

The Bible - part 2

*Two more reasons to believe
the Bible is inspired by God :*

- Accurate science
- Accurate translation

(Notes for a PowerPoint Presentation)

By Catherine Slight and Lin Pearson

NOTE: This is the part of a series of PowerPoint teaching on *The Bible*.

You may like to know that you can download, free of charge, the other seven sections of this series, and other teaching aids, at FreeMinistryResources.org.

The red symbols [▶] are cues for changing the PowerPoint slides. The numbered triangle tells you to click forward to the next slide; the unnumbered symbol is for the next item on the same slide; the words in red describe what you should see on the slide.

Practise! Read the script; become familiar with it; adapt the language to suit your listeners. Practise running the PowerPoint with the script. If someone else is helping you, practise with them. A well-prepared presentation will help convey your message.

Pray. Without the anointing of the Holy Spirit, this will simply be an ordinary talk. Ask God to help you convey a message from his heart.

A note on copyright is included in the last slide. Naturally, you do not show that. It is for your information only.

How much ground will you cover in one session? That will depend upon the time you have available, the age and powers of concentration of your group (this material is suitable for all ages—children, teen and adults), the amount of questions and discussion you incorporate into the session, and also the number of illustrations from your experience, or that of others, that you include.

Terms of Use

This presentation is the work of Catherine Slight and Lin Pearson, and is copyrighted*, and may be used under the following terms.

You may use our resources unaltered for the purpose of study and teaching. They may not in any manner be sold or used to solicit “donations” from others. Nor may they be included in anything you intend to copyright, sell, offer for a fee, or make available online. This copyright is exercised to keep our material freely available for all. If you have any questions, or wish to do something not mentioned in these conditions, please contact Catherine and Lin at freeminres@gmail.com

COPYING

These resources are for your personal use. Please do not pass on copies to others. Instead, we would be very grateful, and it would benefit our site greatly, if you would direct people to FreeMinistryResources.org, where they can download the materials for themselves. This will help the site show up better in search engines, and so enable more people to find us and have access to the free resources.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

The PowerPoint presentation which accompanies these notes may be downloaded from our website. <https://freeministryresources.org/two-reasons-for-believing-the-bible-its-harmony-and-accurate-history/> That page also has links to all the other teaching and PowerPoints in this series.

© 2018 Catherine Slight and Lin Pearson

*FreeMinistryResources.org, including all its resources by Catherine Slight and Lin Pearson, is copyrighted under the following license: Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-No Derivative Works 4.0

1. [Title slide]

2. [Man with scroll - summary of part 1]

In part 1 of this series we saw how united the writers were and how accurate the Bible is in its record of history.

Now we'll see how three other aspects of the Bible writings are also accurate

Firstly,

3. ► [Accurate science heading]

Because the Bible was written so long ago, it may be imagined that modern science would be far ahead of any concepts in the Bible. After all, nowadays we know so much more than the people who lived in Bible days.

This next section will show that to be far from the truth! There are many examples of Bible writers receiving from God scientific information— long before people of other eras. We are going to look at just two aspects of science - **astronomy and medicine**.

► [Astronomy and image of radio telescopes]

► The Earth

Job, the Bible writer, didn't have telescopes, computers, or any scientific education.

Yet he accurately commented on several scientific facts.

"He suspends the earth over nothing" (Job 26:7).

The Greeks thought that a giant held the earth on its shoulders.

The Hindu religion taught that an elephant carried the earth on its back.

But Job got it right! He could have known only because God told him what to write.

4. ► [Astronomy The stars]

Job wrote in Job 38:7, "the morning stars sang together"!

For many years this was thought to be poetic language and nothing else. Then, in the 20th Century, scientists and astronomers studied the stars and discovered that they actually gave out radio signals. They were the sort that could not be heard by the human ear, but when they adapted their instruments, they were able to hear the sound the stars made. It was like singing!

► [More stars (Constellation Orion)]

Job also wrote in 38:31, "Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion?"

This refers to a star constellation which has stayed in formation for millennia (Pleiades) and another in which the stars are moving apart in different directions (Orion's belt).

How did Job know about that without instruments, or the benefit of centuries of observation? It was because God had told him. This is Divine Inspiration.

5. ► [Accurate Science - heading only]

The second aspect of science which has proved absolutely accurate is **medicine**.

► MEDICINE

At the beginning of the Bible are the Books of the Law that God gave Moses. In these laws were many rules which the people of Israel were to follow if they were to stay healthy. Here are some examples.

▶ **Quarantine**

God spoke to Moses about separating sick people from others, to prevent the disease from spreading (eg.Numbers 5:4)

The discovery of the contagious nature of infectious diseases and the use of quarantine to limit the spread was not introduced until over 2,500 years later by a Persian scholar.

[David W. Tschanz, MSPH, PhD (August 2003). "Arab Roots of European Medicine", Heart Views HISTORY OF MEDICINE Year : 2003 | Volume : 4 | Issue : 2 | Page : 9]

▶ **Washing**

In the book of Numbers, chapter 19, there is a list of occasions when people must wash themselves and clothes. This is usually when they had touched dead animals or people.

Today, doctors know how important it is to wash their hands and wear clean gowns when they operate on people. We take that for granted, because we understand that washing will remove harmful germs. But, when Moses wrote these rules, it was not understood by the people. They just obeyed it! And stayed healthy.

But for thousands of years after Moses wrote this, in other nations, including Europe and Britain, Doctors didn't bother to wash or change their clothes after dealing with someone who was suffering from, or had even died from a disease. They would go on to treat another person. This way thousand of people died from infections and diseases. It wasn't until the late 19th century that death rates dropped as medical staff began hand washing.

.....

[*Extra background: This may be of interest to you.*
The sad story of Ignaz Semmelweis, (1818-1865) and his campaign to get doctors to wash their hands between patients, shows how far advanced the Bible practices were over the medical profession millennia later. You can read about him here:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignaz_Semmelweis

.....

How did Moses know what scientists and doctors in our country didn't discover for thousands of years afterwards? There is only one explanation: God had revealed it to him!

▶ **Sanitation**

The British Medical Journal asked a small group of experts and the many thousands of their readers, mostly doctors, to say what they considered was the greatest medical advance from 1840 (the founding of their journal) onwards.

In the light of truly staggering medical breakthroughs and scientific advances of those years, their winner might seem incredible. **They said that the greatest medical advance was sanitation!**

The average human life expectancy increased nearly 35 years over the span of the 20th century. Roughly 30 of those 35 extra years are attributable to improvements in sanitation and living conditions. This dramatically reduced the toll of infectious diseases.

The English social reformer Sir Edwin Chadwick came up with the idea of sewage disposal and piping water into homes as late as the 1840s. Yet God had given Moses instruction on good sanitation and hygiene centuries before.

He said (Deuteronomy 23:12) that when people needed to relieve themselves, they were to go outside the camp and dig a hole to bury the waste matter. This would keep the living areas free from disease.

God's instructions were 3,500 years ahead of humanity's scientific understanding.

► Food

The Jewish people were travelling and living in a hot climate and in the wilderness. They didn't have anything like our fridges or deep freezes to keep their food fresh.

Food could easily rot in the heat. There were no veterinary surgeons or medicines to keep their domestic animals free from pests and diseases. To obtain meat, the people had often to catch what they could in the wild.

God gave the Jews clear instructions: they should eat meat only from specific animals. It has been proven that the animals that God mentioned were those which would not pick up harmful bacteria from the water nor easily become infected with parasites.

God also knew the healthiest way to cook the food. So he gave Moses various food laws for the people.

Although Moses and the people had no knowledge of medical science to help them with their food hygiene, the instructions that God gave them are considered by many to be still valid today.

Another aspect of accuracy in the Bible is in its TRANSLATION.

6. ► [Accurate Translation - heading]

When God first spoke to the Bible writers, they wrote down God's thoughts in their own languages - mainly Hebrew and Greek. These original documents have since been translated into different languages.

There are many different English translations: some are scholarly and very detailed, showing every shade of meaning; some use modern language to translate the original version in a more simple way. The language style may be different, but the truth is the same.

The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. So what we have today are translations of what was originally written.

► [Man - Critics have said...etc]

Critics have said: "Even if you have proved that God inspired the original writers, how can you be so sure that the modern Bible is an accurate translation of the actual words of the original documents?"

Well, here's why we can be sure.

7. ► [1. Accurate translation + Careful Copies - heading]

► [OT and picture of scribe]

The Old Testament

The copies of these Hebrew writings were hand-written, by men called Scribes. That is why the Bible came to be called "The Scriptures" (hand-written).

To make absolutely sure that a copyist had made no mistake, he would count every letter of his copy and check if it was the same as the number of letters in the original. Then he would check the middle word and the middle letter of that word, to see if it was the same as the original document. Only then was the copy passed as accurate. That way, when copies were made from that copy, and checked in the same way, there was no chance of mistakes being added in and copied, down the centuries.

► [NT and groups of scribes]

The New Testament

This was also copied by hand from the original Greek documents. But, because many people wanted copies, many scribes got together to work at the same time. The Chief Scribe would read out from the original and a group of scribes would write it out.

Today we have about 5,000 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, **mostly copies made within 100 years of the original and some fragments only 50 years from the original.**

This is far more than are available to check the accuracy of other writings of that time.

The history books of Tacitus, for instance, were written in 100AD. But the earliest copy available is from 1000 yrs later. **We have over 5,000 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, there are only 20 copies of Tacitus today.**

The best translations of Bible manuscripts were made directly from the original Hebrew and Greek, rather than simply improving someone else's translation. But some people still said: "The old documents you are using are copies of copies. They must have many mistakes."

So Bible scholars wanted to find a **really old copy, one of the earliest to be made**, so they could check it against the later ones from which our translations came, and prove them completely accurate. This did indeed happen. Here's how...

8. ► [Accurate Translation - heading only]

► [2. Goats and scrolls - Qumran]

A group of Essenes (a Jewish sect) were living near the community of Qumran, in the region of the Dead Sea.

It was at a time when the Roman army was searching for, and destroying, Jewish settlements and writings.

► [Cave - image1]

Afraid that their library of precious scripture scrolls would be destroyed, the Essenes stored them in pots and hid them in caves. **It was hundreds of years later that a goat-herd passed by.**

His goats had wandered off. He looked up at a ledge in the rock face, but could not tell if the goats were there or not. So he threw a stone to startle the goat into appearing. To his surprise the stone disappeared and he heard the sound of breaking pottery. The stone had gone right into a cave. Clambering up, the goat-herd found rows of clay pots, containing the scrolls.

► [Cave - image 2]

Archaeologists agree these were the oldest copies of the book of Isaiah that they had ever seen. **Now they could check if later copies were any different from these.** They would learn if the newer versions had all the mistakes they expected!

In all the 66 chapters of Isaiah there were only 13 differences, mostly simple spelling mistakes. This shows that translations of the Old Testament made from even later copies have still been very accurate.

Much earlier, in another settlement, situated on Mount Sinai, New Testament scrolls were found. They were so old that it is thought that they were the first copies made from the originals. Once again, they matched the later copies exactly!

These and other ancient manuscripts have proved that more recent versions of the Bible are accurate translations of the Bible originals.

9. ► [Open Bible 100% reliable 100% true]

In this session we have seen that the Bible writers were accurate in their knowledge of science. Also, that the translations made from copies of the original manuscripts were faithful to the originals.

These are two of the reasons why Christians trust the Bible to be 100% reliable and truthful.

10. ► [Fade to black]