

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE BIBLE

By Mark Paynter

Over the centuries although there have been a vast quantity of books written, few of them can truly be regarded as great. Yet there is only one book that is truly unique. That book is the Bible. Josh McDowell identifies seven reasons why the Bible is unique. The seven reasons that make the Bible unique is its continuity, circulation, translation, survival, teaching, and influence on both literature and civilization. The uniqueness of the Bible does not prove that the Bible is divinely inspired but rather it's superiority over any other writing.¹

The Bible was written over a period of fifteen centuries, by over forty authors in different places and times, in different languages and styles and yet has one central unified theme that of the relationship between mankind and the only Living God expressed in His offer of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible is unique because

- 1 Over forty different authors wrote the Bible during what has been estimated as a 1500-year time span. The authors came from very different backgrounds and occupations.
- 2 The geographical locations in which the Bible was written spanned three continents, Africa, Asia and Europe. The Bible was written in a great variety of places such as hillsides, palaces and prisons.
- 3 The Bible was written under a great variety of circumstances and conditions including war and peace, during times of great joy as well as times of tremendous anguish, despair and suffering.
- 4 The Bible was written in three languages, Hebrew, Greek and some Aramaic.
- 5 More people have read the Bible or parts of it than any other book.

¹ Derived from Josh McDowell page 3-16

- 6 People throughout the ages have viciously attacked the Bible, yet long after they have been forgotten the Bible remains the most powerful influence for all that is right, just and good.²

“The Bible is not just different because it claims to have come from God. The Koran was supposed to have been revealed to Muhammad by the archangel Gabriel. Similarly, Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, claimed to have been given a special revelation from God engraved on gold plates. Other religions also maintain that their sacred writings were revealed by God.”³ Sper then proceeds to argue that the Bible is unique in four other ways.

- 1 Its view of God. The God of the Bible is Sovereign and a God of love, mercy and goodness.
- 2 Its view of man. The Bible provides a realistic portrayal of man, in which is neither more than he is or less than he is.
- 3 Its view of salvation. The Bible alone offers salvation as a free gift.
- 4 Its view of history. The truth of the Bible is confirmed by the facts of history and geography.

Richard M Riss points out concerning the uniqueness of the Bible that

“No book has ever been the subject of more continued attacks upon it than the Bible. Despite the assaults mounted upon it for millennia, it has emerged unscathed.

F. Bettex of Stuttgart, Germany has written

Unchanged and unchangeable, this Bible stands for centuries, unconcerned about the praise and the reproach of men. With sublime freedom it strides through the history of mankind, dismisses entire nations with a glance, with a word, in order to tarry a long time with

² <http://www.peaceministry.org/freq3.htm> 23 February 2002

³ David Sper Can I Really Trust the Bible Chapter The Book is different.
<http://204.29.171.50/framer/1000/default.asp?realname=Google&cc=NZ&lc=en%2DNZ&frameid=1565&providerid=112&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Egoogle%2Ecom%2F> 23 February 2002

the deeds of a shepherd. It rises like an angel to heights that make peoples, passing hither and thither, appear like swarms of grasshoppers, yea, all nations like a drop in a bucket⁴

The Bible's claim to have a divine author is established by ten considerations.

- 1 What the Bible claims about itself.
- 2 What Christ said about the Bible.
- 3 What the human writers of the Bible claimed.
- 4 The textual unity of the Bible.
- 5 The Textual preservation of the Bible.
- 6 The proven historical accuracy of the Bible.
- 7 The scientific accuracy of the Bible.
- 8 The prophetic accuracy of the Bible.
- 9 The social impact of the Bible.
- 10 The personal impact of the Bible.

Just as the Bible is a unique book, a unique movement has arisen in response to the special revelation found in the Bible. Biblical Christianity is unique in a number of ways these include

1 The God of the Bible is unique. (Jer.10: 10-12). All the religions of the world have arrived at their concept of God through personal reflection, the God of the Bible created man in His image and then revealed Himself to mankind.

2 Jesus claimed to be the exclusive way to God. Jesus is not a way to the Father but **the way, the truth and the life.** (John 14: 6)

⁴ Richard M Riss Christian Evidences The amazing survival of the word of God
http://www.grmi.org/renewal/Richard_Riss/evidences/11survival.html quotation is from George T. B. Davis, *Fulfilled Prophecies That Prove the Bible* (Philadelphia: Million Testaments Campaign, 1931), p. 112
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3 Christianity has a unique foundation. “Alone among all religions of mankind. Christianity (including its Old Testament Foundations) is based upon historical acts and facts. Other religions are centered in the ethical and religious teachings of their founders, but Christianity is built on the great events of creation and redemption.”⁵

All other religions are subjective; Christianity alone is capable of objective verification.

4 Biblical Christianity is unique in its account of the origin of the World. No other religion is able to trace the origins to a first cause, all others are evolutionary to some extent and all assume the existence of space, matter and time at the beginning. “Only the Bible starts with the special creation of all things by an eternal, omnipotent, personal God.”⁶

5 Christianity alone offers salvation through the acceptance of the free gift of salvation. All other religions stress the arrival at some form of utopia through self-effort and works.

6 The central person and founder of Christianity, Jesus Christ is unique. He is unique in his pre-existence, prophecies concerning His coming, and His virgin birth, He alone lived a sinless life and is unique in His death and resurrection, His ascension and in His promised second coming.⁷

Christianity is not a religion but a relationship with the Living God who offers the only genuine hope for mankind. This sets Christianity apart from any of the other world religions, all of which emphasis good works as the means to salvation. However Christianity alone proclaims “**God has promised that we can know Him and have fellowship with him now and for all eternity, through His son, the Lord Jesus Christ.** Christianity is not a religion... It's a relationship with God through Jesus Christ." To be a Christian, one must first understand and believe that God exists, and that he is the one true God. One must also believe that Jesus is Christ, Son of the Living God, and that he was sent here by his Father to forgive our sins.”⁸

⁵ Morris and Morris III page 18

⁶ Morris and Morris III page 19

⁷ Morris and Morris III page 20

⁸⁸ John Sebastian Jesus Christ: The Prince of Peace What's so special about Christianity.

<http://www.peaceministry.org/freq4.htm> 23 February 2002

