

Scientific Accuracy as a Proof of Bible Inspiration

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When considering evidences or apologetics concerning the Bible, one quickly learns there are two types of revelation from God. First, there is natural revelation which is nature's declaration that God exists. Psalm 19:1 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." The second type of revelation is special revelation. This refers to the special means God used to reveal Himself and His will. The special means God chose to use in this day and time is the Bible. Though other claims are made for special revelation such as the book of Mormon, Papal Ex Cathedra, or miraculous inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God revealed within the Bible that it is all sufficient (2 Peter 1:3) and nothing more is needed (Galatians 1:8,9).

Also, when considering evidences of inspiration, there are two categories. The first is external proofs such as the Bible's circulation, translation, and survival. Concerning the Bible's circulation, it has always been on the Best Seller's list for it is by far the most circulated book in the history of the world. Also, the Bible is the most translated book in the world. It has been translated into more languages and often multiples times in some languages. Concerning the Bible's survival, it passes the proof of time. Though numerous men throughout the ages have tried to destroy it, it continues to survive its critics, skeptics, and attackers.

The second category of evidences of inspiration is called internal proofs. These proofs are internal to the Bible. That is, they come from the Bible itself. They are such things as the scriptures' unity, historical accuracy, use of prophecy, and scientific accuracy. The Bible consists of sixty-six books written over a period of sixteen hundred years by more than forty men on one central unified theme. Briefly stated, this is what we call the unity of the scriptures. Further, the scriptures are historically accurate. That is, the Bible agrees with other recorded historical data. Also, the Bible's use of predictive prophecies declare it to be from God. There are declarations of future events such that no human could possibly predict. These have their foundation upon the omniscience of God. Lastly, the Bible is scientifically accurate. That is, it is accurate with known scientific fact. This, then, introduces the topic for this lesson.

The argument of the Bible's scientific accuracy is stated in two ways. First, it can be stated negatively: Since the Bible does not contain the superstitions that were commonly held contemporary with its various writers, then the Bible's writers must have been inspired of God. It would be easy and common for uninspired men to include such notions as a flat earth, blood letting, or the earth resting upon the back of some man or beast. These were commonly held

beliefs at various times in history and were later proven wrong. However, the Bible does not contain such notions which is an impressive evidence that the Bible is not man-made but God inspired.

Second, the argument of the Bible's scientific accuracy can be stated positively. Scientific accuracies are scattered within the depth of the words of the sacred text. These are like precious gems buried in the pages of Holy Writ. They are unique and special to the open minded investigator. Interestingly, these precious gems were often written hundreds or thousands of years before they were discovered by scientists.

Before we consider specific areas of science, a few words of caution are in order: The Bible is not a science book. However, if it is inspired of God, we should expect it to agree with true science. What we mean by "true science" is not theories of science but laws of science, that is, those concepts that are proven and not just theorized or speculated. Let us also remember the words of Paul as he wrote to the young evangelist, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace *be* with thee. Amen" (1 Timothy 6:20-21). Further, let us be aware that some have tried to make too much of scientific foreknowledge by trying to show the Bible prophesying everything from automobiles to airplanes to even the rubber shortage of World War II. But, then there are those who explain away any example of the Bible's scientific accuracies.

Consider these examples of the Bible's scientific accuracies beginning with general science and then to specific areas of science.

FUNDAMENTALS OF SCIENCE

Though Genesis 1:1 does not concern itself with general sciences, yet much can be learned from it on this topic. This passage states, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), a British philosopher, after a lifetime of study said that there are basically five fundamentals of science: time, force, action (energy), space, and matter. Notice how Moses declared these fundamentals of science about 1500 years before Christ and 3300 years before Spencer. "In the beginning [*time*] God [*force*] created [*action or energy*] the heaven [*space*] and the earth [*matter*]."

MEDICINE

In the area of medicine, the Bible contains many gems of scientific accuracy. Moses wrote concerning blood in Leviticus 17:14 which says, "For *it is* the life of all flesh; the blood of it *is* for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh *is* the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off." Today, we know that blood is made up of white blood cells that fight off infections, red blood cells that carry oxygen to feed the cells of the body, platelets to help with clotting, and plasma to regulate water content and maintain temperature. A common practice up until recent times was "blood-

letting” in which patients were bled in various ways such as with leaches and cuts. Life-giving blood was drained away, and as you would expect, many patients died. Interestingly, George Washington was one such patient who died as a result of “blood-letting.”

Also associated with medicine is sanitation. Leviticus 13-15 spells out some basic sanitation rules: (1) The recognition and diagnosis of disease; (2) The separation or isolation of the diseased person; (3) The designation of anything that had been touched by a diseased person as unclean; (4) The process by which the unclean became purified; (5) The destruction of those items that could not be cleansed. Now notice what others have said about these medical principles of sanitation. Fielding Garrison in his book “History of Medicine” said that these precepts laid out in the first five books of the Bible are “remarkable chapters” of ancient medicine. B. L. Gordon in his book “Medicine Through Antiquity” said that these principles are “scientifically sound.” And Robert Hudson in his book “Disease and Its Control” said “the ancient Hebrews have been termed the founders of preventive medicine.” In light of this, consider the fact that Moses was trained in Egyptian wisdom (Acts 7:22) whose medicine was considered the finest in the world of antiquity. One scholar claimed that in Egypt during this time “only three out of every ten children born into a family could survive to adulthood,” and the average life-span was only thirty years. This is not surprising when one considers their sanitation practices. The Ebers papyrus prescribed for an embedded splinter to apply “worm’s blood” and “asses’ dung” to the infected area. The Egyptians potions were so filled with dung and urine that medical historians have labeled their practice as “sewage pharmacology.”

It is estimated that one in every four Americans will be infected with some type of sexually transmitted disease. The Center of Disease Control in the United States said that the best way to control sexually transmitted disease is by having one sexual partner. It is more than interesting that this is what the Bible has said for over three millenniums (Exodus 20:14; Matthew 19:4-6)! In spite of the near-total ignorance of these diseases, the Holy Spirit through holy men of God gave the best advice concerning sex that anyone could give: “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). As with other areas of medical science, the Bible proves itself to be accurate far ahead of the actual scientific discoveries. Even as late as the fifteenth century, Theodoricus Ulsenius of Nuremburg blamed venereal disease on a malign “conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn.” Though the Bible gives no cure per se, the Bible does give “an ounce of prevention” and it is far better than “a pound of cure.”

SOCIOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

A most basic and fundamental rule of a well governed society can be found in the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:12 which says, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” There is no greater social or philosophical principles than this “Golden Rule.” Think how much better society would be if every person practiced this most basic precept.

Moral laws fits into the category of sociology and philosophy. Though moral laws are found in varying degrees in many religions, the Bible transcends every moral teaching. Justin Martyr wrote, "Whatever things were rightly said among all men, are the property of us Christians. For next to God, we worship the Word who is from the unbegotten and ineffable God." After forty years studying the religious literature of the Orient, M. Monier-Williams said, "Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your table; but place you own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself, all alone—and with a wide gap between them. For, . . . there is a gulf between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which severs the one from the other utterly, hopelessly, and for ever . . . a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thought."

The sociology/philosophy argument can be summarized as follows: A book that sums up and transcends the best morality of all books of all time is best explained as God's Word. The Bible is such a book. Thus, the Bible is best explained as God's Word. Some want to play on this idea of "best explained." However, remember we are talking about morality, and it would be the greatest travesty for the greatest moral book to be the greatest lie.

GEOGRAPHY

Within Scripture there are numerous references of "going up" or "going down." In our day, we use the expression "going up" to mean going in a northerly direction and "going down" to mean going a southerly direction. However, we are not generally walking, but if we were walking, we would be more concerned about elevation and altitude. When the writers of the Bible used these expressions, they were talking about going up and down in elevation. Interestingly, even though there were no scientific devices to measure altitude when the pages of the Bible were written, the Scriptures are accurate. Not only are the scriptures accurate concerning elevation, they are accurate concerning location. Time magazine reported in December 30, 1974 issue, "In 100 licensed sites in Israel, archaeological digging continues to turn up new evidence that the Bible is often surprisingly accurate in historical particulars, more so than earlier generations of scholars ever suspected."

ASTRONOMY

Isaiah wrote in chapter 40 and verse 22, "*It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.*" The word translated "circle" in this verse means round or spherical. Those living in Isaiah's day thought the earth was flat. Columbus is generally attributed with discovering the earth is round and, yet, Isaiah wrote about it more than two thousand years before Columbus.

God asked Job, "Where *is* the way *where* light dwelleth?" (Job 38:19). The word translated "way" means traveled path or road. Jean Morton wrote, "Until the seventeenth century, it was believed that light was transmitted instantaneously. Then Sir Isaac Newton suggested that light was composed of small particles which travel in a straight line. Christian Huygens proposed the wave

theory of light. Olava Roemer measured the velocity of light as evidenced by its delay as it traveled through space.”

Notice also the Bible is absent of astrology and even condemns such nonsense as superstitions. Jeremiah wrote, “Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people *are* vain: for *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe” (10:2-3).

OCEANOGRAPHY

Psalm 8:8 says “The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.” Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873) was once confined to his bed during a lengthy illness. While his son was reading Psalm 8, the phrase “paths of the sea” caught his attention and based upon this verse, Mr. Maury decided to find the “paths of the sea.” He was the first to recognize the seas were circulating systems with interaction between wind and water. The US Naval Institute issued a book in 1927 entitled, “Matthew Fontaine Maury: Pathfinder of the Seas.” Also, Maury’s home state of Virginia erected a monument in his honor after he died and inscribed upon its base was Psalm 8:8.

Again God asked Job “Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?” (38:16; also note Proverbs 8:28). The earliest secular reference to sub-surface springs in the ocean was by Strabo (63 BC - AD 21), a Roman geographer. Today, we know that such springs are located off the coasts of Greece, Italy, Israel, Syria, and Australia. In 1976, the US Geological Survey discovered fresh water spring along the Atlantic coast from New England to Georgia.

In the same verse, God asked Job, “Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?” (“recesses of the deep” - ASV). Also 2 Samuel 22:16 mentions “the channels of the sea.” For a long time, man thought the ocean was shallow and the floor was flat and sandy like a desert. However, during the H.M.S. Challenger expedition (1873-1876), the first scientific exploration of the ocean floor, a canyon was discovered in the Pacific five and a half miles deep. Since that time another channel or recess was discovered near the Philippines almost seven miles deep.

METEOROLOGY

The weather cycle is spoken of in the Bible in such passages as Ecclesiastes 1:7; 11:3; and Amos 9:6. However, the concept of a complete water cycle was not fully understood nor accepted until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries AD as a result of the work of Pierre Perrault, Edme Mariotte, and Edmund Halley. These men lived well over two thousand years after Solomon and Amos.

BIOLOGY

Moses declared that all things produce “after their kind” (Genesis 1:11,12,21,24). This simple law is what is now known as the laws of genetics and heredity based upon the theory of biogenesis which is accredited to the French chemist Louis Pasteur (1822-1895). Until as recent as the last century, people thought that maggots were spontaneously generated. Interestingly, today some evolutionists teach “Punctuated Equilibriaism” which says that the evolutionary process was not gradual but was stable for long periods of time, and then during relatively short periods of thousands of years, we have major evolutionary jumps (leaps and bounds). The fact, however, remains just as Moses declared, all things produce “after their kind.”

1 Corinthians 15:39 says, “All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds.” Today, we know that there are four fleshs which evolutionists acknowledge. These are different in their biochemical makeup. Again, the Bible is scientifically accurate.

PHYSICS

Moses stated in Genesis 2:1, “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.” The First Law of Thermodynamics (the Law of the Conservation of Energy and/or Matter) states that neither matter nor energy can be created or destroyed. The word translated “finished” in Genesis 2:1 indicates an action completed in the past without continuing action into the future. Thus, Moses stated the First Law of Thermodynamics thousands of years before it was conceptualized.

Isaiah wrote, “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished” (51:6; see also Psalm 102:26 and Hebrews 1:10,11). The Second Law of Thermodynamics (the Law of Increasing Entropy) states that everything is running down or wearing out. Energy (though still existing in some state) goes from a useable state to a non-useable state. This is precisely what Isaiah, David, and the writer of Hebrews stated contrary to scientist as late as the nineteenth century.

Though we have not advanced all the arguments that could be advanced, we have said enough to show any reasonable person that the Bible is scientifically accurate. Its truths are often far ahead of their time. Its truths do not contain the normal inaccurate beliefs of contemporary writers of the Biblical scribes. There is only one way the Biblical scribes could have known these truths — God revealed these truths unto them. “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as *they were* moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21).