

#3 “HOLDING FAST OUR CONFIDENCE...”
IN THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES (Heb 3:6, 14 10:35)

Thus far in this study we have addressed two questions:

1. “Why does man need a standard of authority for his conduct?”
2. “How do the Scriptures meet the criteria for that standard?”

Under that heading we’ve noted some evidence for the Divine Inspiration of God’s Revelation (Bible, Scripture), evidence that is given in the Old Testament, & also evidence (testimony) given by Jesus, the apostles & the other writers of the books in our New Testament.

Then we closed by noting some external historical evidences for Bible Inspiration.

In this lesson, we want to note the non-historical external evidence for Bible Inspiration, & then we will discuss the uniqueness of the Bible to support the claim & the fact that the Bible is the Holy Word of God.

III. EXTERNAL EVIDENCES FOR BIBLE INSPIRATION

A. Scientific Accuracy:

1. The Bible is not a textbook of science, & it’s not just a book of historical facts, but it does deal accurately with science & history.
2. The Bible was written in a pre-scientific age, when there were many false ideas about the world.
3. Therefore, it is certainly remarkable that the Bible does not contain any of the misunderstanding of its day.
4. Recorded in the Bible are several scientific truths that are stated as fact hundreds of years in advance of their discovery.

- a. Rotundity of the earth (**Isa 40:22; Luke 17:26**).

Isa 40:21

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? 22 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, & its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, & spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

- b. Empty space in the North, & the suspension of the earth in space (**Job 26:7**).

Job 26:7

He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.

26:7 the north over empty space: The Hebrew word translated *north* probably does not refer to a geographical designation (see Ps. 48:1, 2, where the same Hebrew term describes God's mountain), but to God's dwelling place in the heavens (see v. 9, which mentions God's throne). If the statement that God **hangs the earth on nothing** (see Gen. 1:2) refers to the suspension of earth in space, it preceded Newton's concept of gravitational attraction by thousands of years. Job probably thought, as did other ancients, that the earth was a circular disk (see v. 10) supported by nothing. In other words, he thought of the earth as floating on the vast subterranean waters.

- c. Static electricity: lightening (**Jer 10:13**).

- d. Oceanography: paths in the seas (**Psa 8:8**).

Psalms 8:6

You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 7 All sheep & oxen-Even the beasts of the field, 8 The birds of the air, & the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas. 9 O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

- e. Life is in the blood (**Lev 17:10-14**).

Lev 17:10-14

And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, & will cut him off from among his people. 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, & I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.¹² Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.’ 13 Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts & catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood & cover it with dust;¹⁴ for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’

- f. All nations created of one blood (**Acts 17:26**).

Acts 17:26

And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, & has determined their preappointed times & the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him & find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

- g. Quarantine, disinfection procedures, covering over mouth in treatment of infectious diseases (**Lev 13, 14**).

- h. The countless number of stars: Ptolemy as late as 150 A. D. listed only 3000 (**Gen 13:16; 15:5**).

Gen 13:16; 15:5

And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. 15:5 Then He brought him outside & said, “Look now toward heaven, & count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.

- i. Process of rain, evaporation into air, & condensation to earth
(**Ecc 1:7; Job 36:27-28**)

Ecc 1:7

All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place from which the rivers come, there they return again.

Job 36:27

For He draws up drops of water, which distill as rain from the mist, 28 which the clouds drop down & pour abundantly on man.

- j. Dimensions of the ark: modern ship builders use the same ratio
(**Gen 6:15**)

Gen 6:15

And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits (450 ft.), its width fifty cubits (75 ft.), & its height thirty cubits (45 ft.).

- k. Progression & classification of life: vegetable, fish, fowl, mammals, man (**Gen 1**)

- 1. Five facts of science in the first verses of the Bible:

(1) “In the beginning” – time

(2) “God created the heavens” – space

(3) “And the earth” – matter

(4) “And the Spirit of God” – force

(5) “Moved upon the face of the waters” – motion

m. Circumcision of male children 8 days after birth (**Gen 17:12**).

We have since learned through science, that eight days after birth the body is producing enough *Vitamin K* in the intestinal tract to cause the liver to produce a substance called **prothrombin**, which makes the **blood platelets** so the blood can coagulate during a surgical procedure.

This fact of nature was unknown until 1935 when a professor Henrik Dam proposed the name “vitamin K” for the factor that helped prevented hemorrhaging in chicks.

Vitamin K shots are usually given just after birth to a male child that is to be circumcised.

IV. UNIQUENESS AS PROOF FOR BIBLE INSPIRATION

A. Its Unity –

1. Imagine the odds against the writings of about 40 men from different time periods, speaking different languages & coming from different walks of life over a period of 1500 years – all coming together to make a complete & harmonious Book about the origin of man & the universe, the nature of God, sin, man & his need for redemption.
2. Genesis begins with the record of the sad event “Paradise Lost”, & the Book of Revelation ends with the promise of “Paradise Regained” for those who are in Jesus Christ.

B. Its Translation & Circulation –

1. One of the first major books to be translated (250 B.C. – Septuagint), it has since been translated into well over 300 languages & portions of it into thousands of dialects (Guinness Book of World Records; 1998).
2. It is the world's best-selling & most widely distributed book, with several billion copies sold (Guinness Book of World Records). “No other book has known the anything approaching this constant circulation” (The Cambridge History of the Bible).

C. Its Survival –

1. Imagine the odds against these writings surviving the attacks of its skeptics & enemies to become the best known, most widely read, respected, & influential of any book ever compiled.
2. **It has survived persecution:** many have tried to burn it, ban it, & otherwise outlaw it from the days of Roman emperors to the present Communist-dominated countries
 - a. King Jehoiakim used his penknife & a fire (**Jer 36:22-23**).
 - b. Emperor Diocletian (303 A.D) issued an edit to destroy the Scriptures, & he had buried what he thought was the last copy under an image of himself. Twenty five years later Constantine had 50 copies of the Bible prepared at the government's expense.
 - c. Voltaire, a French philosopher (atheist) of the 18th century, predicted that Christianity would be swept from existence & pass into history within 100 years of his time. But only 50 years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society used his printing press & house to produce stacks of Bibles! (See **1 Pet 1:24-25**).
 - d. American infidel Robert Ingersol (1900's) claimed regarding the Bible: “In fifteen years, I will have this book in the morgue.”

3. It has survived criticism:

“Infidels for 1800 years have been refuting & overthrowing this book, & yet it stands today as solid as a rock. Its circulation increases, & it is more loved & cherished & read today than ever before. Infidels, with all their assault make about as much impression on this book as a man with a tack hammer on the pyramids of Egypt.” - H. L. Hastings

“No other book has been so chopped, knifed, sifted, scrutinized, & vilified. What book on philosophy or religion or psychology...has been subject to such a mass attack as the Bible? With such venom & skepticism? With such thoroughness & erudition? Upon every chapter, line & tenet? And yet, the Bible is still loved by millions, read by millions, & studied by millions.” - Bernard Ramm (Baptist Theologian & apologist)

4. It has survived time: the manuscript evidence is greater than any 10 pieces of classical literature.

Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	Copies (extent)
Secular Manuscripts:				
Herodotus (History)	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1,300 years	8
Thucydides (History)	460 - 400 BC	900 AD	1,300 years	?
Aristotle (Philosopher)	384 - 322 BC	1,100 AD	1,400 years	5
Caesar (History)	100 - 44 BC	900 AD	1,000 years	10
Pliny (History)	61 - 113 AD	850 AD	750 years	7
Suetonius (Roman History)	70 - 140 AD	950 AD	800 years	?
Tacitus (Greek History)	100 AD	1,100 AD	1,000 years	20
Biblical Manuscripts: (note: these are individual manuscripts)				
Magdalene Ms (Matthew 26)	1st century	50-60 AD	co-extent (?)	
John Rylands (John)	90 AD	130 AD	40 years	
Bodmer Papyrus II (John)	90 AD	150-200 AD	60-110 years	
Chester Beatty Papyri (N.T.)	1st century	200 AD	150 years	
Diatessaron by Tatian (Gospels)	1st century	200 AD	150 years	
Codex Vaticanus (Bible)	1st century	325-350 AD	275-300 years	
Codex Sinaiticus (Bible)	1st century	350 AD	300 years	
Codex Alexandrinus (Bible)	1st century	400 AD	350 years	

(Total New Testament manuscripts = 5,300 Greek MSS, 10,000 Latin Vulgates, 9,300 others = 24,000. Total MSS compiled prior to 600 AD = 230 -- McDowell 1972:42, & Bruce 1943:16-17).

[In our final lesson in this series, we will note one of the most impressive internal proofs of the Bible’s inspiration: its prophetic utterances.]