

"The Revelation of God" - A Summary of the Bible by Dr. Bruce Bickel

- I. The Bible is the only book written by God to reveal Himself.
 - A. The Bible is the only source of revelation from God with regard to man: his origin, his dilemma, his salvation, his destiny.
 - B. It is the single measuring standard for man regarding his moral and spiritual values.
 - C. It is true in every detail (even to the very words in the original manuscripts)
 - D. It is believable, authoritative, and absolutely reliable.

Note: Unfortunately, this is not the view of all who claim to be Christians.
 - E. God is the creator. Man is the creature. God never gives to the creature the right to evaluate the Creator. All the proof in the world has no effect apart from the convicting work of the Holy Spirit.

II. Something to Think About.

A. Instead of saying (1) prophecy has been fulfilled, the Bible is scientifically accurate, miracles occurred, the Bible produces revolutionary changes in lives, (2) therefore, it is the Word of God. Reverse it, /, and say (1) the Bible is the Word of God, (2) therefore, these things are true; prophecy, science, miracles, changed lives - These aren't proofs, they're products.

B. Important Definitions

1. Revelation - The act of God by which He has made known what was otherwise unknowable. (From the Greek "apokalupto" to unveil something previously hidden.) God Himself:

- a. Removed the obstacles to understanding,
 - b. Disclosed who He was, progressively, until the total revelation of God was finally completed at the end of the New Testament.
 - c. Revelation is "what was communicated"
 - d. Christianity is the unveiling of God. (Hebrew 1: 1, 2)
2. Inspiration- How it was communicated
 3. Illumination - Why it was communicated
 4. Interpretation - discovering what was communicated

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III. Revelation

A. Natural Revelation

1. How it was revealed
 - a. Creation (external)
 - b. Conscience (internal)

B. What was revealed about God

1. His Attributes
 - a. His Power
 - b. His Wrath
 - c. His Godhead
 - d. His Glory (Psalm 19)

C. Manner of revelation

1. Comes through man - all men have a God consciousness.
2. Revelation made clear.

D. Special Revelation: The Holy Bible (Progressive)

1. God spoke through:
 - a. Theophanous - Visible appearances of God in time
 - 1). Angels (Exodus 16: 11-13)
 - 2). A bush (Exodus 3:2)
 - 3). Shekinah Glory (Exodus 3:3)
 - b. Prophecy - God used the mouths of prophets
 - 1). Urim and Thummin (Isaiah 28:6)
 - 2). Casting of Lots (Proverbs 16:33)
 - 3). Dreams and Joseph
 - 4). Visions (Ezekiel, Daniel)
 - 5). Speaking Directly
 - 6). Face to Face (Deut. 18:18)

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c. Miracles

- 1). Revelatory: Communicated that God was speaking.
- 2). Redemptive: Attesting to the truthfulness of God's Word

2. These three make up the totality of God's special revelation, which gives man the intellectual knowledge of God (more than just a consciousness that God exists)

E. Living Revelation: Jesus Christ (He completes the pattern of God's revelation)

a. **NATURAL REVELATION** (gives consciousness of God) - which leads to

b. **SPECIAL REVELATION - THE WORD OF GOD** (gives intellectual knowledge of God) - which leads to

c. **LIVING REVELATION - JESUS CHRIST** (the person of God)

1. John 5:39 When a man comes to Jesus Christ, it isn't just the consciousness of God, it isn't just the intellectual knowledge of God, it's the spiritual knowledge of God that equals salvation. And that brings man right back to God.

2. Jesus Christ is not the bringer of revelation; He is the *full and living* revelation . (John 1:18)

IV. Inspiration - The manner in which God did it (revealed Himself)

A. Inspiration - (II Timothy 3:16) The Greek word "Theopneustos" means God breathed" (Theo = God; pneustos = breath). All Scripture is "breathed out" of God, not breathed in. Therefore, there are no degrees of inspiration - God's Word is absolute.

B. Inspiration is not:

1. A high level of human achievement - (Natural)
2. God's thoughts given to man - (Thought)
3. Includes only spiritual and moral teachings - (Partial)
4. An act of God on ht reader - (Existential)
5. Mechanically dictated - (Mechanical)

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C. Inspiration is:

1. All Scripture is God breathed (II Tim 3:16; Gal 3:8, Psalm 33:6)
2. God is the author of what Scripture says - The Scripture is the oracles of God (Romans 3:2)
3. Prophets were the mouthpieces of God
 - a. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4-9, 15: 16)
 - b. Isaiah (Isaiah 6:7)
 - c. Ezekiel (Ezekiel 2:10, 3:22)
 - d. Paul (Acts 22:14, 24:14)
 - e. John (John 10:35; Rev 1:1)
4. No prophecy came from any man, but from the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:20,21)

D. The Bible is:

1. Infallible (Psalm 19:7)
2. Inerrant (Proverbs 30:5,6)
3. Complete (Revelation 22:18, 19)
 - a. No more Apostles
 - b. No more inspired writings
4. Important Note: The writers of the Bible were not inspired, the writings were inspired. Yet, the authors were not secretaries.

E. The Defense of Inspiration

1. The Bible contains 66 books, with 40 writers, written over a span of 1,600 years.
 - a. There was little change for collaboration of writers
 - b. Most writers were simple, unlearned people
 - c. They wrote with absolute confidence
 - d. All claimed they were writing God's Word
2. Old Testament writers
 - a. "Thus said the Lord" --3,808 times (Deut 4:2, 6:1,2, 6-9, 12:32, Amos 3:7)

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3. New Testament writers
 - a. Verified inspiration of Old Testament writers 1,000 times (James 4:5, Romans 7:12, 15:4, II Peter 1:20,21, Acts 28:25)
 - b. New Testament writers called Old Testament writers "Scripture."
(I Timothy 5:18, Deut 25:4)
 - c. Peter verified Paul's writings as Scripture (II Peter 3:15, 16)
 - d. Jude quotes Peter as Scripture (Jude 17, 18)
 - e. Paul's references to inspiration (Gal 1:11,12,15,16; Eph 3:3,4, I Cor. 11:23,15:3, Col 1:25,26)

4. Testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ (Objective)
 - a. Acknowledges That He Was the Theme of All Scriptures (John 5:20; Rev. 19:10; Luke 24:44)
 - b. Christ Came to Fulfill Scripture (Matt 5:17, 26:24)
 - 1) Claims Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35)
 - 2) Based interpretation on a simple word (Matt 24:35; Isaiah 51:6; I Peter 1:23)
 - 3) Acknowledges power of the Word (Matt 4:4-10)
 - 4) Confirmed accounts of the Old Testament record
 - a) Creation of Adam and Eve (Matt 19:4,5)
 - b) Murder of Abel (Luke 11:51)
 - c) Noah and the Flood (Matt 24:37)
 - d) Circumcision (John 7:22,23)
 - e) Destruction of Sodom and Lot's Wife (Luke 17:20,32)
 - f) The Call of Moses and the Law (Mark 12:26)
 - g) Manna (John 6:31-51)
 - h) Brazen Serpent (John 3:14)
 - c. Jesus quoted the Old Testament 180 times

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- d. Thus - This presents a three-fold possibility:
 - 1) There are no errors in Scripture.
 - 2) There are, but Christ didn't know it. (Ignorant, therefore, not God.)
 - 3) There are, and He knew it, but covered up. (Lied, therefore, not God.)

- 5. The Testimony of the Holy Spirit - (Subjective)
 - a. Belief that Scripture is inspired is PRODUCED by the Holy Spirit
 - 1) Not intellect or reason (I Cor. 2:7-14)
 - 2) I believe the Bible through faith (inside) not reason (outside)
 - b. Sin of Man causes HOSTILITY, not STUPIDITY toward God.
RESULT: Man does not want to accept truth. (Romans 1: 18-21)
 - c. Hearing the Word comes Before BELIEVING (Romans 10:17)

- 6. The Bible can testify to its own authority
 - a. It is Unique
 - 1) Only book that gives the ACT OF SPECIAL CREATION
 - 2) Only book that gives a continuous record from the FIRST MAN, to the PRESENT ERA, to the FUTURE.
 - 3) Only book of ancient history that gives history A PURPOSE
 - 4) Only book which is the PUREST RELIGIOUS LITERATURE with the HIGHEST MORAL STANDARDS
 - 5) Only book of antiquity containing DETAILED PROPHECY OF EVENTS TO COME ACCURATELY
 - 6) Only book that CONVICTS MEN OF SIN and LEADS THEM TO SALVATION.
 - b. It Has Unity (II Tim 3:16) - Based on one single author - God
 - 1) Harmony in different writers
 - a) 66 different books
 - b) 40 human writers
 - c) 1600 years (Moses to John)

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- d) Different locations of writers
 - e) 3 different locations
 - f) Different lifestyles
 - g) Different occupations
 - h) Different events
 - i) Variety of literature. Poetry, History, Theology, Proverb, Parables, Allegory, etc.
- 2) Harmony in format
- a) Revelation: (OT) Pentateuch (NT) Gospels
 - b) History: Joshua thru Esther; (NT) Acts
 - c) Devotion: (OT) Job thru Song of Solomon; (NT) Epistles
 - d) Prophecy: (OT) Isaiah thru Malachi; (NT) Revelation
- 3) Harmony in the plan - Perfect historical continuity and final accomplishment.
- a) In the Old Testament: Salvation *prepared*.
 - b) In the Gospels: Salvation *effected*.
 - c) In the Acts: Salvation *preached*.
 - d) In the Epistles: Salvation *explained*.
 - e) In Revelation: Salvation *fulfilled*.
- c. It is Indestructible - God's Word partakes of God's *nature*: God is eternal, so His Word is eternal. (Psalm 119:89)

"THE GRASS WITHERS, THE FLOWERS FADE; BUT THE WORD OF GOD ABIDES FOREVER." Isaiah 40:8

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V. Tests to verify authenticity of the 66 books of the Bible.

A. How were the books chosen?

1. Was it inspired by God and written by a prophet or someone who had the gift of prophecy? (prophecy = proclaiming truth not foretelling the future)
2. Was it accepted, preserved, and ready by God's people at the time --the Israelites?
3. Was the book authored by an Apostle or someone closely associated with an Apostle.
4. Did the content agree with the Apostle's doctrine?
5. Was the book read and used in the churches? Did the people of God read it during worship and make it part of their daily lives?
6. Was the book used by the next generation of believers after the early church?