

IS THE BIBLE SCIENTIFICALLY CORRECT ?

Int.

1. Aim: To show that the Bible is credible when it comes to matters of science.
2. This lesson will be about the Scientific Precision of the Bible.
3. There are three views that people have regarding the Bible.
 - a. Some hold it to be strictly a human document —respectable with age, but certainly not an inspired revelation from God.
 - i. They merely consider it as one of the great literary efforts of antiquity, much as the works of Plato or Shakespeare.
 - ii. They deny that it is a revelation from God.
 - b. Others feel that the Scriptures have some sense of "divinity," but they do not believe that the Bible is entirely the Word of God.
 - i. It may contain sacred truth, they allege, but it also has an admixture of purely human ideology.
 - ii. They would contend, therefore, that much of the Bible's history is flawed, and certainly it is "scientifically" antiquated.
 - iii. I might say, "Lemonade contains lemon juice and sugar," but it also contains something else — water. When they say the Bible contains the word of God, what they mean is certain things within the Scriptures are of God, divine revelation, but there's also other material there that is entirely human and therefore, it is subject to error.
 - iv. They would suggest then, that the Bible is not to be viewed as scientifically precise.

- c. Neither of these views is consistent with the Bible's claim for itself. "All scripture is inspired of God .. "(2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- i. I believe and feel that all of you believe that the Scriptures are verbally inspired — the infallible word of God. It is totally inspired, not a mixture of error and truth.
 - ii. We are confident, as a result of careful and sustained study, that whenever the Bible touches upon a subject, it is accurate — if its language is truly understood.
 - iii. If God is the Author of nature, and if He is the Source of the Scriptures, the two will be in harmony, for He is not a deity of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33).
4. Our focus in this chapter, then, is this: Is the Bible accurate from a scientific standpoint?

Discussion

I. The Bible: Not a Book of Science

- A. It is frequently said that "the Bible is not a book of science."
1. There is, of course, some truth in that.
 2. The Scriptures were not designed to set forth the law of gravity nor to explain that water is composed of two gases — oxygen and hydrogen.
 3. The Bible does not say: "Unless one is born of H₂O and the spirit, he shall in no way enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.". The Bible just uses the term water.
 4. It is generally the case, though, when such a statement is made, that the author of it intends to convey the impression that the Bible is scientifically vulnerable; that it contains, in fact, outmoded "scientific" data. That simply is not the case.

- B. While it technically is true that the Scriptures are not a textbook on science matters, when they incidentally touch on issues that relate to a scientific theme, we have every right to expect that the sacred documents will be without error.
1. For example, it is also true that the Bible is "not a book of mathematics."
 2. It does not teach us how to add, subtract, or do fractions.
 3. Nevertheless, when it does discuss numbers, we expect it to be mathematically accurate.
 4. In Daniel's prophecy of the coming Messiah, he predicted that certain events would be fulfilled in "seventy" weeks;
 - a. The sum was then segmented into sixty-two, seven, and one (Dan. 9:25-27).
 - b. These figures add up to seventy.
 - c. We do not expect a math "mistake" in such instances.
 5. We ought not, therefore, to be distracted by the meaningless quip: "The Bible is not a textbook on science."

II. The Bible's Scientific Precision

- A. It is an amazing fact that though it was completed some twenty centuries ago, the biblical record is always consistent with the discoveries of science.
1. This certainly cannot be said for any modern textbook dealing with scientific issues.
 2. Current science books will be obsolete within a very brief time.

3. When George Gamow published the 2nd edition of his book, *Biography of the Earth* in 1948, he had to write a special preface correcting errors in the first edition, because, as he noted, "many changes have taken place [during the past seven years] in our ideas concerning the origin of the planetary system."
4. He still had a galaxy of errors in that work.

B. Consider some of the following points:

1. Many have argued (and some still do) that the universe is eternal; there never was a time when it did not exist.
 - a. But Moses wrote: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).
 - b. Over 50 years ago a scientist from Great Britain, named "Bertrand Russell", wrote: "There is no reason why the world should not have always existed."
 - c. This statement would not be made today by any respectable scientist.
 - d. But, as Dr. Robert Jastrow has pointed out: "Modern science denies an eternal existence to the Universe..." (15). This means that the universe had a beginning
 - e. This is one of the clear implications of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Everything is "running down." It must have been, therefore "wound up" at some point in the past.
 - f. The Bible says the universe had a beginning.

2. The book of Genesis states that Jehovah's creative activity concluded with the sixth day of the initial week (2:1-2).
 - a. Accordingly, there is no creation of "matter" being effected today.
 - b. This is perfectly consistent with the First Law of Thermodynamics, which asserts that according to present processes, matter is not being created now (which further suggests that it cannot create itself). It may be altered in form (e.g., from a solid to a gas), but it is neither being created nor destroyed.
 - c. Yet contrast these facts with the contention of Bertrand Russell — just forty-five years ago:
 - (1) "There is no reason why the world could not have come into being without a cause; nor, on the other hand, is there any reason why it should not have always existed" (7).
 - (2) These statements are absolutely absurd, and no self-respecting intellectual would echo them today. But the Bible is wonderfully current.

3. Consider Paul's statement in his address to the philosophers of Athens. "... He [God] made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth . . ." (Acts 17:26 ASV).
 - a. The expression "of one" translates the Greek ek henos, literally "out of one male."
 - b. The word "blood" (KJV) does not appear in the older Greek texts.
 - c. And so, the inspired apostle affirmed that the entire human family was descended from one man, Adam.

- d. This asserts the unity of humanity — contrary to ancient Greek ideology.
 - e. The Athenians claimed to be an indigenous people — a special creation, and all others were considered barbarian (cf. Rom. 1:14).
- C. This idea has its modern counterpart as well.
- 1. Charles Darwin, the "father" of modern evolutionism, argued that the "Caucasian races" are superior, and from this concept Adolf Hitler developed his notion of the "master" race.
 - 2. As late as World War II, the U.S. Red Cross segregated blood (for transfusion purposes) according to race types.
 - 3. It is now scientifically known that there is a basic physical unity shared by all ethnic families of the earth.
- D. Evolutionary anthropologist Dr. Ashley Montague has written that "all the ethnic groups of man must have originated from a single ancestral stock."
- 1. He says "the more we study the different groups of man the more alike they turn out to be" (184).
 - 2. Again, the Bible proved true after all!

III. Alleged Inaccuracies

- A. Unbelievers charge, however, that there are scientific blunders in the Scriptures — which ought not to be there if the narrative was given by God.
- B. Here are a few examples generally cited.
 1. Genesis 1:6 Moses wrote: "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters . . .
 - a. It is argued that this passage suggests there is a firm vault in the heavens that holds back the waters.
 - b. There is a mistaken notion here alright, but it can be traced back to the Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament - from the 3rd century B.C.).
 - c. Those translators were influenced by the ideas of their day in their rendition of the original term. However, the Hebrew word *raqiya* simply means an "expanse" (NASB), and it does not imply a "solid" sky.
 2. We are told that the Bible contains references to the "unicorn," a mere mythical animal (Num. 23:22 KJV).
 - a. If the Scriptures are inspired, surely, it is charged, they would not embody such absurdities.
 - b. Again, though, it is a matter of an inaccurate translation.
 - c. It is now known that the Hebrew word *re' em*, in this context, refers to a species of extinct wild ox, and not to the legendary "unicorn."

3. Some allege that the Scriptures contain a scientific blunder when they refer to the "four corners of the earth" (Rev, 7:1).
 - a. Supposedly, this is a mistake from those days when unenlightened man believed the earth was flat.
 - b. But the biblical phrase is simply a figurative expression for the extremities of the earth.
 - c. Some time back the U.S. Marine Corps published a brochure affirming that this branch of the military has men "serving the flag at the four corners of the earth."
 - d. Does anyone suggest that our government does not know the shape of the earth?
 - e. In addition we must mention that I saiah spoke of God as sitting about the "circle of the earth" I sa. 40:22
 - f. Scholars have pointed out that the Hebrew word for "circle" (chuwg) "is compatible with the notion of the earth as a sphere" (Archer, 637).

4. These examples could be multiplied several times over.

IV. False Science Not in the Bible

- A. Invariably, writings that are strictly "human" in composition reflect the "science" of their day.
1. This is why, even today, science books have to be revised rewritten every few years.
 2. It would be unthinkable to use a science text published just ten years ago.
 3. "Science" changes, and yesterdays science is frequently todays superstition!
- B. It is an amazing thing that the Bible does not incorporate into its records the pseudo-science of the antique world. Surely this is evidence of its divine character. But consider the following — by way of contrast:
1. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, said that the brain is a "compound of earth and water."
 - a. He further taught that the human brain "is larger in men than in women." It isn't.
 - b. He suggested that the "region of the heart in man is hotter" than in animals (Chapter 7).
 - c. The truth is, most birds and many mammals have warmer internal heat than humans.
 2. In the famous Papyrus Ebers, a medical text written in Egypt in the 16th century B.C., there is a prescription to prevent losing one's hair:
 - a. "When it falls out, one remedy is to apply a mixture of six fats, namely those of the horse, hippopotamus, the crocodile, the cat, the make, and the ibex.

- b. To strengthen it, anoint with the tooth of a donkey crushed in honey" (quoted by McMillien, 11).
 - c. That document was written about the same time that Moses wrote the Pentateuch.
 - d. Though Moses was raised in Egypt and was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22), when he penned the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), he incorporated no antique superstition into his narrative.
 - e. In fact, that Old Testament narrative is astoundingly ahead of its time.
 - f. The sanitation regulations, incorporated into certain portions of the Pentateuch (which presuppose the existence of "germs") cannot be explained except by the fact that God was behind the message.
3. False science is not in the Bible - but the Bible is scientifically precise.

CONCLUSION

1. When one argues that the Bible is scientifically flawed, or, in an attempt to compromise the integrity of scripture, flippantly quips: "Oh, the Bible is not a book of science," the Christian must rise to a defense of the flawless character of the sacred record.
2. This inspired book is scientifically correct !

Source

The Bible and Science by Wayne Jackson - Courier Publications

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Night Sept. 6, 2009
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