

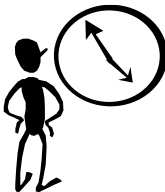
THE BATTLE CREEK BULLETIN

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Time of Assembly



Sunday:	
Bible Study	9:00 a.m.
Worship	10:00 a.m.
(Or every other week)	
Bible Study	4:00 p.m.
Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday:	
Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

The Bible – God’s Revelation

By Fanning Yater Tant

“But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body.” These are the words of Solomon as found in Ecclesiastes 12:12. In his day the books were made and written only by hand. Hundreds of scribes would devote all of their time to copying the books that were written, and Solomon said that of making many books there is no end. Since the introduction of printing in the year 1453, the making of books has become one of the world’s greatest industries. Every year literally millions of copies of books are printed. In the great library of the Louvre in Paris, France, there are so many books that if a person should begin rapidly reading them at the age of fifteen, and should read only the introduction to each book, reading ten hours every day, taking out no time for Sundays or holidays, he would die of old age before he had even gone through the first alcove. In the Congressional Library at Washington, there are almost as many books. They are of every description and on every subject imaginable. To this collection, there are being added more at the rate of several hundred a year.

Of all the millions of books that have been printed, however, there is one book that has influenced the thought of mankind and has shaped the history of the world, more than all the other books combined. If you could stack up in one pile every book that has ever been written on any subject by any man and could place over beside that this one book of which I speak, I mean the Bible, you would find that the Bible has influenced the course of history more than all the other books combined. It has caused more people to suffer martyrdom; it has been the storm enter of more disputes and even more wars; it has been the cause of kingdoms and empires crumbling into dust. The tremendous influence this book has

had on the human race is beyond calculation. When correctly used, it has brought the greatest blessings of the earth to the children of men; when missed and perverted by unscrupulous men, it has been the occasion of more sorrow and bloodshed than any book ever written.

In every age, there have been men who have not believed the Bible. The skeptics and infidels have always been side by side with the most ardent and zealous believers. In one day we have seen a strange phenomenon; we have seen the wave of infidelity reach the highest crest in all history, and we are now witnessing an about-face on the part of thousands of those who have been part of that great wave. Ordinarily, movements of this kind are spread out over two or three hundred years, but the tempo of our age has speeded things up, and within the last seventy-five or eighty years—since the works of Charles Darwin gained prominence in 1860—we have seen infidelity sweep over the land like a hurricane; within the last twenty years that hurricane seems to have completely spent its force and to be receding almost as rapidly as it arose. The greatest scientists of our day, and the men who are the deepest thinkers, are more and more coming to recognize some great creative power outside and above the universe which the scientists of a generation ago would have decried as rank superstition.

I want to tell you some of the reasons for our acceptance of the Bible as an infallible, inerrant, inspired revelation from God himself. Its statements are true and accurate altogether, completely reliable and dependable. Its teachings are truth; its doctrine is holy. Our faith in this book has been built exactly as our faith in a human being is developed — by seeing it tested in a thousand different ways, and meeting every test and every examination with unimpeachable honesty add complete victory. In no single instance has any test revealed an error or an inaccuracy or a false statement of fact in the Biblical record. The keenest minds of two millenniums have sought in vain for contradictions and discrepancies. They are not there. In a thousand ways, unknown and unknowable to the writers of these pages, their every word, and every syllable has been tested. The result has always been the same. There has always been an absolute triumph for the accuracy of the inspired writing.

Archaeology

One of the fields in which the Biblical record has received its most searching test and its most glorious corroboration has been the field of archaeology. The spade of the scientist has made contact in a thousand different places with the writing of the prophet. In every meeting place, identical stories have been revealed. What the prophet said, the archaeologist, working from a different angle and for a different purpose, has found to be the exact truth. May I cite you to a few examples of this type of proof?

Around the southern end of the Dead Sea, the pottery and the archaeological evidence reveal a very well-developed civilization dating back to the third millennium be-

fore Christ. Suddenly, about 2000 years B.C., all civilization in that area came to an abrupt halt. On this, the word of the archaeologist is unhesitating and unequivocal. The record of the ruins speaks with an unmistakable voice. The pottery, vessels, implements weapons, toys, household articles all are clearly of a civilization prior to the year 2000, or thereabout; then for a space of hundreds of years there are no remains of any sort. The next articles the archaeologist can find are all of a period many hundreds of years this side of the time of Abraham. The record is there; the atheist cannot deny it. For what it is worth, that is exactly what the evidence reveals.

What is the meaning of that evidence? Is there any explanation for this sudden and obviously catastrophic end to a civilization? Has history any word? Has the ethnologist any explanation? Has the unbeliever any solution to the puzzle? When we turn to the Biblical record, the explanation is clear and simple. Both Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire and brimstone being rained upon them from the heavens in the time of Abraham, about 1900 B.C. Furthermore, this whole region around the southern end of the Dead Sea is composed of a stratum of salt about 150 feet thick, over which there is a layer of marl and free sulfur. The earth stratum here shows a tremendous rupture, indicating that at some far time in the distant past there was an earth disturbance of unprecedented fury. The countryside for miles around shows an unbroken scene of desolation—a region of burned-out oil and asphalt. Had the writer of Genesis been an eyewitness to the destruction of the Cities of the Plain, he could not have given a more accurate description of what the archaeologist declares actually happened. His word is in total with the record of the rocks. Only a willful and perverted intellect would seek to deny it or evade its implications.

There is a second particular to which I will refer (among hundreds which might be cited in this field of archaeological corroboration. That has to do with the building of the treasure cities, Pithom and Ramses. These two cities were built by the Pharaoh who had begun to oppress the Israelite slaves. His harsh and cruel measures are too well known to need repetition. Suffice it to say that as a punishment to Israel he denied them the straw with which ordinarily they were wont to make bricks, compelling them to go out into the fields and countryside and gather stubble and roots of whatever binding matter they could find. These are statements of the scripture, straightforward and without reservation. The writer of Exodus makes them without any hedging or any possibility of a double meaning. He simply writes of the things as facts that actually happened exactly as he describes them. Little could he dream that his word would ever be analyzed and subjected to the most searching scrutiny of the critics. He was not writing with any thought that his word would be tested.

When, however, the test is applied, what are the results? The ruins of Pithom were excavated in 1883 by Naville of the University of Geneva. In his book, *Moses and the Monuments*, Dr. Melvin Grove Kyle gives a graphic description of the ruins of Pi-

thom: “The bricks are laid in mortar, contrary to the usual Egyptian custom, and contrary to the observations of explorers in Egypt previous to the time of Naville’s discovery of Pithom. The lower courses in at least some of the store chamber are laid with brick filled with good chock straw; the upper courses are made of brick having in them no binding material whatever, and the middle courses are made of brick filled with stubble pulled up by the roots. The impress of the roots is as plainly marked in the brick as though cut by an engraver’s tool.” This is in full and perfect harmony with the record of the inspired writer. There is no discrepancy in any single particular; there is no departure in the archaeological record from the Biblical narrative. The two witnesses are found in perfect agreement.

Tested Truth

To say that we live in a law-abiding universe is to utter a truism that has become trite. This fact has been impressed on us from childhood, not only in the textbooks of the schoolroom but in a thousand effective ways in our daily experience. We have seen the seasons come and go in orderly procession; we have watched the rising and setting of the sun; we have scanned the heavens at night and beheld the stars in a stately parade, moving by inexorable and immutable law from the eastern horizon to the western. We know that ice is cold, that fire will burn, that water always seeks its level. Because of his confidence in the laws of nature, the farmer goes into his fields each spring and plants seeds beneath the surface of the ground. Because of his trust in this law-abiding universe, the engineer does not hesitate to commit himself to the building of a great bridge, or a mighty dam, or a skyscraper, basing the whole structure on certain mathematical formulas which have been carefully worked out and tested. He knows that the stress of certain parts is always the same. He knows that if he builds a bridge to carry a load of fifteen tons, it will not collapse beneath the weight of a few hundred pounds. The Scriptures recognize this eternal truth concerning the natural world. David says, “*Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created. He has also established them forever and ever; He has made a decree which will not pass away*” (Psalms 148:5-6). And Hebrews 1:1-3 declares that Christ not only made the worlds but that he “*upholds all things by the word of His power*” (Hebrews 1:1-3). The laws of nature are exact, dependable, and undeviating. There are no exceptions. A man may be a fugitive from the law of averages, but there are no fugitives from the law of nature.

If this natural physical world is governed and controlled by law, it is equally true that the spiritual and moral world is of the same order. The consensus of the race through all generations has been to this end. One by one we have worked out aphorisms and wise sayings, things we call proverbial, which express these great truths. We declare “There is no royal road to learning,” and mankind generally and readily accepts that as truth. It is self-evident. It is a principle that everyone recognizes instantly. Education comes to all of us alike — prince and pauper, aristocrat and commoner, man and

woman, boy and girl. There is another accepted truth which I want to emphasize, however; and that is our world, our universe, is such that truth is always helpful; error is always harmful to mankind. This is the case in every field into which we may look. Consider medicine. How many millions of men and women must have died needlessly in past generations because of false ideas in medical practice. George Washington, for example, was almost certainly bled to death in the doctor's attempt to treat a common cold. It was the theory that the body might build up too much blood in the system, and that the proper treatment of many diseases was to bleed the patient — or victims — as it often turned out. Or as a cure for alcoholism, consider this statement from the accepted textbook on medicine printed in the year 1700. "Eels, placed in wine or beer and suffered therein to die and rot, he that drinketh that mixture will never touch that kind of liquor again!" In medical science, the slow progress of truth, and the gradual elimination of error, have proved one of the most thrilling stories in all civilization's history. Truth, by the rational order of a moral world, has been helped; error has been hurtful. There are no deviations from this.

Accepting that statement as correct (and both atheists and believers have always accepted it) we find ourselves possessed of a marvelous and infallible criterion or standard for determining the truthfulness of the Bible. We have here an objective measure; an accepted and unquestioned rule of judgment. This is one which has not only the sanction of thinking men of every age, it also has the authority of Jesus Christ. He himself said, "*You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit*" (Matthew 7:16-18). By this simple and obvious test, we can judge whether the Bible is a good tree or an evil tree, whether it is to be accepted as divine truth or to be rejected as a fabrication of lies and falsehoods. What are its fruits? What have been the effects it has produced through all the ages? If we are to judge its divinity by the effect it has had on mankind, if we are to accept the axiom that truth is always beneficial and error is always malevolent, what shall we say of the effects produced by the use of the Bible?



"HE WHO IS WITHOUT SIN CASTS THE FIRST STONE", RIGHT? WELL I STILL HAVE THE FIRST STONE ... I THREW THE SECOND STONE AT HIM