

God Speaks To Modern Man

Suppose, for instance, that we get sixty-six medical books written by thirty or forty different doctors of various schools, . . . bind them all together, and then undertake to doctor a man according to that book! ... Or suppose you get thirty-five ministers writing books on theology, and see if you can find any leather strong enough to hold the books together.”- Will the Old Book Stand? p. 21.

Voltaire said the Bible was an exploded book. It is his theory that is exploded, for he has been dead more than 150 years and the Book is still here.

Ingersoll, a man of rich talent, declared that the Bible would not be read in ten years. It has been long years since he died, yet the Bible today is still a best seller.

Like a cube of granite, the Bible is right side up no matter how many times you overturn it, and it leaves its imprint everywhere it goes. It has been translated into more languages and dialects than any other book. Completed nearly two thousand years ago the Bible or portions of it may be read today in more than one thousand tongues, and it is the most up-to-date book in the world. Someone has written:

“The empire of Caesar is gone; the legions of Rome are moldering in the dust; the avalanches Napoleon hurled upon Europe have melted away; the pride of the Pharaohs is fallen. The pyramids they raised to be their tombs are sinking every day in the desert sands; Tyre is a rock for fishermen’s nets; Sidon has scarcely a rock left behind; but the Word of God survives. All things that threatened to extinguish it have aided it, and it proves every day how transient is the noblest monument that man can build, how enduring the least word God has spoken. Tradition has dug many a grave for it; intolerance has lighted for it many a fagot; many a Judas has betrayed it with a kiss; many a Peter has denied it with an oath; many a Demas has forsaken it; but the Word of God still endures.”

“Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith’s door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.”

“How many anvils have you had, said I,
To wear and batter all these hammers so?
Just one, said he, and then, with twinkling eye,
The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.”

“And so, thought I, the anvil of God’s Word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard
The anvil is unharmed-the hammers gone.”

Author Unknown

15. Why Do Men Need the Bible?

THE Bible, which is often referred to as the Scriptures, is also called “the book of the Lord- (Isaiah 34:16), “the gospel of God” (Romans 1:4), “the oracles of God” (Romans 3:2), “the good word of God” (Hebrews 6:5), and “the word of Christ” (Colossians 3:16).

This Book of divine origin Heaven has provided for man. Why? What is the purpose of the Book? Why do men need it? Of what help is it to them?

Man’s need of the Bible is just as universal as life and death. Sir Walter Scott, famous writer of Scotland, sickly as a child, robust as a man and successful beyond his fondest dreams, found himself upon his deathbed as a result of overwork in an effort to pay off debts from an unfortunate business collapse. In that twilight hour of his life he said to John Lockhart, his son-in-law and later biographer, “Read to me from the book.”

Thinking of the vast writings of Sir Walter, John said, “Which book shall I read?”

Scott replied, “Need you ask? There is but one Book.” So there at old Abbotsford, with his children gathered about him, and while the darkness of death deepened, he listened to the reading of God’s Book, the Bible, and saw a great and comforting light as he fell asleep September 21, 1832.

The Bible is God’s lamp of hope for all men. It is God’s antidote for despair. “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the

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scriptures might have hope.” Romans 15:4.

In these dark days of human history when black clouds of dire destruction hurry across our skies, the promises of the Bible have been given that “we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.” Hebrews 6:18, 19.

It will firmly hold in the straits of Fear, When the breakers tell that the reef is near; Though the tempest rave and the wild winds blow, Not an angry wave shall our bark overflow.

“When our eyes behold, in the dawning light, Shining gates of pearl, our harbor bright, We shall anchor fast to the heavenly shore, With the storms all past forevermore.” - PRISCILLA J. OWENS

OTHER SPECIFIC PURPOSES OF THE BIBLE

We now consider other specific purposes of the Bible, other reasons why men need the Scriptures. Perhaps the fullest summary in a few words is given by the apostle Paul in these two verses:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

First in Paul’s list is doctrine. The word doctrine means teaching, a truth, a tenet of faith. In fact, the Revised Standard Version, Weymouth, and Moffatt read, “profitable,” or “useful,” “for teaching.”

And according to the Scriptures, men need doctrines. It is profitable for us to study doctrines. There may be at times a feeling within us which says, “I do not like doctrines. I want only the Spirit. Just give me spiritual things.” Now, the truth is that doctrines are of the Spirit, for “all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine.” One of the greatest needs the church and the world today is the setting forth in clarity and certainty of the great doctrines of true faith and morals. We need to believe something, and to know why we believe what we believe. Too many are vacillating, “carried about with every wind of doctrine.” Ephesians 4:14. Many do not know what to believe, and are more sure of what they do not believe than of what they do believe.

It was the same in Jesus’ day. He was just beginning His public ministry and was concluding His Sermon on the Mount. To the people He said, in essence, “If you will believe and do the things I say, you will be like a wise man who built his house upon a rock. If you do not believe and do the things I say, you will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand.” That sounds the note of certainty. Matthew writes of this experience in chapter 7, verses 28 and 29: “It came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Jesus believed something. He stood for something.

There has never been a great religious awakening without the preaching of great doctrines. One might as well try to build a substantial house without putting in a good foundation and without rugged framework, as to attempt the erection of strong Christian character without faith in great doctrines. A Christian without fundamental beliefs is like a body without bones.

Truly the body needs more than bones, lest it be but a skeleton. Nevertheless, to be a successful body, it must have bones—good bones. Christian experience needs more than doctrines, but to be successful, it must have them. “All scripture is profitable for doctrine.”

Not only is the Scripture profitable for doctrine, establishing us in an understanding of fundamental divine truths, but according to this same verse (2 Timothy 3:16), it is profitable for reproof.

None of us relish reproof—not by nature. Yet God finds it necessary to reprove us. A man who does not think he is sick will not seek a physician. God cannot remedy our weaknesses if we do not have knowledge of them, and acknowledge them, though God does not delight in reproofing man.

Christ was in conversation with a woman of questionable character. He talked to her about the water of life. He tried to help her without calling attention to her sin. Making little progress, He said to her. “Go, call thy husband, and come hither.” I have no husband, she answered.

Jesus replied, “Thou has well said . . . : for you has had five husbands; and he whom you now has is not thy husband.” John 4:16-18. Christ placed His finger on her sin, and in this case was able to save the woman, howbeit she first sought to save face by arguing for her religion as against His, and her place of worship as against that of the Jews.

Secret sins of the heart, such as pride, envy, hatred, and covetousness, which may escape the view of man, are seen by God and are especially hateful in His eyes. The Scriptures are scheduled to reveal. as

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an X-ray, this inner trouble. In Hebrews 4:12 we read: "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Bible will reveal the crooked and misshapen bones of doctrine, and bring to view the selfish and evil thought. Thus does the Word of God become a reprover of sin, whether that sin be in a believer or unbeliever. It is no respecter of persons. Anyone who searches the Scriptures with honesty of heart will find that he will be reproved. Evil unproved is dangerous.

Correction follows reproof. Mere reproof would be of little value if no change for the better could be effected. Here again the Word of God is the agent. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction! Moffatt says, "For amendment."

The Scriptures not only set up great beliefs, they not only reprove us individually for individual sins, but tend to correct the evil pointed out, to effect an amendment of life and to keep us on the right path.

Alexander McLeod tells somewhere of two young men who visited a factory to discover the secret of a new machine that clever man had invented, and to make secret drawings of it.

In their hotel room one of the young men opened a Bible the twentieth chapter of Exodus and read the Ten Commandments. When he came to the eighth one he could go no farther, for the words seemed to flash like fire, and smote upon his conscience, "Thou shall not steal." Those men went home without the secret of the machine, but with the secret of personal power. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." Psalm 119:9.

Down in the ancient land of Egypt, youthful, lithe, and handsome Joseph was sold as a slave, only later to become the manager of the household of Potiphar, who was captain of the king's guard. When tempted to sin at the invitation of Potiphar's wife, under the enticement of secrecy and the lure of favor and reward, Joseph said to her, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Day after day this sultry-voiced, dusky beauty of Egypt's land cast her eyes upon Joseph and engaged the stalwart youth of God in stealthy, whispered conversation. His answer was always No. He would neither betray his master on earth nor be untrue to his Master in heaven.

What did it cost him to say that word No? The price was prison, where they fettered his feet with chains and laid him in iron (Psalm 105:18).

What was the secret of his power? The principles of righteousness learned in his father's tent in Canaan were in his mind and heart. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against you." Psalm 119:11. He lived as under the direct gaze of God, subject unto His word, and thus did he prevail in the hour of temptation. Standing on the very edge of a perilous precipice, he was steadied by the word and presence of God. One writer has said, "If God's Word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose that is rarely seen in these times."- ELLEN G. WHITE, Steps To Christ, p. 95.

CHRIST IN ALL THE BIBLE

In Genesis He is the Seed of the woman.

In Exodus, the Lamb of God foreshadowed.

In Leviticus, the High Priest typified.

In Numbers, the Star of Jacob.

In Deuteronomy, the Prophet like unto Moses.

In Joshua, the Captain of the Lord's host.

In Judges, the Messenger of Jehovah.

In Ruth, our Kinsman and Redeemer.

In Samuel, the Lord and Seed of David.

In Kings and Chronicles, King of kings.

In Ezra and Nehemiah, Lord of heaven and earth.

In Esther, our Intercessor.

In Job, our risen Redeemer.

In Psalms, the Son of God.

In Proverbs, One brought up with God.

In Ecclesiastes He is above the sun.

In the Song of Solomon, altogether lovely.

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In Isaiah He is the atoning and glorified Savior.
In Jeremiah, the Lord our Righteousness.
In Lamentations, the Man of Sorrows.
In Ezekiel, Prince and Priest.
In Daniel, the Messiah cut off, and then Ruler of the world.
In Hosea He saves the backslider.
In Joel He utters His voice and shakes the earth.
In Amos He reproves and restores.
In Obadiah, the Lord of His kingdom.
In Jonah, the risen Prophet.
In Micah, the Ruler born in Bethlehem.
In Nahum, the Bearer of good tidings.
In Habakkuk, the Holy One with Calvary's scars.
In Zephaniah, a saving Lord in their midst.
In Haggai, the Desire of all nations.
In Zechariah, thy King, meek and lowly.
In Malachi, the Sun of Righteousness.
In Matthew, Emmanuel-God with us.
In Mark, the Stone the builders rejected.
In Luke, the forgiving Creditor.
In John, Creator, Redeemer, and coming King.
In Acts, the ascended Lord.
In Romans, Justifier of the unjust.
In 1 Corinthians, the Hope of the resurrection.
In 2 Corinthians, Constraining Love.
In Galatians, Redeeming Grace.
In Ephesians, Head of the church.
In Philippians, Power of a resurrected
In Colossians, the First-born of every creature.
In 1 Thessalonians, the Voice that raises the dead.
In 2 Thessalonians, feared of sinners, admired of saints.
In 1 Timothy, the only Mediator between God and men.
In 2 Timothy, Giver of the crown.
In Titus, the Blessed Hope of the world.
In Philemon, the Author of peace.
In Hebrews, our great High Priest.
In James, the Lord whose coming draws nigh.
In 1 Peter, the Lamb without blemish.
In 2 Peter, the Daystar to our hearts.
In Epistles of John, the Word of life.
In Jude, Michael the Archangel.
In Revelation, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

GREATEST PURPOSE OF THE BIBLE

The greatest single purpose of the Bible we have left for the last, in order to make impressive the fact that it should be not Only last but also first.

The Bible is likened to a lamp (Psalm 119:105), to food (Matthew 4:4), to a hammer and to fire (Jeremiah 23:29), to honey (Psalm 119:103), and to a sword (Ephesians 6:17). These and other important considerations we pass by for a brief look at the central figure of the Scriptures.

Concerning Himself the Son of man said, "Fear not; I am the first and the last." Revelation 1:17. To the Jews at Jerusalem at the time of one of their religious feasts, when they were seeking to slay Him in the early days of His ministry, Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39.

Of His actions after His crucifixion and resurrection we have this record: "Beginning at Moses and

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all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:27.

In these words it is made unmistakably clear that from beginning to end the Scriptures brought revelations concerning Christ.

It was Christ who from the bush Moses saying, I AM THAT I AM. “Thus shall you say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.’ Exodus 3:14. This was the pledge of Israel’s deliverance. So when He came ‘in the likeness of men,’ He declared Himself the I AM. The Child of Bethlehem, the meek and lowly Savior, is God ‘manifest in the flesh.’ 1 Timothy 3:16. And to us He says, “I AM, the Good Shepherd.” I AM the living Bread.” I AM the way, the Truth, and the Life.” “ALL power is given unto ME in’ heaven and in earth.” [John 10:11; 6:51; 14:6; Matthew 28:18.] I AM the assurance of every promise.” “I AM; be not afraid.” “God with us’ is the surety of our deliverance from sin, the assurance of our power to obey the law of heaven.” - The Desire’ of Ages, pp. 24, 25.

The Bible reveals the Man, and when men find the Man everything else will come out all right.

Have you found the Man of the Book? Have you made Him your Savior, your Friend, your Pattern, your Power?

The Man of the Book is your Friend. Faith in this Man is nourished by the Book. Stay close to the Man. Stay close to the Book. “This Book will keep you from sin, and sin will keep you from this Book.” The secret of your perfection (2 Timothy 3:17) lies in your submission to, and association with, the perfect Man and the perfect Book.

“O Word of God Incarnate,
O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging,
O Light of our dark sky, We praise Thee for Thy radiance That from the hallowed page, A lantern to our
footsteps, Shines on from age to age.

“It is the golden casket, Where gems of truth are stored; It is the heaven-drawn picture Of Christ, the living
Word.

“O teach Thy wandering pilgrims By this their path to trace, Till, clouds and darkness ended, They see
Thee face to face.”
-W. W. How

16. Is the History of the Bible True?

DID you know that when George Washington was President of the United States there was nothing definitely known, aside from the Bible, concerning the history of peoples of the world prior to the date 400 BC, the date of the oldest reliable histories of Greece and Rome? In other words, at the time George Washington died there was not a single document known to be in existence that was written in the time of Old Testament history. Therefore the Old Testament had no witnesses to call to its aid when its statements of historical fact were challenged. Yet there was the Bible, claiming to give the history of the world back, not to four hundred years, but to four thousand years before Christ.

HISTORIANS QUESTIONED BIBLE HISTORY

Historians, with no evidence from other sources to support the Bible, raised questions as to the reliability of Biblical history. Scoffers pointed in scorn to stories of men and nations that they claimed never existed. Militant skeptics shot their arrows of unbelief, thinking that they could inflict a mortal wound on God’s living Word. If the Bible record of Israel and the nations were true, why was there no other record of the same happenings? They asked. And they boldly assumed that because the Bible record stood alone it was most likely false.

Furthermore, they said that the art of writing was a comparatively modern art; therefore, the supposed records of Moses, for instance, could not be reliable, for the simple reason that people did not know how to write in Moses’ day-fifteen hundred years before Christ, or some thirty-five hundred years ago. So they set later dates for these writings. They had particular objection to the book of Daniel, claiming