WHY THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

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CHAPTER 1

Why The Bible Is The Word Of God

Proof 1 – The Bible Confirmed By Testimony Of Its Amazing Unity

The Bible is composed of 66 separate books written by thirty or more men in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. These books range over a period of 1600 years. These men came from every walk of life, and the majority of them had no contact with the others. Most of them had no relationship with the religious organizations of their day.

A book made up of writings of so many authors, living at remotely different periods of times, under varying circumstances, might be expected to have a complete lack of unity. Instead, we find a consistent continuity of thought and a wonderful harmonious unity. There is one great ever-folding theme which pervades the whole Bible – redemption through Christ.

While on the surface there may appear to be discrepancies, upon closer examination they disappear. What at first seems to be inconsistent, actually becomes further confirmation of the Bible's amazing accuracy.

The unity consists of many parts that make up the whole, and throughout the Bible, there is a consistent unfolding of truth. The whole, brought together, reveals a consistent design, a tapestry of beauty and symmetry. How is all this accounted for? There is only one rational explanation behind the Bible's sublime unity – the supernatural mind of God.

The books of the Bible are divided into two divisions – the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament carries the great ever-unfolding theme of One coming to redeem and help mankind – the Son of God. The New Testament is the written proof or documentation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the One

who did come. Jesus came to this Earth in the form of a man and gave His life as a sacrifice to pay for mankind's sin. After three days, He rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven where He sits at the Father's right hand. All this was spoken beforehand and accomplished, so that all men might have eternal life.

The Bible's Marvelous Preservation

As we have seen, prophets of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:19-21). Their words were written down and preserved for later generations. Of course, there wasn't any printing at that time. Some of the earliest writings may have been inscribed on clay tablets, such as those found by archeologists in the land of Babylon. Others were written on leather parchment. Such manuscripts were in the form of scrolls. No scroll was large enough to contain more than one book; consequently, the Old Testament was not bound together in one volume.

No ancient book is comprised of such a vast number of manuscripts as the Bible. For example, we only have a handful of manuscripts of the ancient works of Greek literature. In some cases, we only have a single manuscript.

We have thousands of Old Testament and New Testament manuscripts. This enables us to determine their exact original text. Variations between these ancient manuscripts are very minor and insignificant, and there is every evidence that the greatest care was exercised in copying them. It is obvious that God was taking care of His Holy Scripture.

How We Got The New Testament

All the books in the New Testament Canon – those books officially recognized by the Christian Church as genuine and inspired – were written either by the apostles of Christ or by their companions, who were intimately associated with their work. Almost all of the New Testament books were written during the comparatively brief period between 50 and AD 65 (the exception being the epistles of John and the book of Revelation).

Many copies were made of these writings, and most of the larger churches of that period had a number of the manuscripts in their possession. These were highly prized and zealously guarded by the congregations.

For some strange reason, people from the first century produced very few written records of any kind, except those that were to make up the New Testament. Shortly after the beginning of the second century, however, there was a flood of counterfeit writing, commonly called the Apocrypha, which appeared under

the names of the apostles. These were outright forgeries. The New Testament Apocrypha, by reason of its own internal evidence, has been rejected by every branch of the Christian church. The most casual examination of its contents shows that it is only chaff. Many of the incidents recorded represent the crudest attempt at fiction. For example, one of the apocrypha writings depicts the Boy Jesus as making birds out of clay. At His command, the clay birds supposedly took wings and flew away! In another instance, Jesus was accused of killing a youth. To prove His innocence, He raised the dead boy to life.

On the other hand, there were other writings of the second century that have real merit. These were written to defend the teachings of Christ and the apostles against the heretical doctrines being propagated. These writings of the Early Church Fathers made no claim to inspiration, but drew their proof from the apostles' testimonies.

As time went on, the great superiority of the apostles' writings, compared to anything else, became increasingly apparent. The Early Fathers saw that these priceless legacies to the Church must not only be protected against adulteration, but must be preserved for all generations to come. Therefore, after mature deliberation at specially called church councils, the Early Fathers made the decision that the New Testament Canon should include only the apostolic writings.

The apostles had been eye-witnesses to the ministry of Christ. They had received His teaching firsthand and could speak with authority. Paul urged Timothy to pass on his teaching to others. "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2).

Concerning the matter of the inspiration of Scripture, Christ made two especially significant remarks. As we have noted, He emphasized that men should "believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke 24:25) – the Old Testament. Secondly, in His final instructions to the apostles, Christ authorized them to commit to others the same truths He had given them – The New Testament.

"Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

How could the disciples fulfill this command from that time until the end of the age? How could they fulfill something long after they were gone? They could only fulfill this command by means of their inspired writings, which in the providence of God have been preserved in the New Testament to this day.

Proof 2 – The Bible Claims To Be Divinely Inspired

The Old Testament Scriptures claim to be Divinely inspired. Again and again, it states, "Says the Lord," "The Word of the Lord came to," "And God said."

Long ago, the children of Israel lived in Egypt for several hundred years. The Egyptian king made them slaves. It wasn't until the situation became unbearable, and Israel cried out to God to save them, that He raised up Moses to lead them out of Egypt. When Moses delivered the code of Law to the Israelites, as they made their exodus from Egypt, he made it clear that God had spoken to him.

"And the LORD said to Moses, 'Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever.'
So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD" (Exodus 19:9).

"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29).

The Book of the Law (actually the first five books of the Old Testament) was placed in the Ark of the Covenant – an ornamented box carried by two men. The Ark was very sacred to the Israelites and was their expression to God that they considered the Law holy and divine.

The Book of the Law contained blessings that would follow Israel's obedience to it and the curse that would follow disobedience (Joshua 8:30-35). It is clear that Joshua (Moses' successor) and the people regarded the Law of Moses as being the Word of God. Most significantly, Israel's disobedience to the Law was followed meticulously by the very judgments that the Scripture said would come upon them. The people would be chastened and rooted out of the land that the Lord had given them.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul declared that the Holy Scripture is able to make us wise for salvation through faith, which is in Jesus. He then adds, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Writing to a young man named Timothy, who was like a son to him, Paul said,

"and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:15-16).

The Apostle Peter informs us that prophecy is a light that shines in a dark place, and that these prophecies came, not by the will of man, but by holy men of God speaking as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private

interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:19-21).

We see that the testimony of Scripture itself is inspired of God.

Proof 3 – Jesus Christ Declared That The Scripture Was Inspired

Jesus Christ declared the Scripture was inspired. Many times, He repeated that all things in the Scriptures must be fulfilled (Matthew 13:14; Luke 21:22; John 13:18; 15:25; 17:12).

Jesus authenticated the Law of Moses saying, "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the law to fail" (Luke 16:17).

These words are nothing more than a statement of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures.

Christ taught His disciples to believe all that the prophets have spoken: "Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:25-27).

These verses imply that Jesus regarded the Scriptures as inspired by God, and all things in it must be fulfilled. He spoke strongly when He declared that those who were "slow of heart to believe" the Scriptures were "fools."

Jesus indicates that His own words were inspired when He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Mark 13:31).

Christ authenticated many of the books of the Old Testament by quoting or referring to them and declared them to be the Word of God (John 10:36). If He were mistaken about the Scripture being inspired, He could not have been the Son of God, but rather an impostor. Jesus is indeed the Truth, the Way and the Life. As we shall see, the Scripture, which foretold His coming into the world centuries beforehand, gives irrefutable proof that He truly is the Son of God.

Proof 4 – The Bible's Universal Appeal To All People Is Proof Of Its Inspiration

The Bible has never gone out of date. Tens of millions of copies come off the press every year, translated into well over a thousand languages. In fact, there have been over five billion copies sold in just the past two hundred years.

The Bible has a majestic, yet simplistic style that appeals to the most highly educated, as well as the most humble believer. Children delight in the stories of Joseph, Samuel, David and Daniel.

Old people, bowed down by the weight of years, find consolation and hope within its pages. Generals and men of state have testified that they read its pages daily for inspiration. Lawyers keep a copy on their desk. Millions of devout Christians make reading a few chapters each day a regular habit.

The Bible is suited for all people, races, classes and sexes. One example of this is when a great storm arose on the Sea of Galilee, and it threatened to sink the ship in which Christ and His disciples were sailing. Christ simply said, "Peace, be still," and the sea was calm. These words have soothed doubts and calmed the minds of multitudes who have read this story. The Bible is like a chart on the sea of life. Its message satisfies the longing of the human heart.

The Bible is adapted to those of all nations and all ages. Only God could have given it its marvelous adaptability.

Proof 5 – The Bible Also Has Remarkable Appeal To Young People

Although the Bible is for people of all ages, it is a book for the young in a peculiar way. It is the only book that tells us anything worthwhile about the actual, physical birth and maturing of the human race.

In a way, the youth of today can identify with the youth in the Bible. In a certain sense, God has hidden the great truths of the Scriptures from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes.

Most of the heroes of the Bible were young people. Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, came directly from God's hand. While history deals mostly with grown men and women, kings, queens and statesmen, the Bible has much to say about the youth of its heroes. For example, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Jonathan and Daniel are only a few of the many from the Old Testament. All these were young when we first become acquainted with them. John the Baptist, Paul and the twelve disciples are introduced in the New Testament narrative in their early years. Young people like to read about young people. They understand their hopes, aspirations, temptations, successes and failures.

The Bible is a book of adventure. There is nothing more dramatic than the story of the great Flood, when all but one man and his family perished; of Joseph, who was sold as a slave to Egypt and later became its ruler; of the beautiful friendship of David and Jonathan; of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the three Hebrew children who were thrown into a fiery furnace, but survived; or of Daniel being cast into a lion's den, to mention only a few.

Finally, Jesus Christ was a young man. His great deeds were the deeds of a young man. In fact, the One who hung on Calvary's cross was barely beyond the years of His youth.

The Bible as God's book speaks to the young. In it, youth will find the truth, the ideals and the inspirations that will guide them safely through life.

CHAPTER 2

History Confirms That The Bible Is True

Proof 6 – Historical Research Substantiates The Bible To Be True

There was a time when critics of the Bible thought they saw many historical inaccuracies in it. In recent years, the Bible is becoming regarded, even by those who are skeptical, as an exceedingly trustworthy book in the matter of its history.

At one time, there was serious doubt as to whether or not there was a flood, such as the one described in the early chapters of Genesis. Research in the lands of Egypt and Babylon has lead to discoveries of numerous accounts of this event. There are also references regarding creation and how man first sinned by disobeying God's command. However, many of these accounts are distorted, misleading and are intermingled with mythological stories, which over the years have proven to be nonsense. The Bible record is incomparably superior, which can be attributed only to its Divine inspiration.

The eleventh chapter of Genesis tells of the building of the great Tower of Babel.

"And they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth'" (Genesis 11:4).

Critics of the Bible said this story was a myth, but ancient records, which have since been discovered, confirm there was such a tower. The Greek historian, Herodotus, who lived about five centuries before Christ, describes the structure. It consisted of a series of eight ascending stories, each recessed with a spiral roadway running round it as a means of reaching the top. The Babylonian records declare Nimrod built the Tower of Babel. This truth agrees with the Biblical account found in Genesis 10:9. The great structure originally had a height of about 700 feet. Today, the ruins are a mound several hundred feet high.

The Bible speaks of Ur of the Chaldees as being the boyhood home of Abraham, who was the father of the Jews and Arabs (Genesis 11:31). At one time, no such place was known. Today, excavators have uncovered a large part of the old city.

Critics of the Bible have attacked the authenticity of the books of Moses because they said alphabetical writing was not known in his day. Discoveries from the ruins of Ur of the Chaldees show that writings were known even before the days of Abraham.

Evolutionists have declared that culture, science and religion have gradually evolved. Recent explorations of the ancient cities repeatedly show that those civilizations before Abraham were at their very highest peak, and since then, there has been a steady decline and degeneration of the arts and sciences in these countries. For example, the Great Pyramid, built over 4,000 years ago in Egypt, incorporates scientific knowledge in its construction, which has been rediscovered only in modern times.

Skeptics considered the stories of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire (Genesis 18:16-33 and Genesis 19:1-29) as mere myths. Recent excavations of the sites formerly occupied by these cities reveal large quantities of sulphur and bitumen. These discoveries alone lead us back to some terrible catastrophe of the past.

The Bible tells of the water of the Jordan River being suddenly cut off, so the children of Israel, in the days of Joshua, could pass over on dry land (Joshua 3:16). Skeptics declared that such an event was impossible. Yet, in the year 1927, an upstream landslide left the river bed below dry for several hours!

The Scriptures refer to a strong race of people called the Hittites. Until the end of the nineteenth century, no record of such a people existed in history. Skeptics claimed it was another Bible mistake. The archeologists, nevertheless, have since uncovered indisputable evidence that these people were one of the most powerful nations of old.

It was the same with Edom, which is mentioned so often in the Old Testament. Secular history seemed to have forgotten that such a people ever existed. However, late in the nineteenth century, references to Edom were found on both Egyptian and Assyrian monuments. Further exploration resulted in Edom's capital city, Petra, being discovered – a city hewn out of solid rock. Today, Petra is one of the most outstanding attractions in the Bible lands.

Skeptics have claimed that Daniel could not possibly have written the book which bears his name because of its amazing prophecies that have been so marvelously fulfilled. They claimed that it was a forgery written after his death. They overlooked that Daniel's prophecies continued to be fulfilled centuries after the latest date set by the skeptics for it to be written. Indeed, the book of Daniel even gave the date that the Messiah was to be crucified – nearly 500 years before it happened (Daniel 9:24).

The fifth chapter of Daniel declared that Belshazzar was king when Darius took Babylon. History records that Naboneders was king of Babylon. Critics point this out as an example of Bible inaccuracy. Recent archeological discoveries show that Belshazzar reigned jointly with his father, Naboneders. So once again, the Bible was proven to be right and the critics wrong.

We could continue to give examples of the remarkable historical accuracy of the statements made in the Bible. Enough has been said to show that in each case in which doubt has been expressed by a critic, the work of the archeologist in time has proven the Bible was right after all.

Proof 7 – The Bible Foretold Where Christ Was To Be Born

Five hundred years before Christ was born, the prophet Micah declared that one would be born "whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." This was clearly a reference to Christ's existence previous to His Earthly birth. Secondly, it predicted that He would be born in Bethlehem!

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Only a few weeks before His birth, Christ's mother, Mary, great with child, was in her home city of Nazareth, Israel. She had no thought to travel many miles to Bethlehem. Nevertheless, events beyond her control made it necessary for her to make the journey. The Roman Emperor, Augustus, made a decree that all of the world should be taxed. So Mary, and her husband, Joseph, in order to comply with the law, were forced to make the long trip to register in the city of their lineage. Arriving in Bethlehem, Israel, they found no room for them to stay in the inn. Consequently, Mary was compelled to take lodging in a stable, and there she gave birth to the baby Jesus. She dressed him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger. It came to pass that Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem where the prophet Micah had said He would be born, more than 500 years beforehand. How did the prophet know this would take place, if he were not inspired by God?

Proof 8 – Christ Was To Be Born Of A Virgin

It is not surprising that a miracle should be involved in the birth of Christ. Since His "goings forth has been from…everlasting," His birth must be one of incarnation – that is, God becoming man. Therefore, it would be of a different nature than the usual birth, and this is what prophecy said would happen.

"Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign: Behold, the young woman who is unmarried and a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel – God with us" (Isaiah 7:14 Amplified).

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was a virgin when she gave birth to her first-born son.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18).

The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and informed him that Mary would bring forth a child by the Holy Spirit, and that He should be called "Jesus – for He shall save His people from their sins" (Verse 21).

Proof 9 – The Bible Foretold Exactly When Christ Was To Be Born

If the prophet, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, could foretell "where" Christ was to be born, he could also predict "when" He would be born. The remarkable fact is that the Bible foretold exactly when the Messiah would appear.

This revelation was given to Daniel the prophet. The prophet was told the Messiah would be "cut off" that is, killed; and the event would occur after 69 "weeks" of years, or 483 years after the command to rebuild the city of Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24-25). Therefore, the Prophet Daniel wrote the birth date of Jesus Christ almost 500 years before it happened.

Proof 10 – The Bible Predicted The Kind Of Ministry That Christ Would Have

The prophets declared the kind of ministry that Jesus Christ would have.

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn," (Isaiah 61:1-2).

Jesus Christ, the Lord, was to preach the good tidings of the Gospel, but more than that, He was to heal the brokenhearted, deliver the captives and recover the sight of the blind. The Lord, when He came, did just that. He proceeded to prove the authority of His ministry by performing wonderful miracles. John the Baptist was a prophet who preached that the Son of God would soon appear. When he sent disciples to Christ to ask the question, "Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered saying,

"Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:4-5).

It was these miracles, signs and wonders Jesus performed which gave Him such a tremendous following in the three brief years of His ministry.

CHAPTER 3

Science Proves The Bible Is The Word Of God

Proof 11 – The Bible Declared The World Is Round, That Is, In The Form Of A Circle

Until about five centuries ago, almost everyone thought the earth was flat. It certainly looked flat. A few thoughtful men, who studied the heavens, dared to say the earth was round. These men were subject to scorn and persecution, since most of the eminent scholars of their day held to the theory that it was flat. The Bible taught otherwise; it taught that the earth was in the form of a circle.

"Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in"
(Isaiah 40:21-22).

Thus, it was about 2600 years ago, the prophet Isaiah said the earth was round like a circle. Some who claimed it was flat said that underneath the earth there were giant pillars holding it up. The writer of the book of Job knew there were no pillars underneath it. The earth, he said, hung empty in space. Job 26:7, says, "He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing."

Proof 12 – The Bible Recognized As A Revolving Earth

The Bible recognized that the earth revolved on its axis. When Jesus spoke of His coming, He said, "For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day" (Luke 17:24).

He said at the instant of time that it takes for lightening to flash, it would be day in one place (Luke 17:30-33), but in another, it would be night (Verse 34). That must have been hard for the ancients to believe. How could it be night in one place and day in another? This could only be true if it were dark on one side of the earth and daylight on the other. How did Jesus know this was true? He knew it because He was Divinely inspired.

Proof 13 – The Bible Knew That The Stars Were Innumerable

Until the invention of the telescope, men supposed that there were only a few thousand stars in the sky. 100 years ago, they knew there were hundreds of millions of them. In the last 50 years, they have discovered that for practical purposes the number of stars is infinite. There are billions of trillions of stars. 4,000 years ago, God spoke to Abraham and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them … So shall your descendants be" (Genesis 15:5). The prophet in Jeremiah 33:22 answered this question by saying, "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David."

The scientific world of ancient times was ignorant of this fact, but the Bible knew it to be true. How? The only explanation is that God is its Author.

Proof 14 – The Bible Refers To Lightening, Or Electricity (Radio), Being Used To Convey Speech From One Place To Another

"Can you send out lightnings, that they may go, and say to you, 'Here we are!'?" (Job 38:35).

Lightening is an electric phenomenon. In the above Scripture, God was asking Job, an ancient worshipper of God, if he could control radio waves that are sent out, so that they could carry speech. Job knew nothing about radio waves, but God understood this remarkable property of electricity. Today, the human voice is carried on radio waves to the ends of the earth.

Proof 15 – The Bible Knew That The Interior Of The Earth Is A Fire

"As for the earth . . . But underneath it is turned up as by fire" (Job 28:5).

Science today has a fairly accurate knowledge of the condition of the earth's crust. On the average, for every hundred feet of depth, the temperature increases one degree. The crust, which is 20 to 50 miles in thickness, is fairly solid. Beyond the fifty mile depth, matter is plastic, like the iron that flows from a foundry furnace. It is only in recent times that science has established these facts. The writer of the book of Job, however, knew that down deep in the earth's interior were the eternal fires.

Proof 16 – The Bible Predicted The Invention Of Television

The Bible tells at the end of the age a world ruler will arise who is against Christ. This antichrist will make war against two prophets of God, and finally, will succeed in killing them in the city of Jerusalem. The antichrist, in a gesture of contempt, will allow their dead bodies to be in the street for three-and-a-half days. "Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves" (Revelation 11:9). How would this be possible in three-and-a-half days? Until twenty-five years ago, this would seem impossible, but no longer. By means of television, hundreds of millions of people can see the same event simultaneously. By means of television satellites, people all over the world can see the same event at a given moment.

Proof 17 – The Bible Predicted The Coming Of The Automobile

"The shields of his mighty men are made red, the valiant men are in scarlet. The chariots come with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the spears are brandished. The chariots rage in the streets, They jostle one another in the broad roads; they seem like torches, they run like lightning" (Nahum 2:3-4).

Here is one of the most remarkable prophecies of the Bible. This prophetic fore- view of the automobile is so detailed it can hardly be misunderstood. These strange vehicles that Nahum saw in his vision were as flaming torches – an allusion, obviously, to the brilliant lights of today's motor car. They "rage in the streets" is an apt expression describing the traffic which roars down the arteries of our great cities – traffic which has increased in intensity until it has become harmful to both your life and body parts.

"They jostle one another in the broad roads," In his vision, Nahum saw these vehicles colliding with one another on the highways.

Finally the prophecy adds that "They seem like torches, they run like lightning." Most of the cars being manufactured today have had their horsepower stepped up until they can make a hundred miles an hour or over. To the prophet used to camel transportation, these cars in the vision, streaming down the highways at night at high speeds, seemed to be moving like lightning.

CHAPTER 4

Fulfilled Prophecies That Prove The Bible Is True

At least half a billion people in the world believe the Bible is the Word of God, it shows us the truth about life after death, and it contains the message of salvation and eternal life. How do they know this is so? Do they have infallible proof that the Bible is inspired? Do they have proof that would stand up in court? There are such proofs – proofs that are irrefutable.

In the previous chapter, we noted some amazing prophecies of scientific discoveries and inventions long before they came to pass. There are many other prophecies made by the holy prophets, foretelling events which happened hundreds and even thousands of years later. The remarkable fulfillment of these prophecies is so striking that any honest observer is compelled to agree that those who spoke them must have been inspired of God. Let us consider a few of these prophecies.

Proof 18 – The Prophecy Of The Four World Empires

"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:31-35).

This astounding prophecy of the four world empires is found in both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. In these two chapters, we are told how the prophet saw in vision the successive rise and fall of four great world empires – Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece and Rome. In Daniel 2, in the vision of the Great Image, the head of gold represented the Babylonian Empire; the arms and breast of silver stood for the dual kingdom, Media-Persia, to arise next; the belly of brass was the next kingdom, Greece, and finally, the legs of iron represented Rome. The two legs of the image foreshadowed the division of Rome into Western and Eastern empires.

The amazing, historical fulfillment of this prophecy proves that the prophet

Daniel, who wrote about 2,500 years ago, was inspired of God. As one writer said, "In the Bible we find true prophecy, and we find it nowhere else."

The most wonderful part of Daniel's prophecy is that it foretells a fifth kingdom yet to come – the Kingdom of God – which shall endure forever.

"And in the days of these [final ten] kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people; but it shall break and crush and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever" (Daniel 2:44 Amplified).

Proof 19 – Tyre, The Great Maritime City, Perished As The Scriptures Foretold

"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. They will plunder your riches and pillage your merchandise; they will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses; they will lay your stones, your timber, and your soil in the midst of the water. I will put an end to the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps shall be heard no more. I will make you like the top of a rock; you shall be a place for spreading nets, and you shall never be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken, "says the Lord GOD" (Ezekiel 26:3-5, 12-14).

Four or five centuries before Christ, Tyre was one of the mightiest cities in the world. Her inhabitants were the leading mariners and merchants of antiquity. The city was extremely well fortified and occupied a strategic position on the sea north of Palestine.

She was a wicked city, and the prophet Ezekiel pronounced judgment against her because of her sins. The prophet predicted the walls and towers would be thrown down, and the very dust would be "scraped" from the city. The prophecy further states, "and they will lay your stones, your timber and your soil in the midst of the water." Certainly, this is a rather unusual prophecy, and one that seems highly unlikely to be fulfilled.

Then, two centuries later, the conquering legions of Alexander the Great came against the city. He demanded that the city surrender. The inhabitants turned down his request, as they felt secure on their heavily fortified island.

Nevertheless, the day came when Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, captured Tyre and destroyed its walls and towers. In the meantime, the people of the city had transported everything portable to an island half a mile out to sea.

The storms and the dust and the timber were now "in the midst of the water." The prophecy was partly, but not wholly fulfilled.

Alexander the Great built a road from the mainland to the island. He gathered up the "stones" and the "soil" and the "timber" and cast them into the sea. He marched his legions across on the new roadway that had been built. Soon, the surrounded city fell.

Today, after 2500 years, another part of Ezekiel's prophecy concerning Tyre has been fulfilled. The prophecy said: "It shall be a place for spreading nets in the midst of the sea … and you shall never be rebuilt." Today, the isle of Tyre is a small, inconsequential city of a few thousand, but the great city of Tyre on the mainland, destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, has vanished forever. Now, fishermen on the shores of the ruined city cast out their nets into the sea, just as the prophecy foretold.

But The City Of Sidon Still Stands

North of Tyre was another ancient city called Sidon. The prophet Ezekiel gave an entirely different prophecy concerning her. The prediction against Sidon was not that she would be destroyed, but that there would be blood in her streets, and the sword would be against her.
Here is the prophecy:

"Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, and I will show forth My glory and be glorified in the midst of you. And they shall know (understand and realize) that I am the Lord when I execute judgments and punishments in her, and am set apart and separated and My holiness is manifested in her" (Ezekiel 28:22-23 Amplified).

Although severe judgments were to come against Sidon, these were not a pronouncement of doom on her as was made against the sister city, Tyre. While every trace of the latter city has disappeared, Sidon continues to this day. Her history has been eventful. She has been besieged, taken and retaken many times. Blood has flowed in her streets, and the sword has been on every side. However, she still stands today.

Proof 20 – The Return Of The Jews To Israel

The account of Israel's restoration is the story of an amazing miracle, but Israel has always been a miracle. The call of her father Abraham, some 4,000 years ago, to become the precursor in a long line of kings and nations was a supernatural calling. The rescue of Israel from Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, by the hand of their leader, Moses, was a series of miracles. The Holy Bible, which came from Israel's prophets, was a miracle of inspiration. The birth of the Messiah, as a fulfillment of Scripture, was the greatest miracle of all. Finally, the recent restoration of God's ancient people, which took place 60 years ago, came after 1900 years; it was in complete agreement with the prophecies and is the greatest miracle of our day.

Why has Israel been scattered among the nations during these long centuries? To understand this we must consider the promise given by the prophet Moses of the blessings which would be upon the nation when she was obedient, and then, the solemn warning of judgment that would come, should the people disobey the Law. Instead of a blessing, they would inherit a curse and be cast out from the land which the Lord their God had given them:

"And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.
"Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known – wood and stone. And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul" (Deuteronomy 28:63-65).

This judgment had a fulfillment in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. It was finally fulfilled in AD 70, after the Romans' destruction of Israel's chief city, Jerusalem.

Although the chastening of Israel, during the long, elapsed centuries had been severe, it would not be forever. Eventually, as the prophecies declared, the children of Israel would return to their land. The promise that the nation, after centuries of chastisement and dispersion throughout the world, should be gathered and returned to Palestine in God's time, is spoken of again and again by the prophets.

Ezekiel 36 is an example of many such prophecies.

"For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of

flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the Garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the LORD, have spoken it, and I will do it" (Ezekiel 36:24, 26-28, 33-36).

The story of the restoration of Israel to the land of Palestine is a remarkable one. During World War I, the British war industry ran short of a certain chemical called acetone. Acetone was essential in the production of vital weapons and ammunition necessary for Britain's success in the war. Officials of the British government appealed to Dr. Chaim Weizmann, a brilliant Jewish chemist, and explained their difficulties to him. He accepted the challenge and soon discovered the solution to the problem. Anticipating a successful conclusion to the great conflict, the British government asked Dr. Weizmann what honor he would accept as a reward for his notable contribution to the war effort. He replied by saying that he did not ask for anything for himself, but expressed a hope that something might be done for his people, the Jews, who had suffered so much and so long in the various nations throughout the world.

It came about that Zionist aspirations were given recognition in the Belfour Declaration on November 2, 1917, which proclaimed that the British government looked with favor upon Palestine becoming a homeland for the Jews. A little over a month after this, Jerusalem was in the hands of the British, and the League of Nations later confirmed the Balfour Declaration. Prior to this decision, a mandate of the Holy Land was given to Britain, making the way clear for the Jews to begin immigrating to Palestine.

Immediately, a great change in their country began. Millions of trees were planted by the new settlers. The waste swamps were drained. By means of hard, intensive labor, the land was brought back from its desolate state. Roads were built. Modern machinery was imported. Villages and communal settlements sprang up in many places. Jewish population increased, and today, it has reached the two million mark.

The judgments on the children of Israel and their dispersion throughout the world came to pass as the prophecies declared. Today, after 2,000 years, they have returned once more to their homeland, as the prophecies also said. How was

it possible that the Scriptures could predict so completely and accurately these events thousands of years in advance? It is only because the prophets spoke by the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit of God.

Why We Must Accept The Bible As The Word Of God

There is only one, true God. God, the Creator of the Universe, existed before the beginning of the world. God is a good God, a God of love. He created man to be a companion and friend.

Since Satan deceived man and caused him to rebel and sin against God, sinful man was separated from God, which is the most terrible punishment.

In order to bring man back into communion with Himself, God first revealed His great plan through His Word, the Bible. Before it even happened, man was given the opportunity to know that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, would come to Earth and pay the penalty of death for our sins. These promises are found in the Old Testament.

The New Testament, which includes the teachings of Christ and the instructions God intended for His Church, enables each man or woman to live a solid, stable and victorious Christian life.

If we accept Christ into our lives, God will forgive our sins, and at that moment, it will be as though we have never sinned. The Bible says we have been redeemed. As redeemed men, we can now commune with God while we live on this Earth, and when our life on Earth is finished, we will dwell in the Kingdom of God forever.

What Does Christ's Death On The Cross Mean To You Personally?

Let us think back upon the day when Christ was crucified. There He hung between Earth and Heaven – a spectacle to men and angels with the tortures becoming more unendurable every moment. Death by crucifixion includes the total of all the suffering a body can experience: thirst, fever, open shame, long, continual torment.

It was now the noon hour, ordinarily the brightest hour of the day. Instead, darkness came over the earth. Nature itself, unable to bear the scene, withdrew its light, and the Heavens became black. This darkness had an immediate effect upon the onlookers. There were no more jeers and taunts. People began to silently slip away, leaving Jesus alone to drink to the deepest depths the dregs that suffering and humiliation had to offer. Still, a greater horror was coming. Instead, of a joyful communion with God, there was a cry of distress. Jesus found Himself

utterly deserted by both man and God. Even today, His cry brings a shudder of terror. It was …

"My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

Apparently, there was one thing God had held back from his Son, Christ, lest even He should be unable to bear it. This terrible truth came to Him in the last hours of darkness. As the sun withdrew from shining, the Presence of God was also being withdrawn. Though sometimes forsaken of men, He could always turn in confidence to His Heavenly Father. Now, even God had forsaken Him.

God indeed had forsaken him, though only for a moment. The reason is clear: at that moment, the sin of the world – with all its hideousness – rested upon Jesus. He became sin, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

In this scripture, we find the answer to what happened. Christ was made sin for us. He took upon Him the sin of the whole world, which included yours and mine. Therefore, He had to receive the judgment for sin.

Now, at last, the end was drawing near. The loss of blood produces a thirst beyond description. Jesus cried, "I thirst." The One who hung on the cross thirsted. He is the same One who now satisfies our souls' thirst – "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37).

The final moment had come. Jesus bowed His head in death, saying as He died, "It is finished!" Salvation had been completed. It was a salvation, not earned by works of fasting, confessing penances or going on pilgrimages. Salvation is a finished work, and it's finished forever. It is not necessary to complete it by using our own efforts. There is nothing more to do, but to accept it. There is no need to struggle or to labor for it, but receive quietly what God has prepared, an infinite sacrifice.

Did Christ die for our salvation? He did! Was He raised again three days and nights later in glorious triumph to die no more? He was! Therefore, He says, "BECAUSE I LIVE, YOU WILL LIVE ALSO" (John 14:19).

God has done all that is possible to bring you eternal life. He paid the full price of punishment for your sins. It is now your turn to accept Him. God sees your mind and soul. He knows all of your thoughts. If you sincerely want to accept Jesus Christ, the Son of God, into your life, you will be reborn. You will become a child of God, and God the Father will become your Father.

Necessary Steps To Salvation

1. ACKNOWLDGE: “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13). You must acknowledge in the light of God’s Word that you are a sinner.

2. REPENT: “But unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19). You must see the awfulness of sin and then repent of it.

3. CONFESS: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). “With the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10). Confess your sins to God.

4. FORSAKE: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord … for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7). Sorrow for sin is not enough in itself. We must want to be done with it once and for all.

5. BELIEVE: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). Believe in the finished work of Christ on the cross.

6. RECEIVE: “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:11, 12). Christ must be received personally into the heart by faith, if the experience of the New Birth is to be yours. (FGBMFI)

Now, if you will pray this prayer, it will help you to receive Jesus Christ into your soul and life:

Dear Heavenly Father,
I thank You that You love me.
I ask Your Son Jesus Christ to come into my life.
I know I have sinned and committed deeds unpleasing to You.
I ask You now to forgive me of these sins and to cleanse my life.
Help me to follow You and Your teachings.
Protect me from Satan and evil.
Teach me to put You first in all my thoughts and actions.
Help me to love my fellow man, as You have loved me.
And, Father, show me step by step the plan You made for my life.
I give You myself and my life.
I worship and praise You, my Creator and Lord.
I will continually thank You for sacrificing Your Son on the cross that I might have eternal life with You
Help me to win others to Christ.
I await the return of Christ to take me to Heaven.

Come soon, Lord Jesus. Amen

How To Receive The Baptism In The Holy Spirit

1. You must be born again. This means to ask Jesus to forgive your sins, and then accept God's forgiveness, knowing "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 3:23 and 10:13).

2. If now you have accepted Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit lives in you. John 14:7; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19.

3. The Holy Spirit is a Person and will speak for Himself if you allow Him to.

4. The Holy Spirit will use your lips, tongue and voice if you permit Him – just as when you speak in English.

5. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, in faith you must begin to do the speaking. Acts 2:4 says, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and (they) began to speak."

6. Receiving Christ as Savior required an act of faith. Healing results from an act of faith. Speaking in tongues takes an act of faith.

7. When in faith you begin to speak in tongues, the Holy Spirit will give the utterance – the words to say. That's where the supernatural comes in.

8. Every believer is commanded to “be filled with the Spirit,” Ephesians 5:18, even Jesus’ mother, Mary, and His flesh and blood brothers. James, Joses, Simon and Judas (Matthew 13:55), (Acts 1:14) and His disciples received (Acts 2:4). Receiving the Holy Spirit is not an option.

9. Relax. “This is the rest …” Isaiah 28:12

10. The Holy Spirit is a gift. Acts 8:20; 2:38, 39; 11:17; Luke 11:13. You don’t beg or work for a gift. You just receive it.

11. Begin each day by praying in the Spirit to edify yourself – it’s like charging your spiritual batteries. 1 Corinthians 14:4, 18.

12. Receive now, by worshipping Jesus in your heart and speaking forth in faith in the unknown tongues as the Holy Spirit in you provides the words.

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WHY THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

CHRIST FOR THE NATIONS