

# HAS GOD SPOKEN?

## Matthew 5:18

**INTRODUCTION:** There was an article that appear in the Sterling City Bulletin a while back, it read like this:

A young preacher being interview for his first Pastorate claimed that he really knew the bible. So the interviewing board asked him if he would tell the story of the **prodigal son**. He said,

“Yes, I will - one night there was a man of the pharisees named Nicodemus the same came to Jericho by night. And he fell upon stony ground and thorns arose and choked him half to death. The next morning Solomon and his wife Gomorrah came by and carried him down to the Ark for Moses to take care of. As he entered the eastern gate into the ark he caught his hair in a loom and he hung there 40 days and 40 nights and he was afterwards hungered and the ravens came and fed him. The next day three wise men came and carried him down to a boat dock where he caught a ship to Nineveh and there he found Delilah sitting on a wall and he said, “Chunk her down boys”, and they said to him, “how many times shall we chuck her down” and he said, “70 times 7” So they chucked her down 490 times and she burst asunder in their midst. The disciples picked up 12 baskets of fragments that were left over. And in the resurrection whose wife will she be?”

The story goes that after he left one of the elders said, “I don’t know about hiring this fella, he’s awfully young, but he sure knows his bible”.

Sadly enough, That’s kind of the way we approach the bible, a conglomeration of facts but we really don’t know much about the whole.

**ILLUSTRATION:** In years gone by when the Sailors would cross the Atlantic Ocean they would navigate by the stars, because the stars were fixed points of light, they didn’t move. That is how you are to move through life - with FIXED points of light that are immutable. Precise biblical understanding.

You read the BIBLE, you study and understand it - and you are able to navigate the journey you find yourself on.

The question we are answering today is, “Suppose God is there... is He silent? Or has He revealed Himself in some way beyond the observable Creation?” I believe He has. More importantly Jesus believed God had spoken very clearly. Ultimately, my goal is for you to view the scriptures the same way Jesus did... to see His view of the Bible look with me at **Mat. 5:18**

**TEXT: Matthew 5:18 (ESV)**

18. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Think of the **AUDACITY** of that statement - what's written in this book will outlast **capitalism**, it will outlast **communism**, it will outlast **socialism**, and any other ism that hasn't even arisen.

Better yet, consider the **AUDACITY** of what I do every single week? I stand up here and call all of you people, and the hundreds watching online to stake their eternal soul on the claims of this ancient book. **DO WE HAVE ANY EVIDENCE THAT'S IT'S ACTUALLY THE WORD OF GOD?**

By **EVIDENCE** - I'm speaking of **EXTERNAL EVIDENCE**. Of course, it claims to be the word of God, but that is a circular argument - other books make the same claim. What evidence external to the document itself supports the CLAIM that this is Divine Revelation?

NOW - before we jump into the evidence let me be clear on the **CLAIM**. Namely that God the Creator has spoken TO and THROUGH human agents that at times KNOWINGLY and at times UNKNOWINGLY wrote down the THOUGHTS of GOD and that written record has been preserved throughout time in the for of the OLD and NEW Testaments. The Old and New Testaments in their original forms were TRUTH without any mixture of error. Their original forms have been marvelously and miraculously preserved to such an extent that you can base your LIFE and ETERNITY on the book you hold in your hand.

**SLIDE** - According to **Josh McDowell** - *there is a TSUNAMI of evidence to support that claim.*

***Today I want to show you 6 reasons that I feel so strongly that this book is the Word of God.***

**1. It's Source** - The bible (Old and New Testament) is, humanly speaking, a **Jewish Document**.

Is there any argument that this relatively small and insignificant nation of people has wielded undue influence over the course of history as long as history has been recorded?

- They and their ancestors occupy a piece of land in the Middle East that is just over 8,000 square miles.
- They boast no large reservoirs of oil, or natural resources.

Yet again and again throughout history they have been attacked, dispersed, deported, detained, and murdered. It seems every villain history has produced has been fixated

on the destruction of Israel.

This relatively small and insignificant people gave us the Bible. From the Patriarch Abraham to Moses, David and the Prophets - our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles were primarily of Jewish origin.

Time and again they have been attacked and defeated - from Babylon, Persia, Assyria then Rome. The majority of their enemies not only wanted to destroy them - but they saw it as **essential that they destroy their book**. From Antiochus Epiphanes to Adolf Hitler - there has been a concerted yet unsuccessful effort to **destroy the bible**.

***Even in our day*** - you can hardly turn on the news without world events being described as they relate to Israel. Every world leader must declare his or her position on Israel before they take leadership. WHY? Wouldn't you expect that this is how the world would respond to people who were uniquely chosen by the creator to be His mouthpiece?

As one who came onto the world scene in 1976 - this was just something that I observed to be true - at a college student in 1994, I had to wonder why.

NOT ONLY THE JEWISH PEOPLE - but men like Wycliffe, Huss, Tyndall and Cranmer - People who sought to translate and preserve the text became the scourge of society.

The fact that my father and mother handed me a bible was one thing - but my natural teenage rebellion had a tendency to reject my Father's concept of truth.

But the fact that throughout history the people who loved this book the most handed me the Bible with BLOODY HANDS...and it's very pages seems to carry the smell of smoke...I look at their life, I look at their death.. and I have to wonder - what is it about this book...

*I believe the Bible is the Word of God because of it's Source*

## **2. It's Worldview-**

**Every religious book must answer 5 basic questions.**

- a. What is our origin?
- b. What is the meaning of life?
- c. What should be our morality?
- d. What is our destiny?
- e. How do we enter into a relationship with Deity?

**EXAMPLE: Atheistic Evolution** answers the question of origin. But notice that it has no answer for meaning... If atheistic evolution is true - there is no meaning. You are simply a chemical accident. What is the use of morality? What difference does it make if we love our neighbor or eat or neighbor for breakfast? and destiny is a joke.

But I have never met an Evolutionist yet who does not hold to some form of morality. They all exhibit a belief in the inherent meaning and value to human life. Why? It's completely illogical? The evolutionist has a moral system, they express moral outrage, why is that?

**EXAMPLE: Islam** answers origin and destiny but look at it's morality. **Sherea Law** states that if a woman has been raped she must produce four men as witnesses who suddenly develop a conscience and actually confess to witnessing the rape. If she cannot produce four witnesses she is tried for adultery and flogged.

Compare these things to scripture - Scripture describes the world being created perfect, mankind being created in the image of God. But then a terrible fall into sin. As such Man continues to bear the residual image of God yet in a fallen and shattered sense. God has pursued man, given him a moral law that tends to permeate every society. Certain things are held as right or wrong no matter where a people exist.

The Bible tells us that God so loved the world that he would one day send a Messiah that would make all things new. He came in the person of Jesus Christ. That message has radiated out of Jerusalem into all the world for the past 2000 years.

Everything I observe in the world makes sense according to the worldview presented in the Bible. From the deepest and darkest effects of sin, to the most brilliant and ingenious evidences of human achievement.

*"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."* — **C.S. Lewis**

*I believe the Bible is the Word of God because of it's source....it's worldview*

### **3. It's Accuracy -**

Occasionally, someone will say that they don't believe the Bible because they only believe things that line up with science. The scientific method requires that things are "**observable, measurable, and repeatable**". You can't apply the scientific method to HISTORY. History is not "observable, measurable or repeatable". You don't use the scientific method to prove historical events, you use the **EVIDENTIARY** method like you would in a court room. In other words, "The reliability of sources, corroboration of sources, internal and external evidence to support sources". For example:

- The bible is not primarily a **history** book but when it speaks to historical events there are extra-biblical sources to corroborate it's claims. The Bible is not primarily a **science** book but when it speaks to science it is remarkably accurate.
- The bible begins with an account of humanity flowing from a **single human individual**
  - The most modern science tells us that **DNA** research proves that every person alive on earth today can trace their origin to one man who lived on earth many years ago.

- The bible tells of an **ancient flood** through which God destroyed the world and began again with Noah and his family. One would expect that we would find evidence of sea creatures on Mountain tops and desserts all of which have been discovered.
- The bible tells us that all people lived together and spoke a common language. They they were then dispersed throughout the earth by God himself outward from Babel. If this were true one would expect there to be similarities in the ancient accounts of creation as well as record of the flood - We have such a report
  - The Enuma Elish - The Babylonian Creation Account
  - The Epic of Gilgamesh
  - Even native american histories record similar creation and flood accounts.
  - Aztecs and Mayans have similar stories.

One would expect to find such stories if the bible were true.

- The more localized events of history have been disputed by historians time and again yet without fail the bibles accounts of history have been affirmed with discovery after discovery. Whether is it the walls of **Jericho** that clearly fell outward rather than inward.Or the discovery of the ancient city of **Ur** of the Chaldeas. Archeology affirms again and again the historical record of the Bible.

### **Not only History but Science -**

If you read ancient literature you will see that all ancient people had certain beliefs about the nature of the earth.

- The Greeks believed it rested on 5 pillars
- The Hindus believed it rested on the back of an Elephant - when the Elephant shook it caused earthquakes. The Elephants was on the back of a turtle, the turtle on the back of a serpent. The serpent swimming in a cosmic river.

### **Job 26:7 (ESV) the earliest book of the bible.**

<sup>7</sup> He stretches out the north over the void and hangs the earth on nothing.

For centuries man believed the **earth was flat**, but now we know the earth is a globe. The prophet **Isaiah**, writing **750 years** before the birth of Christ, revealed that "God sitteth upon the circle of the earth" (Isaiah 40:22). The word translated here as "**circle**" was more commonly translated "**sphere**." In other words, Isaiah explained that the earth was a globe centuries before science discovered it.

When **Ptolemy** charted the heavens, he counted **1026 stars** in the sky. But with the invention of the telescope man discovered millions and millions of stars, something that **Jeremiah 33:22** revealed nearly three thousand years ago: "The host of heaven cannot be numbered."

The **hydrological cycle**. Rain or snow falls to the ground and runs off into streams, which run into rivers, which run into the sea. Water evaporates from the surface of the ocean and returns to the clouds, where it becomes rain and snow, which falls to the ground. The hydrological cycle is a discovery of fairly modern times, but the Bible speaks of it in **Isaiah 55:10**: “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth ...”

In the ceremonial laws Leviticus God commanded Israel to **quarantine** people who were sick. In the 14th century scholars studying the bible discovered that this could be the cure for the plague - it wasn't doctors who stopped the plague it was theologians. Today as COVID has spread across the world again it is the Bible that taught science not the other way around.

*I believe the Bible is the Word of God because of it's source....it's worldview.... It's accuracy...*

4. **It's Honesty** - I love biographies but I have found that one of the biggest problems in reading biographies is that they are typically written by fans... and we have a tendency to glamorize our heroes.

ENOCH - is one of the first good guys described in scripture but did you know that the bible says he walked with God 300 years. He left this earth when he was 365. So for 65 years of his life one of the greatest men in the OT **didn't walk with God**.

**ABRAHAM** - the father of the Jewish People shared his wife with another man, lied about her, and when he discovered she could not conceive he took another woman as his wife.

**MOSES** - the lawgiver, was an insecure, reluctant leader, who, in his first attempt to come to the aid of his own people, killed a man, and then ran for life to the desert.

**DAVID** - Israel's most loved King was an adulterer who took another man's wife and then, to cover his own sin, conspired to have her husband killed.

In **Ezekiel 16** the Scriptures describe the people of God, the nation of Israel, as being so bad they made Sodom and Gomorrah look good by comparison.

My observation is that men typically embellish the stories - the fish was never that big, if it existed at all. But scripture presents it's heroes WARTS and ALL.

If the Bible were true, I would expect it to challenge me, reprove me, correct me - encourage me, teach me. I would not expect every sermon to be an affirmation of how I'm already living. I would expect it to CORRECT me in order to BLESS me.

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**5. It's Prophecy-** One would think that if a document was in fact the Word of God it would be able to predict future events specifically and accurately.

Not like Nostradomas... Not like the TV preacher... someone has a back ache

**ILLUSTRATION: Isaiah 53** - When Julie and I went to Israel we heard about a ministry there that sought to convert ethnic Jews to the Christian faith. It was called the Isaiah 53 project. One of the things they would do is read Isaiah 53 to a Jewish person and ask them who it was talking about and where it was found. Keep in mind in the Jewish calendar there is no reading of Isaiah 53. They read 52 and 54 but not 53. So they would read...

**Isaiah 53:4–10 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. <sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? <sup>9</sup> And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. <sup>10</sup> Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

Then they would ask they question - who is this talking about and where is it found. Most of the time the Jewish person would say - that's talking about the Christian Jesus and it's found in the New Testament.

Then they would open the Hebrew bible and show them it was written by the Prophet Isaiah 700 years before Jesus walked the earth.

**ILLUSTRATION:** Peter W. Stoner, a scientist and mathematician, utilized what he called ***“the principle of probability.”*** This principle holds that if the chance of one thing happening is one in M and the chance of another thing happening is one in N, the chance that they both shall happen is one in M × N. This equation is used in fixing insurance rates.

Stoner asked 600 of his students to apply the principle of probability to the biblical prophecy of the destruction of Tyre (see Ezek. 26: 3-16), which claims 7 definite events:

Using the principle of probability in a conservative manner, the students estimated the chances of all seven events occurring as described at 1 in 400 million, yet all seven did occur.

Stoner's students did a similar study on the prophecy that predicted the fall of Babylon (see Isa. 13: 19). They estimated the chances of the Babylon prophecies occurring at 1 in 100 billion, but everything stated did come to pass.

Bible Prophecy is 100% accurate.

*I believe the Bible is the Word of God because of it's source....it's worldview.... It's accuracy... It's Honesty...It's prophecy..*

## 6. It's Unity -

It's UNITY - keep in mind that The Bible is a collection of 66 documents (39 OT and 27 NT) written over the span of 1,600 years by over 40 authors on 3 different continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe) in 3 different languages (Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic) that reveals one unified, progressing and unfolding message - which we call the Gospel.

**ILLUSTRATION** - Imagine we sent out at request for people from all 50 states to send a rock of their choosing and their particular cut to Fernandina Beach, FL. So we have stones from CA, to NY. Then imagine if once they arrived here someone was able to assemble those stones to create a perfect replica of the statue of liberty. Wouldn't you assume that this was not random chance? Wouldn't you assume there must have been some Mastermind at work behind the scenes telling each Mason how he was to cut a particular stone?

The same is true of the bible...over 40 men wrote sections of this book, but when it is assembled it presents the greatest story ever told and becomes the best selling book of ALL TIME.

*I believe the Bible is the Word of God because of who it came from....the worldview it presents... historic and scientific accuracy...It's Honesty...It's prophetic accuracy... it's unity....*

**INVITATION/CONCLUSION:** In 1994, while still in high school I remember sitting in my room, flipping through the stations and coming across a preacher. I remember turning the volume down so no one would hear me listening to a preacher on PURPOSE when I didn't HAVE TO. A few months later I was sitting in my car and heard Charles Stanley read from the Bible, "God made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our account that through Him we might know the righteousness of God." Over the next few weeks I began to build my life around this book. My whole direction in life changed. I remember a Christmas when my uncle Bill came down from Pontiac, MI and asked my dad how I was doing with my career in music. Dad explained how I had changed direction. I'll never forget my uncle saying, "Carl, boys go through this sort of thing in college... he will get over it". Friend, "I'm 44 years old - I'm not over it yet". I've based my marriage on this book, my parenting on this book, my finances on this book - I'm a satisfied customer. Would you join me?