



An undenominational publication
devoted to the teachings of Jesus
and His apostles, and dedicated to
those who seek the truth.

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August-September, 2011

Theme: *What You Need To Know About the Bible*

Inspired By God



Sixty-six books make up this book of books, written by about forty writers. How can we know these men were inspired by God as they wrote the Bible?

Over a period of 1500 years these forty men “...spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21). “All Scripture is God-breathed...” (2 Timothy 3:16). Paul uses the word “God breathed” (“inspired”) to describe the process God used as He revealed His word to man. Words of the Scripture came directly from the mouth of God through the Holy Spirit. Inspiration was a process by which the Holy Spirit chose the proper words and used the individual experiences and personalities of the penmen to

reveal God’s divine word of truth. The complete accuracy of their message was dependent on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Eyewitness Testimony: Eyewitnesses of the recorded events wrote many of the Scriptures. Matthew, Peter, and John lived with Jesus from the beginning of His preaching career and wrote what they saw and heard (2 Peter 1: 16-18; 1 John 1:1-4).

INSPIRED BY GOD continued next page.

More About the Bible



Free Bible Materials

THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE

by Johnny Ramsey

"This booklet will give you a summary of all 27 books of the New Testament. A marvelous, logical, sensible, understandable, thrilling message." It's free!

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TEN RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS

Answers important questions like these: "Is Salvation Just for a Select Few?", "Why Will Many Be Lost?", "How Can I Be Saved?", "Of Which Church Should I Be a Member?", "Can A Man, Once Saved, Be Lost?"

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INSPIRED BY GOD continued from cover.

Unity and Harmony of the Bible: The crimson thread running throughout its sixty-six books is Christ and salvation from sin.

Prophetic Accuracy: Only God could have known specific events before they actually happened. Throughout its 66 books, prophecy, even the details of such events, are set forth.

Historic, Archeological and Geographic Accuracy. In all of its pages not one scientific error can be discovered. When the Bible speaks of a place it is geographically correct. Geographers have marveled at its accuracy, and this is even more remarkable when we know that some of the writers never visited the land about which they wrote. Though men thought in times past they had found the Bible to be in error regarding nations, cities and people, subsequent archaeological discoveries have substantiated the biblical record and have put its critics to flight.

The Positive Effect of the Bible on Man: The Bible stirs poets to their highest thoughts and is the source book for the best literature man has written. It fascinates a little child and thrills the oldest adult. The Bible is the basis of all good government and the greatest moralizing force in existence. There is no book that compares with the Bible.

Let us put our trust in God and the promises of God's Word. Knowing He will one day fulfill to us every promise He has made in His Word.

— Timothy Tarbet, Pulpit Minister
New Milford, Connecticut Church of Christ

Comparing the Bible With Other Books

Christianity and Judaism are not the only religions that look to a book for truth. However, any book can claim inspiration of God. The question is “Are they really from God?” How can we know?

There is a common sense test that the Bible proposes for any prophet (or book) that might claim inspiration: “How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord? If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously” (Deuteronomy 18:21-22). In other words, if a prophet makes a prediction that doesn’t come to pass, you can know that he is not from God. So, how do the world’s sacred books do with this test?



The Jehovah’s Witnesses look to their prophet, J.F. Rutherford, who predicted in *Millions Now Living will Never Die* (1920, pp.89, 90):

“As we have heretofore stated, the great jubilee cycle is due to begin in 1925. At that time the earthly phase of the kingdom shall be recognized.... Therefore we may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the faithful prophets of old,...” Later in *Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom* (1993, p. 632) the Jehovah’s Witnesses debunked their own prophet and his prediction, calling it “mistaken”.

Mormonism’s books, likewise, made many predictions — e.g., the Mormon temple “shall be reared in this generation” in Independence, Missouri (*Doctrines & Covenants* 84). But the Mormon Temple was “reared” in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The closest thing to an actual prediction in the *Koran* comes from Sura 30:1-4 where the Greeks were predicted to be generically defeated and then in a few years be generically victorious — an unconvincing prediction that almost anyone could have made.

Hinduism has been around for millennia, yet it has no fulfilled predictions. So also with Buddhism.

On the other hand, the Bible is full of prophecies — many quite improbable, but all fulfilled. Study the Bible. It is a book full of God’s truth for your life.

— Park Lincomb, Minister
Manchester, New Hampshire Church of Christ

The New Testament of Jesus Christ

The Bible is the most widely sold book of all time. Over twenty-five million Bibles were sold in the United States in 2005. The *Bible Society of the United Kingdom* estimates nearly 2,500,000 Bibles were printed between 1916 and 1975. The number of Bibles printed and distributed each year exceeds 30 million! (www.biblestudy.org/beginner/why-are-there-so-many-bibles-in-the-world.html)

The Bible is divided into two great divisions – the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**. Jesus Christ was born and died under the Old Testament period of history. Yet while He lived upon this earth He prepared the world for a new covenant with God. The Law of Moses represented the major covenant God made with the Jewish nation (Deuteronomy 5). The New Testament represents the new covenant God made with *all people on earth* under the leadership of Jesus Christ. For Christians—those who have come to a believing obedient faith that Jesus is the Messiah – the New Testament is to be believed and obeyed as was the Old Testament for the Jewish people before Christ. Hebrews 9:15 states, “For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that He has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.”

One must go to the New Testament to learn the conditions of salvation and the responsibilities of citizenship in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ today. The New Testament reveals the conditions of a covenant relationship with God. Jesus said “There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept My words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of My own accord, but the Father who sent Me commanded Me what to say and how to say it. I know that His command leads to eternal life.” (John 12:48-50).

— Dick Boyd, Minister
White Plains, New York Church of Christ

Where To Find It In the New Testament

One God 1 Corinthians 8:5-6	Forgiveness of Sins Acts 2:38	Love Defined 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
Uniqueness of Jesus John 5:16-47	Golden Text John 3:16	“Lord’s Prayer” Matthew 6:9-13
Fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:22-23	New Birth John 3:3-5	Beatitudes Matthew 5:3-12
Description of Sin Romans 1:28-32	Coming Judgment Acts 17:30-31	God’s Comfort 2 Corinthians 1:3-5
Why Jesus Died Romans 3:23-26	Rules for Marriage Ephesians 5:22-33	Divine Providence Romans 8:28



Listen Up!

There is a funny line in the Jackie Chan-Chris Tucker 1998 movie, *Rush Hour*, which has become part of our family history. Tucker is welcoming Chan to Los Angeles, but Chan is silent and acting like he doesn't understand

a single word Tucker is speaking. Raising his voice, Tucker asks, "Do you speak any English? Do you understand the words that are coming out of my mouth?" I have modified that question over the years and tend to use it when I think Becky or my children are not listening to me. I'll ask, "Do you not hear the words that are coming out of my mouth?"

Well, they usually hear me. They just don't always listen. Hearing and listening are two different things. When you hear something, it can go in one ear and out the other. My kids would attest to that! But listening requires thought. To listen to someone is to give one's attention to what that person says, even to take notice of and act on what that person says.

This helps me to understand what Jesus once said: "He who has ears, let him hear" (Matthew 13:9). In the past I wondered, "We all have ears, don't we? How could we not hear?" Perhaps Jesus is saying, "Let the one who hears, listen!" Our Lord invites and commands His followers to listen to what He has to say. To pay attention to it. To act on it.

"Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. Do what it says," Scripture teaches (James 1:22). How would we who hear God's word deceive ourselves? By thinking that hearing is the same as listening or doing. It isn't. James is saying that there is little value—dare I say, no value—in hearing God's word if there is not the attendant intention to practice it. When God speaks, we should do more than hear. We should listen!

— Kerry Holton
Former Connecticut Minister now living in Chicago



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The Greatest Book in the World!

What makes the Bible so special? The apostle Peter wrote of “the living and enduring word of God” (1 Peter 1:23). Another author spoke of God’s “living and active” word (Hebrews 4:12). David, the psalmist of Israel, said: “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105). The entire volume of 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books has been produced by the very breath of God (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

These individual books were written over a period of about 1,500 years (1450 B.C. to about 100 A.D.). Those who wrote them were shepherds, farmers, tent-makers, physicians, fishermen, priests, philosophers and kings. The Bible is a cohesive and unified book in spite of the different styles, different languages, and different spans of time. The Bible contains no contradictions or errors!



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The Bible provides a framework for understanding its message. First, there is the “Patriarchal Age” during which time God communicated through the male head (patriarch) of a family. Second, there is the “Age of Moses” when God revealed the “law and the prophets” of the Old Testament. Third is the “Christian Age” in which we now live. In the “Christian Age” God has given us the New Testament.

In the “Patriarchal Age” God chose Abraham and said to him: “I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples of earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:1-3). Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of God’s wonderful promise to bless the world through the lineage of Abraham!

Many generations later God chose Moses as leader and lawgiver of His people, Israel. Moses wrote of a prophet who would come later: “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people” (Deuteronomy 18:18). Jesus Christ is the one of whom Moses wrote. He is the Messiah all must hear and obey. In the “Christian Age” God has spoken through His Son, Jesus.

Reading of the Bible will reveal its theme (*the salvation of mankind*), its integrity, its truthfulness, its openness, its historical or scientific accuracy. Read it to discover its basic goodness. It will lead you to God through faith in Jesus Christ (John 20:30,31). The Bible is the most important book of all.

— Charlie Harrison, Minister
Brunswick, Maine Church of Christ

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Vainly we look after men for guiding light,
Or in dreams for a heavenly call;
Man, of himself, cannot set his soul a-right;
So it's back to the Bible for it all.

— Vana R. Raye