

The Bible:

God's Word or Primitive Musings?

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?

Isaiah 40:12-13

The Bible is sometimes claimed to be an outdated collection of Judean shepherders' journals, made up by simple, ignorant people, and having nothing whatsoever to do with actual history. Skeptics mock the idea that it was inspired by God. Some treat it as less reliable than the average fairy tale.

Now first of all, those who make such arguments reveal their almost total unfamiliarity with what the Bible is and says. Far from being written by one group long ago, the Bible was written by around 40 different authors, on three different continents, in three languages, over a period of around 2,000 years. The writers did include shepherds, but also kings, prophets, fishermen, warriors, a former tax collector, a physician, and others. On top of all that, there is a consistent, unified message throughout. How could so many writers, from so many different places, professions, and cultures, accidentally write a book with such consistency? The answer is simple. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, there is only one true author: God.

And not only is the Bible internally cohesive, but since God is the Creator, and knows all things, He knows everything about science. What if He recorded accurate scientific facts long before human scientists discovered them? Let's take a look at some intriguing examples.

Earth hangs on nothing

Job 26:7 says: *"He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing."*

Especially of interest is the second part of this verse, about God hanging the earth on nothing. This is a great description of the fact that the earth floats in space, essentially, "hanging on nothing." What is equally fascinating, though, is that several different ancient groups had ideas of the earth resting on something, whether the Egyptians, the Native Americans, or the Hindus with their idea of the earth supported by elephants who stood on a giant turtle. We now know these ideas to be false, but the Bible, by contrast, had it right all along.

Paths of the seas

Around a couple centuries ago, a naval officer and soon-to-be oceanographer, Matthew Fontaine Maury was in bed battling an illness. His daughter read to him from Psalm 8:

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

*For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, **and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.** O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” (Psalm 8:3-9).*

As she finished, Maury was struck with the inspiration to find the “paths of the seas” mentioned in verse 8. Over the rest of his life he studied ocean currents, charting the “paths of the seas,” and is often called the “Pathfinder of the Seas.” Not only did the Bible record the fact of ocean currents, but the scripture itself inspired the discovery of those paths.

Mountains in the seas

In the well-known account of the prophet Jonah (where in trying to run from God’s presence, he is swallowed by a large fish and miraculously preserved from death), Jonah gives a fascinating description of his experience:

“The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God” (Jonah 2:5-6).

Bottoms of the mountains? It was not until modern times that we were able to accurately map the ocean floors. How would Jonah have known that there are indeed mountains on the seafloor? This makes perfect sense when we remember that God inspired men to write the Bible. God knew about the seafloor, because He made it!

Germs and breaking pots

What about all those commands of washing, breaking unclean pots, or not touching dead things, that God gave the Israelites in the Old Testament? I think David Rives summed it up well in his book, *Bible Knows Best*: “When God told the Israelites not to eat out of contaminated pots, or to wash their hands, or to separate diseased people from the rest of the camp, it wasn’t a mindless restriction just to test the obedience of the people... it was firsthand knowledge predating the proposal of Germ Theory by millennia. If we had sincerely read the words of scripture, then we would have been better equipped to understand the natural world around us.”² God was taking care of His people, even if they didn’t understand all the details. Doesn’t this make you wonder what other scientific facts at which the Bible hints are still waiting to be discovered?

Conclusion

We have looked at several examples of scientific facts, accurately recorded in Scripture long before scientists discovered them. And many more could be discussed. They all point to the fact that the true Author of the Bible is the Creator who knows all things. While the Bible is not a science textbook, it is accurate in all areas that it touches on science. And think about this: because God is the Creator of the universe, and because He is consistent, we can trust that scientific laws (laws of physics, chemistry, or

logic) are also consistent. And since scientific laws are consistent, we can study them. If scientific laws were the result of random chance, how would we know if they would stay consistent? It is no accident that so many of the great scientists of the past, some who even started whole fields of science, men like Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon, Johannes Kepler, Gregor Mendel, Robert Boyle, and many others, believed the Bible.

Science is possible because we have a consistent, unchanging Creator. Far from primitive musings of ignorant shepherds, our Creator gave us His infallible Word, the Bible, so we could know about Him. And this same Creator gave His life to redeem us from our sin and reconcile us to Him. Do you know Him?

~Denton Ford

1 David Rives, "Bible Knows Best: Hidden Gems of Astounding Science and Good Advice in the Scriptures" (Lewisburg, Tennessee: David Rives Ministries, 2016) p.33-34

2 David Rives, "Bible Knows Best: Hidden Gems of Astounding Science and Good Advice in the Scriptures" (Lewisburg, Tennessee: David Rives Ministries, 2016) p.37