

WHY SHOULD YOU BELIEVE THE BIBLE? December 4, 2016

Are there any reasons why you should believe that the Bible comes from God? Millions of people in the world trust what is written in that book we call the Bible. Those people who believe in Jesus as God's Savior for mankind stake their faith on the Bible. Should you believe the Bible? What would cause you to believe that the Bible is God's book, God's Word?

Hello I'm Larry Murdock. I preach for the Gandy church of Christ.

There are many reasons why I believe that the Bible is God's book. Those reasons can be summed up into two categories. First, I believe in the Bible because of its **nature**. Secondly, I believe in the Bible because of its **topics**. Do you believe in this ancient book? Why do people count this book as special, different from any other ancient book? Why should I believe this book came from God?

One important feature to consider about this ancient book is its **preservation**. Long ago Scribes spent hours each day for months to produce one hand-written copy of this book. Why? Because they thought its message was originally delivered to its writers by God. As a consequence of this dedication and that faith, the Bible is the best preserved ancient book in the world.

Have you heard of the Dead Sea Scrolls? In 1948 a young Bedouin boy threw a rock into a high cave that bordered the Dead Sea in Palestine. He heard something break! He climbed up to the mouth of the cave and looked inside. He saw several clay jars laying beside the one his rock had broken. He reported this to his family and it was soon discovered that the jars contained ancient scrolls. Soon several caves had been explored and they too contained clay jars with ancient scrolls inside. When finally the scrolls were in the hands of archaeologists it was determined that the scrolls were written about 100 years before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth.

There were several kinds of ancient documents found in the clay jars, but one of the best preserved was a copy of the Bible book we call Isaiah. Isaiah was a Hebrew prophet who lived and prophesied 700 years before Jesus was born. Isaiah's book was found in that cave. Up until this find at the Dead Sea, the

earliest manuscript known of the book of Isaiah was a copy written 1,000 years after the birth of Jesus. So, in 1948 a copy of Isaiah was discovered that was 1100 years older than any other copy in existence. Those two copies were virtually identical! What does this suggest? Since all of the Bible's 66 books were preserved in the same meticulous style, it says that the books of the Bible are the best preserved ancient books in existence. The Jewish scribes were so meticulous about their work that two copies of Isaiah, separated by 1100 years, made no significant difference whatsoever! The books of the Bible are the best preserved ancient documents in the world.

But I told you that I believe the Bible is God's Word **because of its nature**. Part of its "nature" is the fact that it has been preserved! God meant for it to speak to every generation! The Bible shows that God has chosen to reveal Himself and His thinking through the means of written documents. In the book of Deuteronomy, the 5th book of the Bible, Moses was commanded to write a Song. It is called the Song of Moses. However, the words were dictated by God. God had a special purpose in commanding Moses to write the song and teach it to the Israelites. God predicted that the people of Israel would turn away from following His covenant, and the Song was intended to bring them back! That's right!

"Now therefore [God commanded] write this song and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song **may be a witness** for me against the people of Israel. For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, and despise me and break my covenant. And when many evils and troubles have come upon them, **this song shall confront them as a witness** (for it will live un-forgotten in the mouths of their offspring). For I know what they are inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give." (Deuteronomy 31:19-22 ESV) No doubt, Moses wrote the words of that Song by inspiration. God dictated the words! God wanted that Song written down so that it would be **preserved** in a document. It was written first in the handwriting of Moses, later it would be preserved in the handwritings of nameless Scribes, **but** the words were from God.

Earlier I told you that the book of Isaiah was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Isaiah preached God's message in an extremely dangerous era. The people of Israel were about to be invaded by the Assyrian empire. The Israelites should have been turning to their God. But, in fact, they were turning away from God. They did not want to hear Isaiah and God's other prophets preach to them. Government leaders were courting the help of Egypt. They wanted to sign a security agreement with the Egyptians. However, God's prophets were saying that the nation had better sign with God.

God decided to make a statement about this proposed security arrangement with Egypt, and He told Isaiah to write it down. God said, "Egypt's help is worthless and empty; therefore I have called her "Rahab who sits still." And now, [God continued] go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as **a witness forever**. For they are a rebellious people, lying children, children unwilling to hear the instruction of the LORD; who say to the seers, "Do not see," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is right; speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions, leave the way, turn aside from the path, let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel." ([Isaiah 30:7-11 ESV](#))

Did you hear it? Did you hear God's purpose for writing it down? God wanted His words written down so that the written word would be "a witness forever." This is the nature of the Bible! God has preserved it as a witness to what God has revealed to mankind. And the Bible's witness is designed to last forever!

When you read the Bible its words are a witness to you! That's right! And how appropriate those words are for every age; appropriate not only for you but for everyone! Even though the forty writers of the Bible lived over a span of 1500 years, they were writing for every generation! In every book of the Bible you will find information that is helpful to you. I call these things "eternal trues."

It is true, however, that in the Bible you will find actions and behaviors that are **not** required of you. For instance, animal sacrifices were commanded and practiced under the covenant that God gave Moses and the early Jewish people. But people today live under a new covenant, called the New Testament of Jesus Christ. The inspired Jewish Christian man who wrote the New Testament book of Hebrews said this, "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets

at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven."
(Hebrews 1:1-3 NIV)

Yes friends, many Old covenant things do **not** apply to you because you and I are now under the authority of God's Son, Jesus Christ. But nevertheless, the whole Bible is a means for our encouragement, and it tells the story of God's great salvation that comes through God's beloved Son. Jesus' apostle Paul said this about the Old covenant's encouragement: "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4 ESV) The Bible teaches endurance; it teaches encouragement; it teaches hope.

And that brings me to my second major reason for believing the Bible is from God. The topics the Bible addresses compel me to listen! That's right! The Bible's subject-matter captures my attention and provides me "truth" on those topics of endurance, encouragement, and hope. The main topic of the Bible is **salvation** from our sins. Do you know that you are lost in sin? Do you know that you need salvation? Do you know that when your body dies, you will live on in the spirit in one of two locations? The topics of the Bible should capture your attention!

On one occasion a crowd heard Jesus speak and they were impressed with the topics he taught. They marveled at what Jesus was teaching and they asked each other, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood." (John 7:15-18 ESV) Jesus did not have to go to school because he was just a mouthpiece for his Father who sent him. God sent Jesus to say what God wanted said as a witness to the world. Jesus declared that if he was seeking his own glory, then a person might suspect that Jesus was lying. But if Jesus was seeking the Sender's glory then the messenger would have no need to lie. This was also true of all the prophets that God had sent to the Jewish nation;

all those who lived before the time of Jesus were sent to glorify God who had sent them. But notice what Jesus said about your **knowing the source** of the teaching; about your **knowing** whether it's true or a lie! Can you detect a lie? Jesus said, "If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God...." So, I ask you, my friends, what do you want? What is your interest, your will? What do you desire? Are the topics of the Bible of interest to you? If not, then you will remain blind to the messages of God. You will cast the Bible upon the trash heap; it will be of no use to you. But if you have a desire to know God, then you will open your Bible and drink from its wells. Jesus said, "**Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.**" (Matthew 5:6 KJV)

Visit a church of Christ near you and begin satisfying your hunger and thirst for righteousness.