

Internal evidence that the Bible is God's word – Unity/Inspiration

“There is a beautiful connection between the first book of the Bible and the last. Scripture resembles a flower. We find the seed in Genesis, the growing plant in the books which follow, the fully developed and beautiful flower in the Apocalypse” - William Hendriksen

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” - II Tim. 3:16

If God has spoken to man, it would be expected that His message would be consistent in every case where He speaks. When men write about a subject there is rarely, if ever, complete agreement in all details. The views of men are affected by their upbringing, social status economic status and their culture. We would not expect a book about God written by men of different times and different cultures to agree. In our own society, the very concept of morality has changed dramatically over the last 70 years. In the 1950's divorce was frowned on, and couples living together before marriage was unheard of. Homosexuality was something that was rarely discussed, and defined as abnormal behavior. In viewing children's programs from 30 years ago, there is sometimes a warning that the views expressed in the old show does not reflect the current views of society.

The bible is unique in many aspects and that uniqueness is a strong evidence that it comes from a divine source. It was written by 40 men over 1500 years in three different languages and consists of 66 different books. The men had a variety of backgrounds - shepherds, kings, scholars, fishermen, prophets, a military general, a cupbearer, a tax collector and a priest all contributed to this work. They all had different specific purposes they addressed, but each tells a story which becomes part of a larger story – how God went about saving His creation-mankind.

Unity of Purpose – The purpose of the bible can be seen in what is included and excluded from the text. There are many subject discussed, which if written by man would have much more details than the bible – for example the story of creation and the crucifixion of Christ. The reason the detail is not there is because it is not necessary to fulfill the author's (God's) purpose. In the book of Genesis, Joseph is discussed in 13 of the 50 chapters while the entire story of creation is only recorded in 2 chapters. We can safely assume that the author thought that the story of Joseph had more to do with His overall purpose. The story of Joseph is something that occurs many times in the bible – it is a story within the larger story. Joseph was rejected by his brethren, persecuted and becomes the savior of his own people and peoples of the world. This is the story of Jesus, which is the story of the bible. The story of Jesus is told in part in the lives of many bible characters, including Moses and others. This unity of purpose can be seen in the following, which is taken from Ferrell Jenkins “Introduction to Christian Evidences”

- “1. The books of Law lay a foundation for Christ by showing why God selected the Israelites as His own people.
2. The books of History illustrate how the nation was being prepared to carry out God’s purpose of bringing Christ into the world.
3. The poetical sections of the Old Testament reveal the longings or aspirations of the people of Christ.
4. The books of Prophecy look forward in expectation of Christ.
5. The Gospels present the manifestation of Christ.
6. Acts tells of the propagation of Christ
7. The Epistles present an application of Christ to the life of the Christian.
8. Revelation presents a climax or consummation to this Christocentric approach to Scripture.”

As an example of how Christ is woven into the prophet’s writings regarding a specific problem of the day, consider Isaiah 7:1-17. The situation at the time was that Judah (whose king was Ahaz) was being threatened by an alliance between the northern kingdom Israel (Ephraim) and Syria. There was great fear in the king’s house and in Judah. Ahaz was a wicked king who had no faith in God, but God was going to deliver him from this threat. A sign was mentioned – a virgin would conceive and bear a son named Immanuel (God with us) – and before this sign took place the enemy would be defeated.

Inspiration (God breathed) – If the bible is meant to be understood by man it must contain the very words of God – not just a general discussion of topics that God wanted us to know about. The bible claims verbal inspiration –

Galatians 3:16 - Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Matthew 5:18 - For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

In addition to being the exact words of God, the revelation is complete –

II Peter 1:3 - His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.

Jude 1:3 - Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

Questions for consideration:

1. Would you expect a document about God a physician to differ from one written by a fisherman? How might they be different?
2. If you asked a group of your friends to write an article on a subject, would you expect them to all come to the same conclusions? Would there be any differences
3. If only the general thoughts of the Bible are inspired of God and not the actual words, will we reach the same conclusions on issues of doctrine? Example – If only the general thoughts are inspired and not the exact words could we conclude that God is approving all music for worship in Eph. 5:19?