



- Welcome and Introduction

The Bible—Is it authoritative?

Why do Christians believe that the Bible was inspired by God?

1. Christ's opinion about the Scriptures

If Jesus rose from the dead, then He is who He claims to be. His viewpoint matters.

Jesus spoke of individuals and events in the OT as factual and historical.

Genesis 2, Abel, Noah, Lot, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Jonah.

Not as moral-laden fables...but as real people and events.

Jesus believed that the Scriptures were the words of God.

John 10:34-35—the Scriptures = “the word of God”

Matthew 4:1-11—the Temptation in the wilderness...3 times “It is written”.

Matthew 5:17-19—not an *iota* or *keraiá* (smallest stroke) of the Law will pass away until all is accomplished

Matthew 22:31-32—“Have you not read what was spoken by God, ‘I Am’ the God of Abraham...He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

Matthew 26:53-56—“this is all happening to fulfill...the Scriptures.”

How does the Bible seem to have been influenced by a supernatural author?

Uniqueness/Unity and **Fulfilled Prophecies**...

2. The Uniqueness and Unity of the Scriptures

Over a 1500 year time span of writing, the message of the Bible is consistently opposite and distinct from the worldview of its pagan surroundings.

The Uniqueness of the OT Worldview—different from its ancient Near East setting

The pagan culture of the world of the Old Testament

believed that ...

- Gods, people, and nature were **all made of the same stuff arising out of chaos.**
- All were subject to **impersonal** fate.
- People must master **the art of duping fickle and undependable gods** to bring favor, fortune, and **especially fertility.**

The Uniqueness of the NT Worldview—same as OT worldview, plus Christ's ethical values

[**Recommended:** *Dominion*, by Tom Holland. *The Air We Breathe*, by Glen Scrivener]

The Unity of the Bible

It is consistent in its **understanding of God**, its assessment of **human dignity and value**, and our **fallenness** and **need for a Savior**, the **expectation of the Messiah** and the **redemption of all creation.**

3. Fulfilled Prophecies

Two Categories: Messianic—about Christ, and **General**—about people and nations

Messianic Prophecies (some examples)

Isaiah 7:14—“a virgin will be with child”

Micah 5:2—“(From the clan of) Bethlehem...a ruler...from days of eternity.”

Zechariah 9:9—“your (righteous king)...humble and mounted on a donkey”

Psalms 22:16-18—“pierced my hands and feet...for my clothing they cast lots.”

Isaiah 53—“He was pierced through for our transgressions...with a wicked man...with a rich man...The Righteous One will justify the many...will bear their iniquities.”

General Prophecies—an example:

Ezekiel 26—The Destruction of Tyre

- 573 B.C.E.—Nebuchadnezzar...332 B.C.E.—Alexander the Great, etc.

4. What about the authority of the *New Testament*?

Jesus authorized the apostles to speak with His authority.

John 14:26—“The Holy Spirit...will bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

John 15:26-27—“The Spirit...will bear witness...and you will bear witness because you have been with me from the beginning.”

John 16:12-15—“The Spirit...will guide you into all truth...He will declare to you the things that are to come.”

Therefore...Jesus affirmed the authority of Old Testament and anticipated the authority of the New Testament

Did the writers of the NT consider their message to be the word of God?

1 Corinthians 2:4-10—“...these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 14:37-38—“...the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.”

Revelation 1:1-3—“The revelation of Jesus Christ...He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John...Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy.”

Revelation 22:18-19—“...If anyone (adds to) or takes away from the words of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life.” (See Deuteronomy 4:2)

The early church recognized the apostle’s words as the word of God.

2 Peter 3:16—calls Paul’s writings “Scripture”

1 Timothy 5:18—quotes Luke as Scripture along with a passage from Deuteronomy

Acts 2:42—The early church “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching...”

“Scripture is not only man’s word, the fruit of human thought, premeditation and art, but also, and equally, God’s word, spoken through man’s lips or written with man’s pen. In other words, Scripture has a double authorship, and man is only the secondary author...The primary author is God the Holy Spirit.”

—**J.I. Packer**—“Inspiration”, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Tyndale, 1986

Conclusion and Encouragement