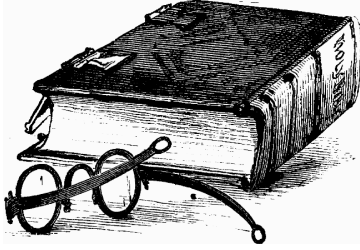


The Bible: The Written Word of God



The Claim of the Bible

Even a casual reader of the Bible will soon discover he is reading a very unusual book. Even though he may not accept its

claims, a careful and reflective reading will demonstrate, for most at least, that this book is not only unique, but makes some very unique claims. The following are a number of evidences that support this uniqueness.

Internal Evidence

In hundreds of passages, the Bible declares or takes the position explicitly or implicitly that it is nothing less than the very Word of God.

Some thirty-eight hundred times the Bible declares, "God said," or "Thus says the Lord" (e.g. [Ex. 14:1](#); 20:1; [Lev. 4:1](#); [Num. 4:1](#); [Deut. 4:2](#); 32:48; [Isa. 1:10, 24](#); [Jer. 1:11](#); Ezek. 1:3; etc.). Paul also recognized that the things he was writing were the Lord's commandments ([1 Cor. 14:37](#)), and they were acknowledged as such by the believers ([1 Thess. 2:13](#)). Peter proclaimed the certainty of the Scriptures and the necessity of heeding the unalterable and certain Word of God ([2 Pet. 1:16-21](#)). John too recognized that his teaching was from God; to reject his teaching was to reject God ([1 John 4:6](#)).¹⁷

For other passages which either declare or assume the Bible as God's Word see [Deuteronomy 6:6-9, 17-18](#); [Joshua 1:8-9](#); 8:32-35; [2 Samuel 22:31](#); [Ps. 1:2](#); 12:6; 19:7-11; 93:5; 119:9, 11, 18, 89-93, 130; [Prov. 30:5-6](#); [Matthew 5:17-19](#); 22:29; [Mark 13:31](#); [Luke 16:17](#); [John 2:22](#); 5:24; 10:35; [Acts 17:11](#); [Romans 10:17](#); [Colossians 3:16](#); [1 Thessalonians 2:13](#); [2 Timothy 2:15](#); 3:15-17; [1 Peter 1:23-25](#); [2 Peter 3:15-16](#); [Revelation 1:2](#); 22:18.

But isn't this a circular kind of argument, and is that a valid argument? In a court of law, the

accused has the right to testify on his own behalf. That testimony should be considered in the light of the evidence. In this case, the evidence, both external and internal, strongly supports the claims of the Bible.

In response to those who would reject the above-mentioned argument, it should be noted that the writers who made those claims for the Scripture were trustworthy men who defended the integrity of the Scripture at great personal sacrifice. Jeremiah received his message directly from the Lord ([Jer. 11:1-3](#)), yet because of his defense of the Scripture some attempted to kill him ([Jer. 11:21](#)); even his family rejected him ([Jer. 12:6](#)). Counterfeit prophets were readily recognized ([Jer. 23:21, 32](#); 28:1-17). However, the Bible's claims should not be understood as arguing in a circle or by circular reasoning. The testimony of reliable witnesses — particularly of Jesus, but also of others such as Moses, Joshua, David, Daniel, and Nehemiah in the Old Testament, and John and Paul in the New Testament — affirmed the authority and verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.¹⁸

The ever present assumption of the writers of the Bible is that the Bible is the God-breathed Word of God. A good illustration is seen in [Psalm 19:7-11](#) which not only declares the Bible to be the Word of God, but identifies six perfections with corresponding transformations of human character that the Bible will produce in those who study and apply it in faith.

External Evidence

(1) **The continuity of the Bible.** One of the amazing facts about the Bible is that though it was written by a wide diversity of authors (as many as 40) over a period of 1600 years, from many different locations and under a wide variety of conditions, the Bible is uniquely one book, not merely a collection of sixty-six books. Its authors came from all walks of life. Some were kings, some peasants, still others were philosophers, fishermen, physicians, statesmen, scholars, poets, and farmers. They lived in a variety of cultures, in different experiences and

often were quite different in their make up. Regardless of this diversity, as one book, it is:

*... bound together by historical sequence, type and antitype, prophecy and fulfillment, and by the anticipation, presentation, realization, and exaltation of the most perfect Person who ever walked on earth and whose glories are manifest in heaven.*¹⁹

Enns has an interesting comparison as it pertains to the Bible's continuity. He writes:

*The divine origin of the Bible is further seen in considering the continuity of its teaching despite the unusual nature of its composition. It stands distinct from other religious writings. For example, the Islamic Koran was compiled by an individual, Zaid ibn Thabit, under the guidance of Mohammed's father-in-law, Abu-Bekr. Additionally, in A.D. 650, a group of Arab scholars produced a unified version and destroyed all variant copies to preserve the unity of the Koran. By contrast, the Bible came from some forty different authors from diverse vocations in life. For instance, among the writers of Scripture were Moses, a political leader; Joshua, a military leader; David, a shepherd; Solomon, a king; Amos, a herdsman and fruit pincher; Daniel, a prime minister; Matthew, a tax collector; Luke, a medical doctor; Paul, a rabbi; and Peter, a fisherman.*²⁰

Summing up the significance of the Bible's continuity, Enns writes,

It is apparent that many of the writers did not know of the other writers of Scripture and were unfamiliar with the other writings, inasmuch as the writers wrote over a period of more than fifteen hundred years, yet the Bible is a marvelous, unified whole. There are no contradictions or inconsistencies within its pages. The Holy Spirit is the unifier of the sixty-six books, determining its harmonious consistency. In unity these books teach the trinity of God, the deity of Jesus Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the fall and depravity of man, as well as salvation by grace. It quickly becomes apparent that no human being(s) could have orchestrated the harmony of

the teachings of the Scripture. The divine authorship of the Bible is the only answer.²¹

Speaking of the Bible as "a phenomenon which is explainable in but one way—it is the word of God," the late Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote, "It is not such a book as man would write if he could, or could write if he would."²² It is beyond the scope of man's capacity to write a book like the Bible under the conditions describes above apart from its divine origin.

(2) The Bible's revelation of God. The Bible's revelation of God is unique among all the religious writings of either antiquity or of more modern times. While the Bible is a very ethical book, it never divorces its code of morality from a personal relationship with the God of the Bible, teaching that God's laws are not meant to hinder joy and pleasure, but to enhance man's capacity to know and love God and people. Morality is to be a product of knowing and loving the God of the Bible ([Deut. 4:4-6](#); [Matt. 22:36-40](#); [Mark 12:28-31](#)).

In addition, no other religious writing presents both the absolute holiness of God combined with God's love, mercy, and grace that reaches out to sinful man who has been separated from God not only because of man's sin, but because of God's absolute holiness. One of the great revelations and themes of the Bible is that which is expressed by Isaiah, "holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" ([Isa. 6:3](#); [Hab. 1:13a](#)).

While other contemporary writers were primarily polytheistic, the Bible is monotheistic. It presents a monotheistic concept of God rather than the polytheism which was so flagrant in the days when the Scriptures were written. Furthermore, when later holy books like the Koran and others presented a monotheistic concept of God, the Bible remained unique because it is the only book about God that presents God as one (monotheism) yet one in three persons, the Trinity or Trinity. Indeed, the Bible's revelation of God is one that is starkly different from the ones depicted in all

other holy books whether of antiquity or of modern times.

(3) The nature, condition, and cure for man's sin. Only the Bible describes man's condition in sin as it really is and demonstrates the impossibility for man to deal with his sin and sinfulness apart from God's grace solution in the person and death of His Son. Every other religion in the world, past and present, has man seeking to obtain his own salvation or gain God's favor by some form of human works or religious activity. Only the Bible presents a solution for man's sin that is truly life changing, when properly embraced and believed.

(4) The ethics and morals of the Bible. The ethics and morals of the Bible cover all areas of human conduct from the home, the husband/wife relationships, parent/child relationships, to human conduct in society as with employers and employees, neighbors and enemies, and the state and its citizens. It covers morals on all levels as well as business, economic, and social spheres. But as mentioned previously, the ethics and morals of the Bible are unique in that they are always related to one's belief in the existence of God and one's relationship with Him; in this way, the motives themselves are judged. Ethics and morals are never simply a matter of outward conformity to the moral standards of Scripture as other religions or religious books do. The emphasis of the Bible is "search me O God, and know my heart."

(5) Fulfilled prophecy. Another amazing illustration of the divine origin and uniqueness of the Bible is its many fulfilled prophecies.

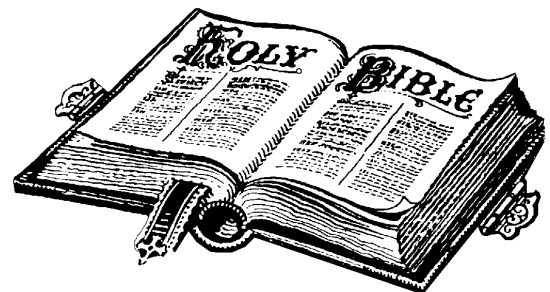
Throughout Scripture, hundreds of prophecies were made by Old Testament writers concerning the Messiah, the future kingdom on earth, the restoration of Israel as a nation, and their return to their Promised Land. In the New Testament also many predictions are made of events to come. As Scripture unfolds, about half of these prophecies have already been fulfilled, but others, following the same pattern of literal fulfillment, are subject to fulfillment in the

future. The perfect precision of prophecy extending to such details as the place of Christ's birth, the character of His execution, the very words He would speak on the cross testify to the absolute accuracy of the Word of God. In Scripture, prophecy is just as accurate as history.²³

(6) The Bible as Revelation Beyond Human Comprehension.

The extent of Bible revelation is beyond human comprehension. Like a telescope, the Bible reaches beyond the stars and penetrates the heights of heaven and the depths of hell. Like a microscope, it discovers the minutest details of God's plans and purposes as well as the hidden secrets of the human heart. The Bible deals as freely with things unknown as it does with the known. It can speak with complete freedom and assurance about situations and events outside the realm of human experience. The Bible knows no limits to the infinite knowledge of God who guided its writers. It permits its readers to gaze on events in eternity past as well as in eternity future. The comprehension of divine revelation is utterly beyond the capacity of even the most brilliant men unaided by the Spirit of God.²⁴

Other unique features of the Bible that give evidence of its divine origin are its types and antitypes, its nature as unique literature, its scientific accuracy when compared to true science, its enduring freshness, and its power to change lives.²⁵



O LORD, YOUR LAW IS EVER SURE

BRIAN L. PENNEY, 2013
FROM PSALM 119

BOHEMIAN BROTHERS, 1566

1. O Lord, Your Law is ev - er sure, Set - tled in
2. Your word, O Lord, is my de - light, 'sta - blished on
3. O Lord, Your Law, like hon - ey sweet, And like a
4. Your Word, O Lord, gives peace and rest, In our af -

heav'n, it shall en - dure, Giv - ing us strength,
earth to give us light, Teach - ing our hearts
lamp shall guide our feet, Guard - ing our minds
flic - tions and dis - tress, Lead - ing to life,

keeps our way pure.
to know the right.
from sin's de - ceit.
hap - py and blest.