

## The Bible From Heaven

**T**HE BIBLE is made of paper and ink and leather, or other materials, and is a series of printed words. To this extent it is a book made by the skill and energy of men. But the message it contains did not originate in the minds of men. It came from God, and that is the reason we entitle our subject for this broadcast "The Bible From Heaven." Anyone who reads the Bible through from Genesis to Revelation knows that time and again it claims to come from God and to be His revelation to men. In 2 Peter 1:21, we read: "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."

Now, there certainly is need for a revelation from God because there are so many problems that we can never settle by reason alone. Some of the big questions are: Where did man come from? What must he do to please God? What offends Him? What is to become of us hereafter? The only way we can ever know the answers to such questions is for God to reveal them to us.

"Holy Bible! Book divine!  
Precious treasure, thou art mine!  
Mine to tell me whence I came;  
Mine to teach me what I am.

"Mine to comfort in distress  
If the Holy Spirit bless;  
Mine to show by living faith,  
Man can triumph over death.

"Mine to tell of joys to come,  
In the saints' eternal home:  
O thou holy Book divine,  
Precious treasure, thou art mine!"

—John Burton.

On one thing, universal experience and the Bible agree—all men are sinners. You can ask a large congregation of people: "Is there anyone here who has never done anything wrong? Is there anyone here who has never sinned?" And no one will get up and say, "Mr. Chairman, I am perfect and have never sinned." If anyone should say such a thing, all the others would condemn him as mistaken—or even worse. The conscience of mankind agrees with the Bible in Romans 3:23 that "all have sinned."

But the question comes: How can we be pardoned? How can we find God's favor? What must we do?—Torture ourselves? Give our wealth to God? Offer human sacrifices of our loved ones?—What does God require? Here is the question in Micah 6:6-8: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

On this all-important subject, nature is silent; not a word about salvation comes from the mighty ocean or the beautiful stars. We must have a revelation direct from God if we are ever to know how to be saved, and the Bible repeatedly claims to be that revelation. In the sacred books of the East we find men talking about God, but in the Bible we hear God talking to men.

In 2 Timothy 3:16, the apostle Paul declares that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God." The apostle Peter, speaking of the writings of David in the Psalms, said: "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." Acts 1:16. And David himself says, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me and his word was in my tongue." 2 Samuel 23:2. Then who really did the speaking through the prophets and apostles

of the Old and the New Testament? It was God. Let us read Hebrews 1:1: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, . . ."

The writings of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms are all called "the Scriptures" by Christ, as we read in Luke 24:27, 44: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. . . . And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."

The world needed a written revelation of God's will because the wisest nations without it carried on the vilest abominations. Bloody sports and gladiatorial combats, the public sacrifice of hundreds of innocent children on the smoking altars of heathen gods were a part of that dark world.

Without divine revelation, the learned priests of Egypt worshiped bulls, dogs, cats, rats, reptiles, and beetles. It is said that a Roman soldier who accidentally killed one of their gods, a cat, was put to death for sacrilege. Even the gods of the classic and cultured Greeks were merely the deified passions, fears, and diseases of mankind. Their supreme god, Zeus (or Jupiter) was loose in family life, Mars was a murderer, Mercury a thief, Bacchus a drunkard, Venus a wicked woman; and they were worshiped with appropriate ceremonies of lust, drunkenness, and cruelty. Not even the wisest heathen philosophers and teachers were able to rise above this darkness.

We are told that Plato taught the expedience of exposing children in some cases; and the things that Aristotle taught as lawful would send him to prison today; Lycurgus allowed the Spartans to put weak children to death; Aristippus maintained that it was right for a wise man to steal, break the seventh commandment, or commit sacrilege when the opportunity was offered. Socrates, Proclus, Menander, and others, with all their learning and influence, by example and teaching were much the same. They were wise, but not in righteousness, as the apostle says in 1 Corinthians 1:21, "the world by wisdom knew not God."

If it be thought that the modern heathen world is better than it was in the days of Socrates and Cicero, just look at India. In the nineteenth century Christian missionaries found them with 330 million gods, according to their own count. Intelligent human beings were rendering worship to sacred cows, divine monkeys, adored cats, and holy crocodiles, while widows were being burned to death on the funeral pyres of their husbands. Read the first chapter of Romans; it is not an untrue picture of pagan corruption in all ages.

Jesus gave us a good rule to follow—"By their fruits ye shall know them." Matthew 7:20. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

Wherever the Bible has gone, it has been a spiritual anti-septic to pagan corruption. Where do we find schoolhouses, colleges, hospitals? It is where the light of the Holy Scriptures has shone.

What nation has infidelity ever civilized? Who ever heard of infidels' sending out missionaries to enlighten the dark corners of the earth? What apostles of infidelity have left home and loved ones to spend life itself in heathen lands to help savage and barbarian tribes? What hospitals for lepers have they established? Even the question brings a smile. As far as infidels' efforts are concerned, the cannibals might continue to eat their fellow men, and mothers might continue to sacrifice their children to bloody idols to the end of time. The infidels have confined their efforts largely to finding fault with the Bible and with those who are trying to follow its teachings.

And what do they promise us? To him who denies the inspiration of the Bible and vilifies the Founder of the Christian religion; to him who tramples under foot the blood of the cross, and slanders Paul, Peter, James, and John; to him who laughs at Moses, Daniel, Job, and Isaiah; to him who disdains heaven and deifies his appetites; to him who degrades himself to a dumb animal—to him, to this man, they promise eternal sleep, an everlasting death. This is the faith, the hope, the joy which they work so hard to receive. This is all that the infidel, of whatever kind, has to offer us. But the Bible brings

“life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Timothy 1:10.

“What is the chaff, the word of man,  
When set against the wheat?  
Can it a dying soul sustain  
Like that immortal meat?”

“Thy word, O God, with heavenly bread  
Thy children doth supply;  
And those who by thy word are fed,  
Their souls shall never die.

“’Tis like a field where hidden lies  
The pearl of price unknown,  
And he indeed is truly wise  
Who makes this pearl his own.”

—*Isaac Watts.*

Where did the Bible come from? It is here. How are we to explain its existence? It must have come from good men, wicked men, or from God. But good men would not lie and say that God was the author of it if He were not. Wicked men could not produce it—and would not if they could, because it is contrary to what they do and love. Therefore, it must have come from God.

About 150 years ago, John Wesley preached from the Bible, stirred thousands, and founded the great Methodist Church. Did he write the Bible?—No! The Episcopal Church had it for about two hundred years before his day. Did they originate it?—No! King James I of England called 54 scholars together to translate the Bible into the English language, which they did, and it was published in 1611. Did these learned men write the Bible?—No! Wycliffe had translated it hundreds of years before that—about 300 years before King James’ day. Did Wycliffe write the Bible?—No! It was in Latin before his time, and millions of Catholics had it and had heard it read for about a thousand years. Millions of Greeks had the Bible, too, and it was read all over the civilized world. It was

also in the possession of the Waldenses in the Alps and in the hands of the Celtic Church of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England all those years.

There are in existence today, manuscripts of the New Testament which are about 1,700 years old and, when compared with an English Bible today, they are found to be the same in practically every particular. Most of the differences in the various manuscripts of the Bible are in such small details as copyists might differ in—for instance, a reversed order of words, as “Christ went to Jerusalem” in one, and “to Jerusalem Christ went” in another.

The great church Council of Nicaea met in A.D. 325. At one time skeptics claimed that this council formed the Bible. But far from it—they appealed to the Bible to settle their differences.

Go back to A.D. 315. At that time Eusebius wrote a history in which he mentions Christ and the apostles, and gives an account of each book of the New Testament, calling each by name. (Book III, chap. 25.) You can find this history in any good library. The Bible was already old in the days of Eusebius.

Go back farther—to A.D. 260—when Victorinus wrote a commentary on the Old Testament and several books of the New Testament, and mentioned almost every book in the New Testament. So the Bible was old then.

Let us look back 60 years more—to A.D. 200—when Origen, the most learned man of his time, living only a hundred years this side of St. John, traveled all over the Eastern world and collected manuscripts of the Bible. He published an edition of the Bible called the “Hexapla” because it had six columns on each page, in this way giving six versions side by side. Origen was the first to give a complete list of the New Testament books. You can read about him in any good encyclopaedia or history. But the Bible existed before his day.

Go back in history to A.D. 150—only 50 years from the apostle John—and you come to Tertullian of Carthage. In his writings there are enough quotations from the New Testament to fill at least thirty pages. And he said that in his day the

authentic letters of the apostles were recited in the cities of Corinth, Philippi, Rome, Ephesus, etc.

One step more takes us to Justin Martyr, born 10 years before the apostle John was banished to the Isle of Patmos. His writings contain references to the four Gospels, the Acts, and the book of Revelation, which he says John wrote. He also says that the memoirs of the apostles and the prophets of the Old Testament were read in Christian meetings in his time. This brings us right to the apostle John. And we could give many other proofs that the Bible and Christianity came right down the path of time from Christ and the apostles to our day.

In A.D. 65—only a little more than 30 years this side of the crucifixion—the great Roman historian Tacitus, who was a contemporary of the apostles, speaks of “Christ, who,” he says, “in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death as a criminal, under the procurator, Pontius Pilate.” And this is just what the Bible says. (See Matthew 27.)

The Bible proves itself. It is full of wonderful prophecies made hundreds of years ago, which have been fulfilled. The whole life story of Jesus was written in the prophecies of the Old Testament long before He was born, and they were fulfilled as to the event, and even to the day and hour, in His life and death. The great prophecies of Daniel and Revelation also have been fulfilled, and history proves it!

You will find this proof of fulfilled Bible prophecy in the Bible correspondence courses offered free to all Voice of Prophecy listeners. And it will just thrill your heart as you see what a wonderful book is this Bible from Heaven!

“O Word of God incarnate,  
O wisdom from on high,  
O truth unchanged, unchanging,  
O light of our dark sky!  
We praise thee for the radiance  
That from the hallowed page,  
A lamp to guide our footsteps,  
Shines on from age to age.

“The church from her dear Master  
Received the gift divine,  
And still that light she lifteth  
O'er all the earth to shine.  
It is the golden casket  
Where gems of truth are stored,  
It is the heaven-drawn picture  
Of Christ, the living Word.

“O make Thy church, dear Saviour,  
A lamp of purest gold,  
To bear before the nations  
Thy true light as of old;  
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.*

The Bible claims to be a revelation from God. It contains the very things that we need to know and could never learn except by a revelation from God. The Bible prophecies, in their wonderful fulfillment, prove God's Word to be true; and history proves that we have the authentic Bible right from the days of the apostles. Therefore, what reasonable man will refuse to give the Scriptures an honest hearing? We invite you, one and all, to consider the words of the apostle Paul found in 2 Timothy 2:15: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”—and also the words of Christ in John 5:39: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”

Will you not join us in the study of God's Word? The Voice of Prophecy offers what we believe to be the largest Bible correspondence class in all history. Hundreds of thousands are already enrolled in this free Bible course in which you will find full proof of the inspiration of the Bible and the fulfillment of Bible prophecies. Remember, it's all free—just write

stating that you would like to enroll, and the first lessons with full instructions will be sent to you. The address is easy to remember, just The Voice of Prophecy, Box 55, Los Angeles, California. There is no charge now or later. It is all for the glory of Christ who "died for our sins according to the scriptures." 1 Corinthians 15:3.

May God bless you as you study the Bible from Heaven and endeavor to live according to its wonderful words of life!

"Thy Word is like a garden, Lord,  
With flowers bright and fair;  
And every one who seeks may pluck  
And weave a garland rare.

"Thy Word is like a deep, deep mine;  
And jewels rich and rare  
Are hidden in its mighty depths  
For every searcher there.

"O may I love Thy precious Word,  
May I explore the mine,  
May I the fragrant flowers glean,  
Thy graces all divine."

—*E. Hodder.*