

BASIS FOR CONFIDENCE IN THE BIBLE'S DIVINE AUTHORSHIP

Note to the speaker:

Help audience to reason on the trustworthiness of the Bible. Show how the fulfillment of prophecy and the practical guidance contained in the Bible prove divine authorship. Highlight how Jehovah's Witnesses have benefited by conforming to Bible standards, thus providing a basis for confidence in its divine authorship.

DIVINE AUTHORSHIP OF BIBLE QUESTIONED BY MANY (4 min.)

Many today doubt—or deny outright—Bible's divine authorship

Atheist tract asked readers: "Won't you help get this book [the Bible] out of the hands of our children, out of decent homes, and out of hotel and motel rooms?" (Frank C. Hughes in *Spiritual Guide to Gracious Living*) An atheist author referred to Bible as "fairy tales" (*The Evening Post*, Dec. 11, 1979)

Bishop of Episcopal diocese of Michigan said: "The Bible contains mistakes, inaccuracies and contradictions. It is therefore understandable why the major Christian churches do not view the Bible as infallible." (*The Detroit News*, April 24, 1982)

Catholic nun from Denver, Colorado, said of Bible: "It is embarrassingly human. The human authors show a woeful ignorance of science, history and even theology . . . God did not free the inspired author from the scientific ignorance shared with the people of that time." (*Rocky Mountain News*, Feb. 26, 1982)

Do these opinions have merit? What basis is there for confidence in the Bible's divine authorship?

BIBLE WRITERS CLAIMED DIRECTION BY DIVINE AUTHOR (10 min.)

Bible writer David gave credit to Jehovah for beautiful writings found in Psalms (2Sa 23:2)

Though prophet Daniel did not understand all of what he wrote, many of his prophecies have been fulfilled (Da 12:8)

Prophecies were directed by God's holy spirit (2Pe 1:20, 21)

Apostle Paul said *all* Scripture is inspired of God (2Ti 3:16, 17)

If early Christians had confidence in Bible's divine authorship, should we not also?

Consider how (1) Bible prophecies, (2) Bible principles, and (3) fruitage produced by Jehovah's Witnesses give basis for confidence in the Bible's divine authorship

PROPHECIES ARE OUTSTANDING EVIDENCE OF DIVINE AUTHORSHIP (15 min.)

Consider prophecies fulfilled in Jesus

Psalm 22 contains prophecies about Jesus

Verse 1 foretold Jesus would be forsaken to enemies by God; verses 7, 8 foretold he would be reviled while on stake; verse 16 foretold he would be impaled through his hands and feet; verse 18 foretold that lots would be cast for his garments

All these prophecies were fulfilled more than a thousand years after being written

At the very minimum, there are scores of Messianic prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus (*it-2* 387)

The book *Archaeology and Bible History* says: "The chances of all of these prophecies being fulfilled in one man are so overwhelmingly remote that it is strikingly demonstrated that they could in no wise be the shrewd guesses of mere men." (*ce* 221)

Daniel foretold rise and fall of world powers (Read Daniel 8:5-8, 20-22)

This prophecy was fulfilled more than 200 years later when Alexander the Great died and four of his generals divided up Grecian Empire (*w93* 5/15 6)

Isaiah foretold by name the coming of Cyrus to liberate Jews from Babylonian captivity even before captivity began (Read Isaiah 44:24-28)

Foretold that Babylon's gates would be left open (Read Isaiah 45:1) (*w93* 5/15 5)

Foretold eventual desolation of Babylon (Read Isaiah 13:19; 14:22, 23)

Babylon, completely deserted by 200 C.E., continues desolate to this day, thus confirming accuracy of Isaiah's prophecy (*hp* 28-9)

Prophecies concerning last days of this system fulfilled in our time

Reading 2 Timothy 3:1-5 is like reading headlines in current newspaper

Revelation 6:1-8 fulfilled from 1914 onward (*re* 89-99)

Prophecy establishes divine authorship of the Bible (Isa 46:10)

EVIDENCE OF DIVINE AUTHORSHIP IN PRACTICAL GUIDANCE BIBLE GIVES (10 min.)

Bible serves as light to our path by offering practical counsel in many areas (Ps 119:105)

Helps to remedy economic problems

Condemns laziness, promotes industriousness (Pr 6:6-11; Col 3:23; 2Th 3:10)

Those who are industrious may be more likely to remain employed

Stresses proper values; material things should not be put first in life, nor should they control us (Mt 6:33; 1Ti 6:6-12)

Warns against life-styles that can lead to poverty (Pr 23:20, 21)

Bible counsel can lead to improved mental outlook and physical health

Since the Bible is not a medical textbook, it does not claim the power to reverse chronic mental, emotional, or physical illness

Nevertheless, Bible principles promote emotional and physical health; how?

Bible shows that mental attitude can affect one's physical health (Read Proverbs 14:30)

Bible encourages us to cultivate qualities that are characteristic of "a calm heart" (Pr 16:32; Ro 12:17-21; Eph 4:31, 32)

Bible condemns practices that can adversely affect one's physical health

Cautions against overeating, heavy drinking, defilements of the flesh and spirit (Lu 21:34; 2Co 7:1)

Bible's high moral standards bless us with a measure of protection against certain diseases (Pr 7:5, 22-27; Heb 13:4)

Those who live by the Bible's counsel are benefited (Isa 48:17, 18)

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES TESTIFY TO BIBLE'S DIVINE AUTHORSHIP (6 min.)

Fruitage produced in their lives by adhering to Bible's moral laws and principles proves that the Bible is from divine source

Jesus said one could tell good or bad tree by its fruits (Mt 7:16-20)

Bible principles have helped many to transform their lives (Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

Jehovah's Witnesses are living proof of practicality of Bible standards

A united family, though living in over 230 lands

Not materialistic, they seek God's Kingdom first (Mt 6:33)

They avoid abuse of drugs, including tobacco

Endeavor to lead clean lives by obeying Bible's high moral standards

The fact that Bible counsel *works* is strong basis for confidence in the Bible's divine authorship (Mt 11:19)

Apply Bible counsel in your life; help others to do the same (1Ti 4:16)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)