah.** The following incident concerns a wicked Israelite king named Jeroboam: “As Jeroboam approached the altar to burn incense to the golden calf-idol, a prophet of the Lord from Judah walked up to him. Then, at the Lord’s command, the prophet shouted, ‘O altar, the Lord says that a child named Josiah shall be born into the family line of David, and he shall sacrifice upon you the priests from the shrines on the hills who come here to burn incense; and men’s bones shall be burned upon you’” (1 Kings 13:1, 2, TLB).

This all took place in 975 BC. Some 350 years went by; then in 624 BC, we are told of the actions of a new king of Israel: “He also tore down the altar and shrine at Bethel which Jeroboam I had made when he led Israel into sin. He crushed the stones to dust and burned the shameful idol of Asherah. As Josiah was looking around, he noticed several graves in the side of the mountain. He ordered his men to bring out the bones in them and to burn them there upon the altar at Bethel to defile it, just as the Lord’s prophet had declared would happen to Jeroboam’s altar” (2 Kings 2.3:15, 16, TLB).

- **Cyrus.** Perhaps the greatest Old Testament prophet was Isaiah. For some sixty-two years this eloquent and godly man wrote and preached. But even though Jerusalem was at rest when he ministered, Isaiah predicted her captivity (as did also Jeremiah; see Jer. 25:12; 29:10) and subsequent restoration. “That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid” (Isa. 44:28).

Isaiah penned these words around 712 BC. By 606 BC, Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king, had captured Jerusalem and had led many captive Jews (see Ps. 137) into his capital. For seventy long years they remained here. This was all predicted, of course, by Jeremiah (Jer. 25:12; 29:10). Then, in 536 BC, the miracle happened. The prophet Ezra tells us: “...that the Word of the Lord...might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus...that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus...The Lord God of heaven hath... charged me to build an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah” (Ezra 1:1, 2).

So then, Isaiah rightly predicted that Cyrus would allow the Jews to return and rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem 176 years before it happened.

- **Alexander the Great.** Although Daniel does not refer to him by name, there seems little doubt that Alexander is the “he-goat” mentioned in Daniel 8:3-8.

Alexander was the first real world conqueror. He crossed the Hellespont in the spring of 334 BC and soon met and crushed the Persian troops at the battle of Issus in 333 BC. Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that when Alexander approached Jerusalem, he was met at the gates by the high priest, who thereupon proceeded to show him that his victories over the Persians had all been prophesied by Daniel in 553, some 220 years in advance. The Greek warrior was reportedly so impressed at all this that he worshiped the high priest and spared Jerusalem.

- **Antiochus Epiphanes.** Like Alexander, Antiochus is not mentioned by name, but is surely referred to in Daniel 8:9-14. Antiochus was a bloodthirsty, Jew-hating Syrian general who conquered Palestine in 167 BC. He then entered the Temple Holy of Holies and horribly desecrated it by slaughtering a hog on the altar! Daniel foresaw this terrible event some 386 years before it happened.
- **John the Baptist.** In Isaiah 40:3-5, the prophet correctly describes the future message of John the Baptist 700 years in advance. (See also Mt. 3:1-3.)

Prophecies Fulfilled by our Lord during his Earthly Ministry

In the Old Testament there are some thirty-seven basic prophecies concerning the earthly ministry of the anticipated Savior. While upon this earth, Jesus Christ fulfilled every single prediction. Consider the following texts:

1. He would be born of a virgin (cf. Isa. 7:14 with Mt. 1:22, 23).
2. He would be given the throne of David (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12, 13 with Lk. 1:31).
3. He would be called Emmanuel (cf. Isa. 7:14 with Mt. 1:23).
4. He would be rejected by his own (cf. Isa. 53:3 with Jn. 1:11; 7:5).
5. He would have a forerunner (cf. Isa. 40:3-5; Mal. 3:1 with Mt. 3:1-3; Lk. 1:76-78; 3:3-6).
6. He would be born in Bethlehem (cf. Micah 5:2, 3 with Mt. 2:5, 6).
7. He would be visited by the magi and presented with gifts (cf. Isa. 60:3, 6, 9 with Mt. 2:11).
8. He would be in Egypt for a season (cf. Hosea 11:1 with Mt. 2:15).
9. His birthplace would suffer a massacre of infants (cf. Jer. 31:5 with Mt. 2:17, 18).
10. He would be called a Nazarene (cf. Isa. 11:1 with Mt. 2:23).

11. He would be zealous for his father (cf. Ps. 69:9 with Jn. 2:13-17).
12. He would be filled with God's Spirit (cf. Isa. 61:1-3; 11:2 with Lk. 4:18, 19).
13. He would be a light to the Gentiles (cf. Isa. 42:1-3, 6, 7 with Mt. 4:13-16; 12:18-21).
14. He would heal many (cf. Isa. 53:4 with Mt. 8:16, 17).
15. He would deal gently with the Gentiles (cf. Isa. 9:1, 2; 42:1-3 with Mt. 12:17-21).
16. He would speak in parables (cf. Isa. 6:9, 10 with Mt. 13:10-15).
17. He would make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem (cf. Zech. 9:9 with Mt. 21:4, 5).
18. He would be praised by little children (cf. Ps. 8:2 with Mt. 21:16).
19. He would be the rejected cornerstone (cf. Ps. 118:22, 23 with Mt. 21:42).
20. His miracles would not be believed (cf. Isa. 53:1 with Jn. 12:37, 38).
21. His friend would betray him for thirty pieces of silver (cf. Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Zech. 11:12, 13 with Mt. 26:14-16, 21-25).
22. He would be a man of sorrows (cf. Isa. 53:3 with Mt. 26:37, 38).
23. He would be forsaken by his disciples (cf. Zech. 13:7 with Mt. 26:31, 56).
24. He would be scourged and spat upon (cf. Isa. 50:6 with Mt. 26:67; 27:26).
25. His price money would be used to buy a potter's field (cf. Jer. 18:1-4; 19:1-3; Zech. 11:12, 13 with Mt. 27:9, 10).
26. He would be crucified between two thieves (cf. Isa. 53:12 with Mt. 27:38; Mk. 15:27, 28; Lk. 22:37).
27. He would be given vinegar to drink (cf. Ps. 69:21 with Mt. 27:34, 48).
28. He would suffer the piercing of his hands and feet (cf. Ps. 22:16; Zech. 12:10 with Mk. 15:25; Jn. 19:34, 37; 20:25-27).

29. His garments would be parted and gambled for (cf. Ps. 22:18 with Lk. 23:34; Jn. 19:23, 24).
30. He would be surrounded and ridiculed by his enemies (cf. Ps. 22:7, 8 with Mt. 27:39-44; Mk. 15:29-32).
31. He would thirst (cf. Ps. 22:15 with Jn. 19:28).
32. He would commend his spirit to the Father (cf. Ps. 31:5 with Lk. 23:46).
33. His bones would not be broken (cf. Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12; Ps. 34:20 with Jn. 19:33-36).
34. He would be stared at in death (cf. Zech. 12:10 with Mt. 27:36; Jn. 19:37).
35. He would be buried with the rich (cf. Isa. 59:9 with Mt. 27:57-60).
36. He would be raised from the dead (cf. Ps. 16:10 with Mt. 28:2-7).
37. 37. He would ascend (cf. Ps. 24:7-10 with Mk. 16:19; Lk. 24:50).

The Bible is Proven by its Universal Influence upon Civilization

- Western civilization is founded directly upon the Bible and its teachings. Its very manner of life had its origin in Acts 16:9, when Paul, obedient to his heavenly vision, directed his second missionary journey toward Europe instead of Asia and the East.
- The world's calendar and most of its holidays stem from the Bible.
- It was the Bible, which elevated the blood-drinking savages of the British Isles to decency.
- The Bible has influenced, if not directed, the advancement of all fine arts.
- ❖ **Literature.** The poet Milton's greatest works are rooted in the Word of God, as are Shakespeare's and those of others.
- ❖ **Art.** Many world-famous paintings depicting well-known scenes in the Bible are preserved today. These paintings can be found in every important museum on earth. They have been done by the greatest and most talented artists of all time. These would include Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, Raphael, Michelangelo, and others.

- ❖ **Music.** The Bible has produced more inspiring music than all other combined books in the world. Bach—History has concluded that Johann Sebastian Bach “anticipated every important [musical] idea that has been born since his day. He is the inspiration of the pianist, the organist, and the composer.” Bach was a zealous Lutheran who devoted most of his genius to church-centered music. Also consider Mendelssohn—author of “St. Paul, Elijah” Brahms—“Requiem” Beethoven—“Mt. of Olives,” “Samson and Delilah” Handel—“Messiah” (he quotes from fifteen books of the Bible) Haydn—“The Creation”

- ❖ The Bible has produced the law of the Western world. Early attempts of governing forms such as the English common law, the Bill of Rights, the Magna Carta, and our own Constitution are all rooted in God’s gift to Moses on Mt. Sinai, the Ten Commandments.

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 9

Prophecy and the Bible

1. List five prophecies dealing with the nation of Israel.

Answer.

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2. List five nations spoken of in the Bible in a prophetic way.

Answer.

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3. List four cities spoken of in the Bible in a prophetic manner.

Answer.

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4. Name at least five people spoken of in the Bible prophetically.

Answer.

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5. How many basic prophecies are found in Christ to be fulfilled?

Answer.

Personal Reflection

Write a paragraph of 6-8 sentences telling what influence the *Bible* has had upon your culture.

Chapter 10

The Preservation of the Bible

The Care and Copy of the Bible

No book in history has been copied as many times with as much care as has been the *Word of God*. The Talmud lists the following rules for copying the *Old Testament*.

1. The parchment had to be made from the skin of a clean animal, prepared by a Jew only, and was to be fastened by strings from clean animals.
2. Each column must have no less than forty-eight or more than sixty lines.
3. The ink must be of no other color than black, and had to be prepared according to a special recipe.
4. Neither word nor letter could be written from memory; the scribe must have an authentic copy before him, and he had to read and pronounce aloud each word before writing it.
5. He had to reverently wipe his pen each time before writing the Word of God, and had to wash his whole body before writing the sacred name Jehovah.
6. One mistake on a sheet condemned the sheet; if three mistakes were found on any page, the entire manuscript was condemned.
7. Every word and every letter was counted, and if a letter were omitted, an extra letter inserted, or if one letter touched another, the manuscript was condemned and destroyed at once.

The old rabbi gave the solemn warning to each young scribe: “*Take heed how thou dost do thy work, for thy work is the work of heaven; lest thou drop or add a letter of a manuscript and so become a destroyer of the world!*” The scribe was also told that while he was writing if even a king would enter the room and speak with him, the scribe was to ignore him until he finished the page he was working on, lest he make a mistake. In fact, some texts were actually annotated—that is, each letter was individually counted. Thus in copying the Old Testament they would note that the letter *aleph* (first letter in the Hebrew alphabet) occurred 42,377 times, and so on.

According to Greek scholars Westcott and Hort, the points in which we cannot be sure of the original words are insignificant in proportion to the bulk of the whole, some 1/1000. Thus only one letter out of 1,580 in the Old Testament is open to question, and none of these uncertainties would change in the slightest any doctrinal teaching. Today there are almost 5,000 ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. This perhaps does not seem like many, until one considers that fifteen hundred years after Herodotus wrote his history there was only one copy in

the entire world. Twelve hundred years after Plato wrote his classic, there was only one manuscript. Today there exist but a few manuscripts of Sophocles, Euripedes, Virgil, and Cicero.

The Bible is Proven by its Amazing Circulation

When David Hume said, “*I see the twilight of Christianity and the Bible,*” he was much confused, for he could not tell the sunrise from the sunset! Only one-half of one percent of all books published survives seven years. Eighty percent of all books are forgotten in one year. For example, let us imagine that during this year, 200 new books are published in America. Statistics show that by next year only forty of these 200 will remain. At the end of the seventh year, of the original 200, only one lonely book will survive. What other ancient religious book can even remotely be compared to the Bible? Where could one go today to purchase a copy of Zen Vedas, or the Egyptian Book of the Dead? In fact, dozens of religions which once flourished have simply disappeared from the face of the earth without leaving the slightest trace. But the smallest child can walk into almost any bookstore in America and pick up a copy of the Word of God.

The Bible is Proven by it’s Absolute Honesty

Perhaps no other single statement so completely summarizes the Bible as does the following: “*The Bible is not a book that man could write if he would, or would write if he could.*” Let us analyze this one section at a time. “*Man could not write the Bible if he would.*” Even if a man had all the necessary spirituality he could not know the facts involved in the historical, scientific, and prophetic statements we have previously seen in the Bible. Thus, without God’s direction the Bible is not a book that man could write if he would.

“*Man would not write the Bible if he could.*” Suppose God would give sinful man all the necessary facts and abilities to write the Bible. What then?

Man still *would* not write it correctly if he *could*. Note the following reasons:

- Because of the bad things God writes about some of his friends. Here five men immediately come to mind. Most of these individuals are mentioned in the Faith Hall of Fame (Hebrews 11).
 1. Noah—indeed a man of God. He walked with God, he was a just man (Gen. 6:9), and he obeyed God (Heb. 11:7). Yet after the flood this great hero of the faith gets dead drunk and exposes his nakedness and shame to his entire family (Gen. 9:20-24). Surely a mere human author would not have written all this.
 2. Moses—the meekest man in all the earth during his time (Num. 12:3), and a leader who single-handedly led an entire nation of enslaved Hebrews out of captivity in Egypt. But en route to Palestine we read of his anger and direct disobedience to the clearly revealed Word of God. (See Num. 20:7-12.) Surely man would have eliminated this part of Moses’ record.

3. David—without exception the grandest human king who ever sat upon a throne. God himself would testify that here was a man after his own heart. (See 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:7, 12, 13.) David’s fearlessness (1 Sam. 17:34-36, 49), love for God (Ps. 18, 103, etc.), and kindness (1 Sam. 24:6, 7) were universally known. But in 2 Samuel 11 this same king is accurately accused of lust, adultery, lying, and cold-blooded murder. Who but God would write in such a manner?
 4. Elijah—few other Old Testament prophets are as colorful and exciting as Elijah the Tishbite. In 1 Kings 18, he champions the cause of God against 450 priests of Satan, but in the very next chapter he is pictured as running for his very life from a mere woman.
 5. Peter—self-appointed spokesman for Christ who so confidently assured the Savior that, “Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended” (Mt. 26:33). But in the hour of Jesus’ great need we read of Peter: “Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man” (Mt. 26:74).
- Because of the good things God writes about some of his enemies. As we have already seen, on many occasions God records bad things about his friends, and he often mentions good things about his enemies. This can be seen in the accounts of Esau (Gen. 33); Artaxerxes (Neh. 2); Darius (Dan. 6); Gamaliel (Acts 5:34-39); Julius (Acts 27:1-3); etc. The point of all the above is simply this—the Bible is *not* an edited book. God literally “*tells it like it is.*” Human authors, however sincere, simply do not consistently write this way.
 - Because of certain doctrines repugnant to the natural mind. Many examples could be listed here, but the following three will demonstrate this:
 1. The doctrine of eternal hell. *Revelation 14:10-11 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*
 2. The doctrine of man’s total helplessness. *Romans 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
 3. The doctrine of final judgment upon saved and unsaved. *1 Corinthians 3:9-15 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay,*

stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Revelation 20:11-15 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The Bible is Proven by its Life-Transforming Power

According to an ancient proverb—“*The proof of the pudding is in the eating.*” So it is. Undoubtedly the greatest proof of all that the Bible is indeed God’s Word is its amazing ability to change corrupt humanity. The Bible is a beautiful palace built of sixty-six blocks of solid marble—the sixty-six books. In the first chapter of Genesis we enter the vestibule, filled with the mighty acts of creation.

The vestibule gives access to the law courts—the five books of Moses—passing through which we come to the picture gallery of the historical books. Here we find hung upon the walls scenes of battlefields, representations of heroic deeds, and portraits of eminent men belonging to the early days of the world’s history.

Beyond the picture gallery we find the philosopher’s chamber—the book of Job—passing through which we enter the music room—the book of Psalms—where we listen to the grandest strains that ever fell on human ears.

Then we come to the business office—the book of Proverbs—where right in the center of the room, stands facing us the motto, “*Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.*”

From the business office we pass into the chapel—Ecclesiastes, or the Song of Solomon with the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley, and all manner of fine perfume and fruit and flowers and singing birds.

Finally we reach the observatory—the prophets, with their telescopes fixed on near and distant stars, and all directed toward “*the Bright and Morning Star,*” that was soon to arise.

Crossing the court we come to the audience chamber of the King—the Gospels—where we find four vivid lifelike portraits of the King himself. Next we enter the workroom of the Holy Spirit—the Acts of the Apostles—and beyond that the correspondence room—the epistles—where we see Paul and Peter and James and John and Jude busy at their desks.

Before leaving we stand a moment in the outside gallery—the Revelation—where we look upon some striking pictures of the judgments to come, and the glories to be revealed, concluding with an awe-inspiring picture of the throne room of the King.

Student's Study Guide

Review

Chapter 10

The Preservation of the Bible

1. List the seven rules for copying the *Old Testament*.

Answer.

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2. About how many Greek manuscripts of the New Testament exist?

Answer.

3. What is meant by the statement, "*The Bible is not a book that man could write if he would, or would write if he could.*"

Answer.

4. What does Revelation 14:10-11 teach about hell?

Answer.

5. What does Romans 7:18 teach about man's total helplessness?

Answer.

6. What does 1 Corinthians 3:9-15 and Revelation 20:11-15 teach about the final judgment?

Answer.

Personal Application

If the *Bible* has changed your life in a definite way, tell how.