

The Bible: Why? How?

- I. The invisible God and Creator has revealed Himself by three means.
 - A. General revelation in nature. **ROM 1:20 c/w PSA 19:1; ACT 14:17.**
 1. Nature only reveals His existence and power (creative and destructive).
 2. Nature does not reveal His purpose or will, nor does it reveal specifics about sin, forgiveness, reconciliation, the afterlife, etc.
 3. Nature's message is subject to ambiguous interpretation, as is evident by the variety of superstitions derived from natural phenomena.
 4. Nature is a broken book under the "...bondage of corruption..." (**ROM 8:20-22**) and is therefore not an infallible revelation of God's person, will, and purpose for man.
 5. Those who look to nature for ultimate answers end up worshipping the creation, not the Creator, and rationalizing their way to destructive conclusions. **ROM 1:23-28.**
 - B. Special revelation.
 1. God once granted *external* revelation through theophanies (veiled personal appearances) and voices in which He spoke to men. **GEN 3:8-19; 12:7; EXO 3:2.**
 2. God once granted *internal* revelation to chosen individuals through visions and dreams. **GEN 15:1; NUM 12:6; ACT 2:17; 16:9-10.**
 3. God gave *inspired* revelation to the prophets and apostles for declaration and recording. **2PE 1:21; 2TI 3:16.**
 - C. Jesus Christ. **JOH 1:18; MAT 11:27; 1JO 5:20.**
 1. Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God. **HEB 1:1-3; 1TI 3:16.**
 2. It is by His knowledge of God that sinners are justified. **ISA 53:11; JOH 10:15.**
 3. Jesus Christ taught men of God and sent His Spirit to amplify His knowledge of God, God's will, purpose, plans, etc. **JOH 14:25-26; 16:13-15.**
 4. If one would more perfectly know God, he must grow in grace and in the knowledge of God as expressed in and by Jesus Christ. **2PE 3:18.**
- II. What men may truly know of God, they must know through Jesus Christ. **JOH 14:1, 6-7.**
 - A. Jesus Christ not being present to our senses, we must rely on the information provided to us by those to whose senses He was abundantly manifested. **1JO 1:1-3.**
 - B. Men are accountable to the *record* that God provided through *them*. **1JO 5:9-10; 4:6.**
 1. record: The fact or attribute of being, or of having been, committed to writing as authentic evidence of a matter having legal importance, *spec.* as evidence of the proceedings or verdict of a court of justice; evidence which is thus preserved, and may be appealed to in case of dispute. 2. The fact or condition of being preserved as knowledge, esp. by being put into writing; knowledge or information preserved or handed down in this way.
 2. Hence, the need for *recorders* (One who records or sets down in writing). **ISA 8:1-2; 1KI 4:3; JOH 21:24; ACT 15:23; 1CO 2:11-13; 5:9-11; EPH 3:3.**
 - C. The apostles of Jesus Christ not only left a written record of their knowledge and experience of Him, they also authenticated the previously written record. **ROM 15:4.**
 1. The O.T. scriptures testified of Christ. **JOH 5:39.**
 2. They were Israel's chief advantage. **ROM 3:1-2.**
 3. All scripture declares Jesus Christ by Whom God may only be truly known.
 - D. God has therefore decreed that He may only be truly known to the post-apostolic world by inspired scriptures which declare Jesus Christ *prophetically* (O.T.) and *historically* (N.T.).
 1. It is the inspired *written record* by which God may be known and that record was completed by the time of the last apostle's death. **DAN 9:24-27.**

- a. The apostles would be guided into all truth. **JOH 16:13.**
 - b. The apostles would stand as God's judges. **MAT 19:28; 1JO 4:6.**
 - c. As the inspired prophets *spoke* (**2PE 1:21**), then *wrote* (**ACT 13:27**) for our learning (**ROM 15:4**), so the inspired apostles *spoke and wrote* for our superior knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. **2PE 1:19.**
2. The written record of scripture is the supreme revelation of God available to us.
- a. It tells us how the external revelation of God in nature came into being, why it is in its present state of entropy, and its inability to adequately inform us about God. **HEB 11:3; ROM 5:12; ECC 8:17.**
 - b. In the absence of the Person of Jesus Christ (by Whom God is known), it stands as His record available to us to perfect us in the knowledge of Himself, and therefore in the knowledge of the Father. **EPH 3:4-5; 2TI 3:15-17.**
 - c. Even angels by which the word of God came (**ACT 7:53**) defer to scripture. **DAN 10:21; REV 19:10.**
 - d. The best record of purchase is a subscribed (signed) written one. **JER 32:10-12 c/w REV 1:1, 19; 22:16.**

III. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. **REV 19:10.**

- A. testimony: Personal or documentary evidence or attestation in support of a fact or statement; hence, any form of evidence or proof.
- B. Jesus has perfect knowledge of God since He is God and therefore His testimony is true. **JOH 3:11, 31-33.**
- C. The full scope of the knowledge of God is beyond us. **ROM 11:33-34.**
- D. The Holy Spirit limited even the knowledge we have of Jesus Christ's public life to what the apostles *wrote*. **JOH 20:30-31; 21:24-25.**
- E. The apostles *wrote* what is *sufficient* to provide *certainty* of knowledge. **LUK 1:1-4; 2TI 3:15-17.**
 1. certainty: That which is certain.
 2. certain: Determined, fixed, settled; not variable or fluctuating; unfailing.
 3. One may be certain of what truth God would have him know if he reads and believes the writings of Scripture.
 4. The Holy Spirit warns about venturing into uncharted "knowledge." **COL 2:8, 18.**
- F. The written word carries the same weight as if God were personally speaking to men as He did with Moses. **GEN 12:3 c/w GAL 3:8; EXO 9:16 c/w ROM 9:17.**
 1. The scriptures were the oracles of God. **ROM 3:2.**
 2. oracle: In *Gr.* and *Rom. Antiq.* The instrumentality, agency, or medium, by which a god was supposed to speak or make known his will; the mouthpiece of the deity...
 4. Divine revelation; a declaration or message expressed or delivered by divine inspiration; also, *pl.* the sacred scriptures (from *Rom.* iii. 2).
 3. Thus, in lieu of a personal audience with God, believers can, by heeding the written Scriptures, live by *every word that proceeds from His mouth* (**MAT 4:3-4**). Mind that Jesus never appealed to oral tradition to fight Satan here. **MAT 4:5-11.**

IV. Some reasonings.

- A. Is inspired Scripture sufficient to perfect the man of God? Yes. **2TI 3:16-17.**
- B. If oral tradition is identical to Scripture, what is tradition's value?
- C. If oral tradition is also inspired revelation but conflicts with Scripture, which is correct?

- D. If Scripture is correct, then oral tradition cannot displace it.
 - E. If oral tradition is correct, then Scripture is a lie/error and should be discarded.
 - F. If Scripture was divinely given but not preserved inviolate, then all that is left is tradition.
 - G. If all that is left is tradition, then Scripture has no place.
 - H. Therefore, inspired Scripture must also be preserved and the only thing that oral tradition could ever possibly do is rival and oppose Scripture.
 - I. Inspired revelation must have been given, recorded/written and preserved.
- V. The first recorded example of such inspired writing is **EXO 17:14**.
- A. Subsequent commands to write were given. **EXO 24:4; 34:27**.
 - B. Moses wrote much more. **NUM 33:1-2; DEU 31:9, 24-26**.
 - C. Joshua wrote more to add to this “book.” **JOS 24:26**.
 - D. Later, Samuel “...told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the LORD” (**1SAM 10:25**).
 - E. The book(s) could then be called forth for benchmark purposes, etc. **DEU 17:18; JOS 1:8; 1KI 2:3; NEH 8:1**.
- VI. The foregoing verses show that there was an emphasis on the book(s) being conserved in the proximity of God’s presence on earth.
- A. The Mosaic Tabernacle gave way to the Temple and it is possible that Moses’ original writings were still there in King Josiah’s day. **2KI 22:8**.
 - B. The ark of the covenant which was housed in the holiest place in the Tabernacle and the later Temple was deemed the throne of God. **EXO 25:22; PSA 80:1**.
 - C. The placement of the writings by the ark suggested their divine authority.
 - D. Their placement by the ark is also significant since this implies they were separated from common books.
 - 1. Non-inspired writings would have had the taint of corruption since they were carnal, of the flesh. God does not condone corruption in His presence. **HAB 1:13; REV 22:15**.
 - 2. Being thus separated from other writings, these books were manifestly declared to be *holy* (kept or regarded as inviolate from ordinary use...consecrated...sacred).
 - 3. The inspired writings are properly revered as “...the holy scriptures...” (**ROM 1:2; 2TI 3:15**), given by the Holy Ghost, conserved in the holy of holies where the Holy God dwelt.
 - 4. It is interesting that the closest thing to the throne of God was the Scriptures, and whereas Israel’s high priest only drew nigh once each year (**HEB 9:7**), the Scriptures were always there between man and God’s throne.
 - 5. The ark had a mercyseat whereon sacrificial blood was sprinkled. **EXO 25:21**.
 - a. The mercyseat was itself a cover for the *tables of the covenant* housed in the ark (**1KI 8:21; HEB 9:4**), the Law which condemned men. **GAL 3:10**.
 - b. The Scriptures were therefore a constant witness to the need for blood atonement in mercy covering the curse. **LUK 24:46-47**.
 - 6. Over the ark were the wings of the cherubim. **EXO 25:18-20**.
 - a. These were images of angels which “...excel in strength...” (**PSA 103:20**).
 - b. This implies that the Scriptures are divinely safeguarded and preserved by forces that sinners cannot compete with. c/w **2KI 19:35**.
 - c. Angels have vested interest in the Scriptures. **GAL 1:8; 1PE 1:12**.
 - d. Angels shall imperil the natural creation (**REV 8-10**) but not the Scriptures. **MAT 24:35**.