

BIBLIOLOGY (22)

3) John 15:13 - Here is the ultimate ethical code pertaining to love- the greatest demonstration of love is one who is willing to lay down his life for a friend. Not lay it down for a cause or a country, but for a friend.

4) James 3:5-10, James 4:2 - In the mind of God certain speech is classified as murder.

These are just a few examples of the ethics of the Bible. The Bible's ethical codes are the highest and they never lower their standards to accommodate man. The Bible continually exhorts man to raise his ethical standards in conformity with God and challenges to this goal with the promise of future judgment.

(External Proof #5) – The continuity of the Bible.

Here is one of the most remarkable proofs that the Bible is the most unique book in the entire universe. The Bible is written with themes and messages that consistently and continually reveal the same things from cover to cover. The Bible was written over a 1600 year span of time. It was written over a time frame of 60 generations. It was written by over 40 authors of all walks of life (King-Solomon; Fisherman-Peter; Poet/Soldier-David; Peasant-Amos; Scholar-Paul; Medical Doctor-Luke; Tax Collector-Matthew). The Bible was written on three different continents (Asia, Africa, Europe). The Bible was written in two main languages, with parts in a third language (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic). The Bible has been translated into several other languages. It is a book that speaks on hundreds of controversial subjects (Creation, Angels, Satan, Heaven, Hell, Life After Death, Death, Israel, Promised Land Boundary Markers). Yet in spite of this- **all the writers agree and say the same things about these controversial subjects.**

Josh McDowell challenged a scholastic skeptic to find 10 authors all from one walk of life, one generation, one place, one time, one mood, one continent, one language and one subject. His challenge to the skeptic was to find 10 authors who all wrote on the same subject who agreed in what they wrote about the subject. The skeptic finally came to the conclusion that it was an impossibility and he ultimately trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior (Josh McDowell, Evidence That Demands A Verdict, p.21).

In my personal reading and study, I have **never** found even two authors who completely agree on every part of a controversial issue. I have read several books on subjects such as Running, Camping, Packing Animals, Training Horses, Hunting various species of animals, Nutrition, just to name a few. Many of these authors know each other and quote each other, yet they do not agree on several things.

When I was a teacher, I saw, on several occasions, two students write a thesis on the same subject and come to the same conclusion, but did not agree on how they arrived at their conclusion. They were using the same books for research and attending the same school. Here is the point- when we consider the amazing continuity that exists in the Bible over a 1600 year span of time, we must admit, the Bible is like no other book in existence.

BIBLIOLOGY (23)

(External Proof #6) - There is **one** central theme from cover-to-cover in the Bible –
Jesus Christ!

Having just considered the fact that the Bible was written over a period of 1600 years and written by over 40 authors, this proof gives more concrete evidence that the Bible is in fact the inspired Word of God. There is a continual theme which exists throughout the entire Bible, and that theme, of course, is Jesus Christ:

A. In the Old Testament- Jesus Christ is coming.

B. In the Gospels - Jesus Christ is here.

C. In the Epistles - Jesus Christ is returning.

It also may be observed that when the theme of Jesus Christ is developed in the era of the O.T., or the Gospels or the Epistles, the subject matter is **always** consistent for that particular era. For example, the theme of Jesus Christ in the O.T. is that of His predicted coming. No O.T. writer presents the idea that He is already here. All O.T. writers pick up on this theme and relate necessary information in view of it. In other words, all the O.T. writers give detailed information concerning the theme of the coming of Jesus Christ. All pieces of information are critical to the whole, and when one considers that most O.T. writers did not even know each other, one must stand in total awe of this powerful thematic reality. Truly it is further evidence that the Bible is what it claims to be, the inspired Word of God.

(External Proof #7) - The Enduring Character of the Bible.

The Bible, as **no other book ever written**, has an enduring and eternal character which has influenced and continues to influence generations and cultures.

G.S. Wegener, in his book- 6000 Years Of The Bible, writes: "...the doubter...even the unbeliever, must acknowledge that the Bible has left its mark on the history of mankind as no other book has done, and has exercised a decisive influence on the Western world. Its story is part of the fabric of our civilization; its importance transcends the boundaries of sect and schism." (p.7)

Werner Keller, a non-theologian, journalist, in his book- The Bible As History writes: "No book in the whole history of mankind has had such a revolutionary influence, has so decisively affected the development of the western world, or had such a world-wide effect as the "Book of Books", the Bible. Today it is translated into 1660 languages and dialects (in 1979), and 2,000 years gives no sign of having exhausted its triumphal progress." (pp.23-24).

Even the skeptic must factually admit there has never been an impacting and enduring book that is comparable to the Bible. It continually **does** endure and it continually does impact lives.

BIBLIOLOGY (24)

Now the survival of the Bible is amazing, in fact it is miraculous. There are three areas of survival that need to be considered:

(Area #1) - The Bible has survived through Time.

I. The Survival of the Old Testament.

It is very clear that the Israelites preserved and copied the Hebrew Old Testament with great care and great accuracy, which has never been given to any other book. We know, for example, that Moses was one of the O.T. writers (Deut. 31:9). We also know that his writings were still carefully preserved in approximately 621 B.C. (II Kings 22:8).

One of the truly intriguing passages of Scripture which clearly reveals the unique and miraculous survival ability of the O.T. is Jeremiah. In this context, God commanded Jeremiah to write His word on a scroll (36:1-3). Jeremiah called Burach to help him accomplish his task (36:4). When King Johoiakim learned of this writing, he sent Jehudi to get it and read it to him and when he listened to a portion of it, he had the manuscript cut-up and burned (36:21-23). This was a direct attempt to get rid of this portion of God's written word. However, God simply reproduced it (36:27-28). He clearly preserved the O.T. Himself, even when part of it was cut and burned. There can be no denying that there is no other book like this. It truly has survived time, even times when attempts were made to get rid of it.

The preservation of O.T. Hebrew manuscripts is truly an amazing study in which one does see the preservative hand of God. As far as can be determined, the actual, original Hebrew manuscript actually penned by the real author (i.e. Moses), called autograph, is not available. In other words, to any scholar's knowledge, God did not preserve the actual and first manuscript that was written by an O.T. writer such as Isaiah, David, Samuel, etc.. However, just as Jeremiah 36 reveals, God certainly did preserve copies of the original manuscript. In fact, the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is "amply represented by both pre- and post- Christian manuscripts." Because of what God has preserved it is possible to know and believe that the Hebrew manuscripts of God's word are available and reliable.

The first attempt to form a collection of Hebrew manuscripts was done by Benjamin Kennicott from the years AD 1776-1780. Through his work, he compiled and listed 615 O.T. manuscripts. Four years later, Giovanni de Rossi published a list of 731 manuscripts of the O.T. (1784-1788). The two main O.T. manuscript discoveries that God permitted man to find in modern times are: 1) The O.T. Manuscripts of Cairo Geniza (AD 1890ff.); 2) The Dead Sea Scrolls (AD 1947ff.).

In a Cairo synagogue attic storeroom an unbelievable discovery was made of some 200,000 manuscripts and fragments and some 10,000 of them were Hebrew Biblical texts. Of the 200,000 Cairo manuscripts, 100,000 are housed today in Cambridge and the largest organized collection of Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts are housed in Leningrad. There are 1582 texts of the Hebrew O.T. written on parchment, 725 written on paper, plus 1200 O.T. Hebrew fragments.