

## **Why I Believe**

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I HAVE NOT always believed as I do now. Like the majority I have hail my skeptical era. Now I certainly believe the Bible is true, that there is a living God who rules, that Christ is my risen, reigning and won returning Lord. Here are a few of the many reasons I could give. In fact the question, "Why do you believe?" is a little embarrassing, not because of the lack of evidence, but because of its super-abundance. I hardly know which reasons to give and which to leave out.

To begin with, it was the incredible, almost uncanny fulfillment of Bible prophecy that first arrested my attention and shook my skepticism. For instance, in Isaiah 13:19-22 the prediction is made regarding Babylon, It "shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there." Babylon had all the advantages any city could ask for. It was situated on a beautiful plain, as flat as a table top, with an abundance of fresh water, for the Tigris and Euphrates carried millions of gallons past it awry day. It was ideal for irrigation. The soil is all river silt, without a stone of any kind or size. Yet with all these advantages it is a barren wilderness today. Why?

Note also, "Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there." How did Isaiah know that Arabs would still exist, let alone inhabit that area? Other nations such as the Babylonians, Assyrians, Hittites, Philistines, and Edomites are gone but the Arab remains, and as in millenniums past, "the Arabian" does not pitch his tent in Babylon's ruins. This is more remarkable when one remembers that these nomads take their flocks among the ruins of cities for shelter. For instance, the prophet Zephaniah foretold of Nineveh that "flocks shall lie down in the midst of her." Zephaniah 2:14. I visited the ruins of Nineveh recently and there were the flocks of sheep and goats in the midst of Nineveh's ruins. But not so in Babylon. For of this golden city we read, "Neither shall the shepherds make their fold there." Isaiah 13:20. The infallible accuracy and precision, even when speaking of things to come, is incredible. Here are not merely broad, general outlines, but often minute details.

I was forced to see here the divine origin of the "Scriptures of truth." I discovered there were hundreds, probably thousands, of clear, separate prophecies, each one appearing to be more wonderful than the one before. I discovered also that Christianity appeals to reason and it does not hesitate to submit its credentials. It goes further; it invites, even commands, the most careful scrutiny. "Come now and let us reason together, said the Lord." Isaiah 1:18. "Prove Me now, said the Lord of hosts!" Malachi 3:10.

How can one explain the multitude of Bible prophecies except by its divine origin? For instance, in Ezekiel 30:13 we read "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt," and, wonder of wonders, for the past 2,500 years no Egyptian has sat on the throne of Egypt. Oh, yes, they have had kings. In fact Egypt has had the longest line of kings of any nation of earth. Listen now to history. "From about the middle of the fourth century BC to the present day no native prince has sat upon the throne of the Pharaohs." - "General History," by Phillip Van Ness Myers.

Volumes could be and have been written on the prophecies of God's Book. Space alone forbids the telling of the boundless store. Unbelievers have often said to me, "If I could see a miracle, I would believe." Prophecy is equivalent to any miracle and is in itself miraculous. Christ, the greatest teacher of all time, declared, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:31. Other faiths, like Mohammedanism and Buddhism, have tried to prop up their claims on pretended miracles, but they have never ventured into prophecy. It is of interest to note that when Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, the basis of his argument was that in the very crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The prophecies of their own Bible were exactly fulfilled. Why did he use the argument of prophecy? Because it is unanswerable. Because it is perpetual. And because its force is always and everywhere applicable.

We live in a scientific age, an age that demands proof-proof that can be tested and proved. That is good. The Bible invites a test. The Book of God is for such an age. It is not afraid of investigation. Truth never fears investigation. "Taste and see that the Lord is good." Psalm 34:8.

I believe in God and the Bible because it is the only logical thing to do and the only reasonable approach to life. What profound conception lies behind the Bible's first statement, "In the beginning God created." Genesis 1:1. The existence of the universe demands a Creator. A building demands a builder. It must also have first been conceived in the mind of the architect. The inventor must precede the invention. The universe is an invention-and what an invention! A billion blazing suns and a thousand galaxies or Milky Way systems all forming a stupendous and yet perfect unity! Such a creation demands an infinite Mind, a Supreme Creator.

Some have told me that they do not believe in God, simply because they have never seen Him. Thus they indicate that they believe only in what they see. Experience, however, forces us to believe in many things we cannot see. Take, for instance, gravitation, air, thought, electricity. These forces, although unseen, cannot be denied by any thinking person.

As stated in Psalm 119:160, "Your Word is true from the beginning." That is from the very first word. All creation, all life proves there is a Creator.

I believe in God and the inspiration of the Bible from my personal experience. I believe God's Word for what it has done for me. It has not only given life a meaning but also it has made the future glorious. I was invited to "taste and see that the Lord is good." Psalm 34:8. I did and found Him to be all He had promised to be. Being alone with God in prayer and in Bible meditation has brought to me sweetness and joy beyond words. I know some will laugh at this. But may I remind you that my testimony counts in a court of law. In fact, I remember a case in a court of law that was decided mainly on my testimony; testimony does count. What right does any skeptic—who on his own testimony knows nothing of conversion, answered prayer and the joys in Christ—have to deny my experience. If I were blind (from birth) and was told by you that you possessed a faculty called sight I should be unreasonable if I ridiculed you as a fanatic. Further, my unbelief would not do away with your sight. None can know what fellowship with Christ can mean but those who have experienced it. Tens of thousands have proved it to be a reality.

During the last war when German armies pushed into Southern Russia, men were sent from the southern part of Europe into Russia to inquire how Christians were faring. When asked what was their main need, the unanimous reply was "Bibles." When these were delivered, the Russian Christians kissed the Bibles and hugged them to their hearts.

The people of God in days of old testified: "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise." 1 Kings 8:56. "The Lord is to be trusted." 2 Thessalonians 3:3 N.E.B.

The Bible to me is the most wonderful thing in the world and grows more wonderful as the days slip by. It is an ageless Book. It has met man's need in every age. Its facts and truths meet no embarrassment in the face of advancing science. It is read by more people today than any other book. It is the only book translated into over a thousand languages. It is the only book that can be translated into any language and retain its Power and personality. It has been burned and banned. It has been ridiculed, but lives. Every page has been stained with the life blood of martyrs. It is the world's greatest masterpiece and it cannot be improved. If you think it can, try it. Yet few of its writers could be considered scholars. It was written by fishermen and kings among its writers were I doctor, a tax collector and a shepherd. It is also the only ancient book that stands in this scientific age. It is "the survival of the fittest." It will continue to survive. It can never be destroyed. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matthew 24:35. "The word of the Lord endures forever." 1 Peter 1:25. Follow it, and you will come to the haven of peace; disregard it, and your life's voyage will end in disaster.

Another interesting fact that I have noticed is that I have never yet met doubters who read the Bible. Think of it—the Book that is used to swear in witnesses in our courts, the Book on which young men take the oath of allegiance when joining our army, the Book which was handed to our Queen at her coronation with the words "It is the most precious thing this world affords," the Book that has influenced mankind more than any other—yet it is rejected by many without even being read. To condemn without a trial is not justice. If there is a candid doubter who has faithfully studied the Bible and the evidences, I certainly have not met him.

I believe the Bible because it is such an amazing Book. It is the most hated Book in the world. It is forbidden in Russia and other places. Thousands of volumes have been written to disprove it—millions of dollars have been spent to get rid of it. It is the most expensive possession we have. It has cost the life blood of millions of martyrs. It is more than a book, it is the greatest of all books. It is more than a book of ethics; it has revolutionized ethics. It is more than a book of morals, it is the basis of morals.

It is a revelation from God. While all paganism, all isms and all philosophies, are the fruit of man seeking God, the Bible reveals God seeking man. Without the Bible God is a riddle, and life without God is a tragedy.

Truly the Scriptures are not the contrivance of a mere mortal man's brain; they must have originated from God. To me the two testaments are like the two lips by which God has spoken to us. How else could we explain the origin of the Bible? Bad men did not write it. Their minds could not be employed on such holy themes and so fiercely denounce sin. Good men could not be its authors, for they would not lie and counterfeit God's name. Its incredible foresight puts the final, infallible proof. It came from God as it claims.

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