

The Inspired Word of God

Introduction:

Many people say the Bible is too old. It is irrelevant. We live in a scientific age. The Bible is unscientific. It is a book of fables, a fabrication, a traditional story. It is difficult to believe such a book. Or they may say its moral teaching is too difficult to obey, or its punishments are too strict. It is better to have a natural religion. Something most people find easy to believe.

I. The Bible is an Amazing Supernatural Book

A. The Bible was written by about 40 men. They lived in different ages. The first writer was Moses. He wrote the first five books of the Bible. The last book was Revelation, written by John the Apostle fifteen hundred years later. These 40 writers lived in different countries, and different ages, and spoke several different languages, but they wrote **one** book. From the first to the last there is unity and progress.

The whole Bible is about one God---The eternal, unchangeable, infinite God. He reveals Himself in the created world, through the prophets, and in the coming of His beloved Son.

The whole Bible reveals that people are sinners. Adam and Eve sinned, the whole world sinned. In every age people are sinning against God. The whole world worshiped idols and did many evil things. There was no perfect man until Jesus came.

The whole Bible reveals the Son of God, the Savior, Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament He is revealed by the ceremonial worship. He is the Lamb of God (the sacrifice), the Light of the World (the lamps in the tabernacle), the Bread of Life (the showbread in the tabernacle). He is revealed by all of the prophets of the Old Testament. He came as the great glorious Savior of the world.

The whole Bible tells us that there is a life after death. Job said, "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth. And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God." Job 19:25,26 David said in Psalm 23:5, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." The New Testament tells much more about the future life.

At any rate, the whole Bible is a wonderful book. More people read it, more people love it and memorize it than any other book. Even though it was completely written more than two thousand years ago more and more

Bibles are printed and read in hundreds of languages. There is no other book which compares to it.

B. The Bible Contains Many Prophecies and Many of them have Already been Fulfilled. Dr. Kennedy says there are 2000 Old Testament Prophecies.

Many false prophets have said they knew the future. Many have told us the date when Jesus would return to the earth. But Jesus has not yet come. These false prophets could not prophecy the second coming of Christ or other future events so it is clear they were false prophets. In the Old Testament also, there were false prophets. They were renounced. But the prophets who wrote in the Bible are true prophets. The Spirit of God told them about future events, such as the destruction of great cities and nations. They were inspired by the Spirit so their prophecies were true and were fulfilled. The Spirit gave the word of prophecy to many O.T. prophets. We can't study all, but we will look at a few.

1. God spoke to Abraham about Israel.

Genesis 12:1-3. "Now the Lord had said to Abram: 'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'"

In addition a little later God told Abraham, (Genesis 15:13-14) "Then He said to Abram: 'Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge, afterward they shall come out with great possessions.'"

If we read the whole O.T. we know this promise was completely fulfilled. Abraham's descendants multiplied. They became slaves in Egypt for 400 years and multiplied greatly. God brought them out of slavery. God made them a great nation in the age of King David and Solomon. Later they became a great blessing to the whole world, for through them God gave the whole Bible, and He sent His Son who descended from Abraham to be the Savior of the world. He became a great blessing to the whole world. In many hundreds of years this great prophecy was completely fulfilled.

2. God Spoke To Ezekiel about Tyre

Tyre was a great powerful city by the Mediterranean. It had great walls, and much wealth. Even when they were the most powerful, God told Ezekiel the prophet that Tyre would be completely destroyed. (Ezekiel 26:3-5)

“Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for spreading nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken, says the Lord God; it shall become plunder for the nations.’”

Two hundred fifty years later Tyre was still a great powerful city. But Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with a great army. For 13 years he attacked Tyre. Finally, they broke through the walls. The army came in and destroyed the city. Many of the people fled to an island close by in the sea. There they fortified themselves. So Tyre was not completely destroyed. It seemed that the prophecy was not completely fulfilled. But later, in about 250 years, Alexander the Great of Greece came to attack the Tyre island. He decided to build a causeway out to the island. They tore down the remaining walls and all the houses and dumped them into the sea. With all of the remains of Tyre, many huge rocks and trees they built a half-mile road out to the island. They completely destroyed it. It was never rebuilt. Today it is a place where the fishermen spread their nets. So this prophecy was completely fulfilled.

3. God Spoke to Isaiah and Jeremiah about Babylon.

Babylon was also a great and powerful city. God gave many prophecies about Babylon. The city had walls 187 ft. thick, and 200 ft. high. Babylon was so strong that they did not fear any enemies. They destroyed Jerusalem and many other great cities. But even when Babylon was very strong and rich God spoke to Isaiah and Jeremiah saying Babylon will be destroyed. He gave many prophecies. We will look at only a few.

To Isaiah (13:19-21) God said, “And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans’ pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation; nor will the Arabian pitch tents there, nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there. But wild beasts of the desert will lie there, and their houses will be full of owls; ostriches will dwell there, and wild goats

will caper there. The hyenas will howl in their citadels, and jackals in their pleasant palaces. Her time is near to come, and her days will not be prolonged.””

Usually when a great city is destroyed in war, later it is rebuilt, but not Babylon. It was destroyed forever.

Was this fulfilled? Daniel 5 tells us that the Medes and Persians came in at night and captured great Babylon. But they did not completely destroy it. The Persians ruled from 539 until 332 BC. Alexander the Great ruled them until 323. Later it was conquered by the Moslems. But later, about AD 400 Julian the Apostate completely destroyed Babylon. For years nobody could even find the old city. What God told the prophets was completely fulfilled. Today if you look at a map, do you find Amalek, Moab, Edom, Ammon, or Philistia ? God told the prophets that these nations would be destroyed and forgotten. People cannot make accurate prophecies about the future. Only God knows the future. And in the Bible He tells us much about the future.

4. God Spoke of the Coming of Jesus Christ.

God’s Word gives us many prophecies about Jesus Christ. We can study only a few. God tells us Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 He tells us that Jesus would be born of a virgin and be called Immanuel. He tells us that He would be called “Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

God tells us that Jesus would suffer for our sins. Isaiah (53:4-7) tells us of Jesus’ suffering. “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he opened not His mouth.”

In Psalm 22 God tells us much about Jesus’ death upon the cross.(Psalm 22:7-9) “All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; let him deliver Him since He delights in Him! But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother’s breasts.” (12-16) “Many bulls have surrounded Me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion. I am

poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws. You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing cast lots.”

In Psalm 16:9-11 God prophesies Jesus’ resurrection. “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

All of these prophecies were written 5-6 hundred years before Christ was born. Many details are given about Christ. Man could not know such things would occur, but all of these prophecies about Jesus were fulfilled. It was God the Spirit who inspired these accurate prophecies. The inspired prophecies are completely reliable. The Bible is the Word of God.

C. The Bible Has the Spiritual Power to Change Men and Nations.

We are not able to change the hard hearts of people. We cannot lead them to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. We think some can never be changed. But Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Jesus Christ, by the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit is able to change the hard and sinful hearts as He wills.

When I first realized this I was in the Navy. In our company was a very bad young man. He often got drunk and came back at night making a lot of noise when we all wanted to sleep. His talk was dirty, he lived a very immoral life. He didn’t like to obey the rules. And he sometimes got very angry. He enjoyed talking about his immoral life, and even boasted about it. One evening some friends were talking about the Bible. He came and told us that there are many errors in the Bible, so we should not trust it. We gave him a Bible and asked him to show us some errors. He couldn’t find any errors. He said to give him some time and he would find some errors. Sitting on his bed he was often seen reading the Bible. Someone said, “Why are you reading the Bible?” He said he was looking for mistakes. He kept reading the Bible. Then sometimes he would tell us he found something very good. He kept reading, and he was completely changed. He

seemed happy. His talking changed, he stopped using profanity and filthy language. He began to tell us that he believed the Bible and that Jesus Christ was his Savior. I could not believe him. I thought he was a hypocrite. But as time passed we saw that he was a real Christian. He became cheerful, and kind. He obeyed the rules. And he faithfully attended Church. The Spirit of God used the Word to change his heart. He was born again—a new person. Later he became a minister and preached the gospel. The Word of God has the power to change people's hearts.

This year I have read “The Fifty Years Journey of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Japan.” I enjoyed reading it (in Japanese) very much. The church leaders, missionaries, and church members wrote about their Christian life. Nearly all of them grew up in non-Christian homes. Mr. & Mrs. Nitta did not believe the Bible. But they came to Ichinotani Church and studied the Bible and heard the preaching of Mr. Boyle and others. By the Word God's Spirit changed their hearts and they became believers, and then became leaders of the church. Many young people studied the Word and became Christian believers. Some soon began to trust Christ. Others did not become believers for many years.

But all of the church members were changed by the Word. They put away their idols. They stopped ancestor worship. They began to keep the Sabbath. They studied the Word and faithfully came to the worship services. And they told others about their faith in Christ. And they are continuing to do that. Their hearts have been changed by the Word and God's Spirit. And today also by the teaching of the Word, young people and also older people are being led to faith in Christ. “These were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:13

In American history, about 1733 and later, by the preaching of the Word many young people became believers. The lives of many were changed, and the churches became full. The faith of Christ was spread from town to town.

This sort of thing is happening all over the world. In China now every day many thousands are becoming Christian believers. More than any other book, they want the Bible. They are willing to believe and also to suffer for Christ.

Summary

The Bible was written by 40 men, but it is one book.

There are many prophecies in the Bible. All are truly fulfilled.

The Bible has spiritual power to change the hearts of men and women.

The Bible is truly the Word of God. May God help us to truly believe it.