

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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TWENTY-FOUR PROOFS  
THAT THE  
BIBLE IS NOT THE WORD OF GOD.  
By a CAMBRIDGE GRADUATE.

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THE popular doctrine concerning the Bible, taught by the Church of England and other bodies of Christians, is that it is a direct communication from an omniscient and all-wise God to his creature, man, inspired or *breathed into* the minds of certain holy men of old. From this it follows, as a logical necessity, that every syllable, from the first verse in Genesis to the last in the Revelation of John, must be absolutely true; that the morality and philosophy of the Bible must be the most sublime imaginable; its history perfect in accuracy; and that its prophecies have been, or will be, fulfilled in every detail. If this be not the case, then we must conclude that it is purely human in its origin, for we cannot suppose that it is partly inspired and partly false, since God has given us no means of distinguishing the inspired from the uninspired, and we should have to judge for ourselves of its value—that is, use reason to the exclusion of faith, and treat it as we do any other book.

1. The Bible is clearly proved to be historically inaccurate, since it contains contradictions in different accounts of the same event. For example, we will take the story of the resurrection of Christ. Matthew tells us that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the sepulchre; there was an earthquake; the angel of the Lord descended and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it; and finally "they did run to bring his disciples word" (Matt. xxviii., 1-8). Mark tells us that Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, came to the sepulchre, found the stone already rolled away (no earthquake or angel this time), and entering in they saw a young man sitting on the right side (evidently meant for the angel mentioned in Matthew, since he gives the same message); and finally "they trembled and were amazed, *neither said they anything to any man*" (Mark xvi., 1-8). Thus on the last point Mark flatly contradicts the other three evangelists. Luke tells

us that Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, came to the sepulchre, found the stone rolled away, and entering in, "behold *two* men stood by them in shining garments"; and "they told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed unto them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Then arose Peter and ran unto the sepulchre" (Luke xxiv., 1-12). Lastly, John tells us that Mary Magdalene went to the sepulchre (apparently alone this time), and seeing the stone taken away, ran and told Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved that they had taken away the Lord. The two disciples went into the sepulchre, and not seeing Jesus, went away again unto their own home. Mary stood without, and saw the *two* angels sitting, "one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain," and she came and told the disciples (John xx., 1-18). It certainly requires a considerable exercise of faith (self-deception?) to persuade ourselves that these four accounts agree with each other in every detail; yet on their truth hangs the central doctrine of Christianity—namely, the resurrection of Christ; for "If Christ be not risen, then is our faith vain."

2. The genealogies of Christ given in Matt. i., 1-17, and Luke iii., 23-38, are different and contradictory to one another. Not only are the names different, but while Matthew gives twenty-seven generations from David to Jesus, Luke gives forty-two!

3. We are told by John that "no man hath seen God at any time" (1 John iv., 12), and yet Jacob said at Peniel: "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Gen. xxxii., 30). Again, we find (in Exodus xxxiii., 11) that "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend"; and in the 20th verse of the same chapter we are informed that he said to Moses: "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live"; and so he put Moses in a cleft of the rock, and put his hand over him, and took it away, and showed him his back parts as he passed by. We are also told that there "went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the

nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink" (Exodus xxiv., 9-11). After this it may be thought hardly worth mentioning that Isaiah puts in a claim to having seen the Lord in a vision: "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Isaiah vi., 1).

4. The Laws in the Old Testament, which are said to have been given to Moses by God himself, prove on examination not to be calculated to refine, elevate, and humanise the race to whom they were given, educating and leading them to nobler things—"a schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ"—such as would come from an all-wise and benevolent being, "whose mercy is everlasting"; but a code infamously unjust and cruel, brutalising and degrading in its tendencies, showing the grossest superstition in the mind of the lawgiver, and altogether what we should expect to find coming from a barbarous and primitive people. One example of the injustice of these laws will be sufficient: "If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money" (Exodus xxi., 20, 21).

5. Not only has the Mosaic code of laws cursed the race to whom it was given, but even now it exercises a baneful influence over the world; those laws sanctioning and regulating slavery proving most formidable obstacles to the abolition of the slave trade in the Colonies and Southern States of America, where large meetings of ministers were held declaring slavery to be enjoined by God; and in every session of Parliament at the present time are they brought up by the opponents of the Bill for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

6. The laws in the Old Testament on witchcraft (Lev. xix., 31; xx., 6, 27, etc.) have caused tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children to be burnt alive in the middle ages, and now the world has discovered it to be a purely imaginary crime! Is it possible that God, foreknowing all this, would have inspired such laws?

7. Polygamy is nowhere condemned in the whole Bible, and is distinctly allowed in the Old Testament; the chief saints, as Abraham, David and Solomon, being all polygamists.

8. We are taught that "God is love" and yet that he is

going to burn the vast majority of mankind for all eternity in hell; for "strait is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it"; "many are called, but few chosen"; "he that believeth not shall be damned." Surely no one will contend that the majority believe.

9. Paul teaches that God will torture us in hell, not for resisting his will, but because he makes us sin without our being able to resist. "He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."—Rom. ix., 15-22. So Paul teaches us to believe, not in a merciful, all-loving Father, "unwilling that any should perish," but in an omnipotent Devil, who amuses himself by roasting us in hell for committing sins which he himself forces us to commit.

10. The Bible does not solve the difficulty of the origin of evil, but on the contrary states expressly that God is the author of evil. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv., 7.

11. There are many other passages which prove that the God of the Bible, whom we are taught to love and reverence, is malignant in character, and are wholly incompatible with those passages attributing to him mercy and goodness. For example, Paul says, speaking of certain persons, "God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned" (2 Thess. ii., 11, 12). Noble motive truly!

12. In the Old Testament especially, God is represented as approving of the most horrible atrocities; among others too numerous to mention, slaughtering all the Midianites, men, women and children (Numbers xxxi., 1-18).

13. God is even represented as accepting a human sacrifice, as in the case of Jephthah's daughter, who was offered up "for a burnt offering" (Judges xi., 30-39).

14. We submit that the basis of morality held up throughout the Bible is purely selfish; not doing right because it is right, but rather for hope of reward in heaven, and from fear of hell; trying to curry favor with God, no matter at what expense to our fellowmen.

15. In some of the Psalms (read every Sunday in the churches) we find sentiments simply diabolical in their malignity. David prays concerning his enemies, "Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold upon them. . . . Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" (Psalms. lxi., 22-28). Just fancy praying that your enemies may not repent, lest they should get saved and not be burnt forever in hell! And this is implied in the above passage. We can only compare this prayer, inspired by the Holy Ghost into the mind of David, the man after God's own heart, for true charity and nobility of thought, with the following passage of the Christian father Tertullian, who is so highly esteemed by the Church: "Expect the last and eternal judgment of the universe. How I shall admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs and fancied gods, groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates, who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquefying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot flames with their deluded scholars; so many celebrated poets trembling before the tribunal, not of Minos, but of Christ; so many tragedians more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings; so many dancers," etc. (*De Spectaculis*, cap. 30).

16. Again we find in another Psalm—"Set thou a

wicked man over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand. When he shall be judged let him be condemned, and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few, and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds and beg: let them seek their bread also out of desolate places. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath, and let the strangers spoil his labor. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him; neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off, and in the generation following let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out" (Psalm cix., 6-14). In our churches and Sunday-schools to-day it is taught that this is the inspiration of him who said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt. v., 44).

17. Jesus Christ prophesied that "the son of man shall come in the glory of his father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. xvi., 27-28). He said also, after referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet . . . Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled*" (Matt. xxiv., 29-34). It is evident that these prophecies, which have been shown to be false by time, were understood by the apostles to be on the eve of fulfilment when they wrote their epistles, for Peter and Paul apologise for the end of the world not coming so soon as might be expected (see 2 Peter iii., 3-12; 2 Thess. ii., 1-6). Peter also says: "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter iv., 7). Paul says: "The Lord is at hand" (Phil. iv., 5), and tells the Hebrews not to forsake their assemblies, and

to exhort one another "so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. x., 25). James says: "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James v., 8). Jude says: "There are certain men crept in unawares," and after denouncing them, reminds his readers of the words of Christ—"How that they told you there should be mockers *in the last time*" (Jude, v. 18). Lastly, John informs us that "the time is at hand" (Rev. i, 3). And all these things (and more, which we have not room to notice) were written about the time that "that generation" who heard Jesus was passing away. Have not these predictions one and all been proved utterly false by time, that trier of truth?

18. The prophecies in the Old Testament, said by the evangelists to refer to Christ, on examination will be found wholly inapplicable. For example, Matthew (ii., 6) applies to Christ the prophecy of Micah—"And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel." On turning to Micah, however, we find that this "ruler in Israel," who he says shall rise up, is a general, coming to defend them against the Assyrians; for he goes on to say: "This man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds and eight principal men. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof; thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders" (Micah v., 5-6). It is somewhat difficult to see how this can apply to Christ; yet if it cannot the Holy Ghost must have made a mistake in making Matthew quote part of this prophecy as being fulfilled in Christ.

19. Again Matthew tells us that the words of Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," were fulfilled in Christ (Matt. ii., 15). On turning to the prophet we find him chiding Israel for national ingratitude. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images" (Hosea xi., 1, 2). We will merely remark on this that we have not sufficient faith to enable ourselves to

believe that this is not simply an historical reference to the Israelites coming from Egypt under Moses, much less are we able to see in it an overwhelming proof of prophetic power in Hosea.

20. None of the prophecies said to refer to Christ will bear the slightest examination. For example: "He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah ii., 4). Yet when the Prince of Peace did come, he said: "Think not that I come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law" (Matt. x., 34, 35).

21. Science has clearly demonstrated that it is false that "in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day" (Exodus xx., 11).

22. Science has clearly proved that the grass and herbs and trees were not created before the sun and moon and stars, as stated in Gen. i., 11-18.

23. Science clearly teaches the utter absurdity of such astronomical ideas as that "God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven" (Gen. i., 6-8). St. Augustine, in explaining this, informs us that the firmament was stretched across the sky like a skin. We suppose this is what Peter refers to when he says "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise" (2 Peter iii., 10).

24. If by any sophistry it were possible to reconcile science and the Bible, it must still be admitted that in the past God was unable to convey his true meaning on these points, and not only has his revelation given rise to false scientific ideas, but has hindered the development of science at every turn, and brought untold bitterness and persecution in the last few centuries on scientific men, in addition to wrecking the faith of many truthseekers at the present day.