


asylum. The Bible had changed the life of that island community. So, it has been from age to age: "The entrance of thy words giveth light" (Psalm 119:130).



An old Scotch woman who was alone for the greater part of the day was asked, "What do you do during the day?" "Well," she said, "I get my hymn book, and I have a little hymn of praise to the Lord." Then she added, "I get my Bible and let the Lord speak to me. When I am tired of reading, and I cannot sing anymore, I just sit still and let the Lord love me."

How To Search The Scriptures

Seriously (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15). Earnestly (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:11). Anxiously (John 20:31; Psalm 119:9). Regularly (Acts 17:11; Psalm 1:2). Carefully (Luke 24:27; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Humbly (Luke 24:45; James 1:22).



TAKE-HOME LESSONS

1. The validity of the Bible's Inspiration is fully established by multiple facts.
2. God has provided a light revealing spiritual truths (2 Peter 1:19).
3. The Bible is always accurate when stating scientific facts.
4. The Bible IS, beyond question, God's revealed word!

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CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE?

John 10:35 records a conversation of Christ with the Jews. They had taken steps to stone Him because He made Himself equal with God (verse 30). Jesus' answer to the charge of blasphemy is twofold-He appeals to the authority of Scripture (Psalm 82:6); He appeals to empirical testimony of His miraculous works. In His reply Christ, in a parenthetical statement, issues a bold assertion for the revealed, recorded, and canonical Word of God—it is divinely inspired, authoritative, and imperishable!

This statement is significant to our discussion concerning the topic of inspiration. "Broken"—literally this means that the Scriptures will never lose force and cease to be binding. Thus, the Scriptures will never be set aside as irrelevant.

Can we be absolutely sure that the Bible before us today is the one possessed and studied in New Testament times? Consider three vital points in answer to this pressing question.

The providence of God

A rather obvious and logical argument is seen in this point. If the original manuscripts were brought as a result of the working of Almighty God, surely the same Being can, through providential means, preserve the contents through the centuries. It is absurd to suppose that God would go to such great lengths to reveal His mystery, and then abandon the process so that no assurance is

possible for future generations! The providence of God is a force to be recognized.

The integrity of the Old Testament

The fact that the text was copied, by hand, over a period of 3,000 years (from Moses to the printing press) poses a great imaginary problem—the likelihood of error! B. Kennicott studied some 518 manuscripts—these contained about 280 million letters. Of this total there are about 900,000 variants; 750,000 of these are merely changes of the letter “v” to the letter “l.” Laying aside the unimportant changes, there is only one variant for every 1,580 letters.

The integrity of the New Testament

Over 4,000 Greek manuscripts are in our possession. There are over 9,000 manuscripts of early translations. The documentation of the New Testament far surpasses that of ancient books generally received as truthful.

Westcott & Hort (experts on the Greek New Testament) have observed: *“The proportion of words virtually accepted on all hands as raised above doubt is very great, not less than seven-eighths of the whole. The remaining one-eighth formed greatly in part by changes of order and other trivialities, constitute the whole area of criticism...setting aside these differences, the words still subject, in our opinion, to doubt only make up about one-sixtieth of the New Testament. In this proportion the amount which can be said in any sense to be substantial variations can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text”* (Introduction to the Greek New Testament).

Concluding Thoughts...

The Bible IS God’s Word! The amazing preservation of the text is evident. It is incredible that the Jews would preserve the book that recounts their rebelliousness and ruin and is so full of Jesus Christ. Yet, they faithfully watched over the Word received, without permitting one alteration through addition or subtraction. It is remarkable that the Roman Catholic Church

kept intact those Scriptures which condemn their deviations and they never dared add to them the Apocryphal Books until 1546.

Brother McGarvey gives the following answer: *The case is like that of a certain will. A gentleman left a large estate to his descendants of the third generation, and it was not to be divided until a majority of them came to age. During the interval many copies of the will were circulated among interested parties, many of these copies of copies. In the meantime the office of record in which the original was filed, burned with all its contents. When the time for division drew near, a prying attorney gave out information that no two copies were exactly alike. This alarmed them all and set them busily at work to ascertain the truth of the report. On comparing copy with copy they found the report true, but on close inspection it was discovered that the differences consisted in errors of spelling or grammatical constructions; some mistakes in figures corrected by the written numbers; and some differences not easily accounted for; but in none of the copies did these errors affect the rights of the heirs. The result was that they divided the estate with perfect satisfaction to all, and they were more certain that they had executed the will of their grandfather than if the original had been alone preserved. (Evidences of Christianity, Book I, page 17).*

A validating anecdote...

The story of Pitcairn Island and the mutiny of the *Bounty* has one incident worth retelling. The mutineers sank their ship and landed with their native women on the lonely island named Pitcairn. One of the sailors discovered a method of distilling alcohol, and the island colony was debauched with drunkenness and vice.

After a time only one of the sailors survived, surrounded by native women and children. This sailor, Alexander Smith, found in one of the chests that had been taken from the *Bounty* a copy of the Bible. He began to teach his fellow exiles its principles, with the result that his own life was changed, and finally the life of that island colony.

In 1808 the United States ship *Topaz* visited the island and found a prosperous community, without whiskey, without a jail, without crime, and without an insane