

BIBLE INSPIRATION

A fact possess the quality of being authentic—thus, a fact is irrefutable and indisputable. Therefore, the facts in a case testify to the truth of whatever the case concerns. Truth is just what a thing is—it is reality. Hence, truth does not contradict truth any more than reality contradicts reality. When the Bible speaks of facts pertaining to secular history, sociology, geography, biology, zoology, and so on, harmony, and not contradiction, between the Bible and such disciplines is overwhelmingly discovered. Therefore, scientific facts do not contradict Biblical facts, and scientific truth does not contradict Biblical truth. Thus, in such disciplines as archaeology and oceanography, we may be sure that there is no contradiction between these fields of study and God's Word. To the contrary, the facts found in these disciplines serve to verify Bible facts and prove its inspiration. Let me share with you a few scientific evidences that prove that the Bible is truly the inspired word of God.

“He stretcheth out the north over empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7). This is a well known fact today, that the earth hangs on nothing—there are no suspending wires and no supporting beams. People in Job's day thought the earth was being held up by four elephants standing on a turtle, or held by a strong man. How could have Job known that the earth hung on nothing? A lucky guess? No, he knew this by inspiration of God.

“As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me” (Jeremiah 33:22). It is interesting that the astronomer Hipparchus in 150 BC (the most influential astronomer of antiquity), “counted the stars” and believed there to be 1,026. Much later, Ptolemy (another astronomer), in 150 AD, “counted the stars” and declared there to be 1,056. The late Carl Sagan counted 25 sextillion stars (that it is 25 with 21 zeros behind it!), and he said he is not even close to finishing. Mind-boggling! How did Jeremiah know the stars are without number? Did he pull out his telescope to have a look or did he travel into space to see for himself? Or, was it just another lucky guess? No, he received this information by inspiration.

“It is he that sitteth above 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” (Isaiah 40:22). The word “circle” in this verse comes from the Hebrews word *klug*, meaning roundness or a sphere. The people in Isaiah's day and even up to the time of Columbus thought the earth was flat. How did Isaiah know the earth was round? Did he read of this in the Encyclopedia Britannica? Again, was it just a lucky guess? No! Isaiah was inspired of God!

“The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea” (Psalm 8:8). Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873) was once confined to his bed during a lengthy illness, and on one occasion his son read to him from the 8th Psalm. Maury dedicated his life to finding these “paths in the sea.” He was the first to discover that there were circulating systems in the sea. Maury discovered that the oceans are not large, still bodies of water without a current. Is it not amazing that the Bible was ahead of science in supplying what technology would not be able to reveal through empirical facts until thousands of years later. These paths of the sea are called “planktons” by modern oceanographers. Did you know that the Cromwell Current runs over 13,000 miles through the Pacific Ocean and the Florida Current has more than 4,000 times the flow of the Mississippi River? Utterly amazing! How did the Psalmist come by this information? Was it just a lucky guess? Not hardly—he was

THE PLEASANT VIEW PLUMB LINE

“...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” (Amos 7:8)

A PSALM OF PROFOUND PENITENCE

Text: _____

I. He _____ God's _____

Notes:

II. He _____ for God's _____

Notes:

III. He _____ God's _____

Notes:

WHAT IS FAITH UNFEIGNED?

Text: _____

I. A Faith _____

Notes:

II. A Faith _____

Notes:

III. A Faith _____

Notes:

IV. A Faith _____

Notes:

inspired by God!

“Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep?” (Job 38:16).

“When he made firm the skies above, when the fountains of the deep became strong” (Proverbs 8:28). Notices that Job refers to the “springs of the sea” and Solomon to “the fountains of the deep.” Today, these great springs that open onto the ocean floors are well known. How did these Bible writers know of these springs in the sea well before they were discovered? Did they travel into the depths of the sea in their submarines? Was it a lucky guess? Not hardly! They could only have this knowledge if God gave it to them.

Job also mentions the “recesses of the deep” (Job 38:16). This phrase in the Hebrew tongue refers to that which is hidden and known only by investigation. Man in previous centuries thought the ocean to be a shallow extension from one continent to another. There have been found recesses in the oceans up to seven miles deep. Wow! Amazing! How did Job know about these recesses? Just a lucky guess? Or, could it be that he was inspired of God?

“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 forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished” (Isaiah 51:6). Isaiah informs us here that the earth is wearing down (“the earth shall wax old like a garment”). This is exactly what the “second law of thermodynamics” states, that everything is wearing out. The Second Law of Thermodynamics traces its origin to French physicist Sadi Carnot in 1824. How did Isaiah, nearly two thousand years before hand know about this? Just a lucky guess? NO, my friends, Isaiah was inspired of God.

Truly the Bible is the verbal plenary inspired Word of God! Is it any wonder that the Psalmist declared, *“Oh how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day...I have not turned aside from thine ordinances; for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path”* (Psalm 119:97, 102-105).

Thus, *“Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work”* (II Timothy 3:16-17).

-Tom Moore

THE BOOK OF CHRISTIAN ENCOURAGEMENT

It was three years later (A.D. 67), and Paul was sitting in a cold, damp dungeon, lonely and awaiting the surety of death. Just three years before he had experienced the joy of release and the pleasure of serving the Lord once again, but now he experienced the sorrow of imprisonment and a coming execution. As he sat destitute and near death Paul remembered his most loyal and trustworthy companion, a young preacher named Timothy, and once again picked up the pen to write to him one last time. Before, in his first epistle Paul offered Timothy timeless words of advice about how to proceed in his work as a preacher. Now, in his second epistle to Timothy and the last of his life, Paul offers to Timothy the encouragement he would need as he embarked upon the greatest work in all the world, the preaching of the gospel.

Paul's passion was preaching. Throughout his life he had dedicated himself at all times to serving God, previously misguided, but since time in complete faithfulness. When he first heard and obeyed the gospel, his immediate reaction was to personally begin preaching it himself (Acts 9:19ff). Since that time his dedication was to God and the proclamation of His word, even amidst the most formidable of foes. He faced the highs of joy and the lows of sorrow; but through it all he knew one thing—the gospel must continue to be preached. His days were short, for he had but a very little time before he would face his execution. Thus he called upon his trusted friend, his son in the gospel, and his protégé to keep up the great fight against sin, to preach the word.

We all need a pat on the back and a word to pick us up every now and then, but these final words Paul penned to young Timothy epitomize what should be the will and desire of every child of God. And it is thus through each chapter that Paul relates great words of Christian encouragement to young Timothy with all of the expectation in the world that the work would be done, souls would be saved, and God would be glorified.

First, in chapter one, Paul begins by expressing his feelings of pride in young Timothy for his work's sake. He recalled with great joy and thanksgiving his association with him and his desire to see him one last time in this life. Paul, no doubt, shed tears of joy as he remembered meeting Timothy when he was only a boy who had been taught the scriptures and had been encouraged in the faith by Lois and Eunice, his grandmother and mother. They had reared him to have unfeigned faith, and it is upon that faith that Paul calls young Timothy to serve God unashamedly. The fullness of Paul's plea to him seems to be summarized in verse thirteen, where Paul begged him to, "*Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*" Implied is the fact that already there were unsound words being proclaimed both near and far. Paul's hope was that Timothy would always tightly cling to the truth and preach it to all the world.

Second, in chapter two, Paul goes on to invoke not only a dedication to the faith in Timothy, but likewise a strength. "*Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*" (vs. 1). Paul recognized that not only would Timothy need unfeigned faith, but unswerving dedication to stand face to face with evil and not budge an inch. As much as could anybody, Paul understood the dangers that accompanied the preaching of the gospel, but even facing death he recognized the blessings to far outweigh any threats that he faced. He recognized that the cause he served and the word he preached was greater far than himself, and thus expounded: "*Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound*" (vs. 13). Thus did Paul encourage Timothy to flee temptation and follow after righteousness as a faithful and strong servant of God.

Third, in chapter three, Paul warns Timothy of perilous times that would come. These perilous times would be evidenced by widespread apostasy and an increase in ungodliness. A simple plea followed: "*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of...*" (vs. 14). From a young age Timothy had been taught the scriptures which were inspired of God, and Paul reiterates to him the power of those inspired words that can perfect a man and furnish him throughly unto all good works (vs. 16-17). Timothy knew the truth, and there was no need or benefit in forsaking that truth for the "pleasures" of the world.

Then, fourth, in chapter four, Paul gives Timothy a final charge that is epitomized in three words: **PREACH THE WORD**. Many would not listen, but Paul said preach it anyway. As one who spoke from experience, Paul's seasoned advice was, "*...watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry*" (vs. 5). Paul had done just that and was sitting in a Roman prison awaiting death, BUT his soul was ready to meet his Lord. No greater blessing can be enjoyed than the assurance of hope after awhile.

The book of II Timothy allows you to experience every emotion from joy to sorrow, but all the while encourages you to fight the same good fight, finish the same course, and keep the same faith, looking forward to the same crown of righteousness that can be bestowed on us in the last day. Read it with joy, read it with sorrow, but read it with hope; and thereby is the blessing of God.

-Andy Brewer