Is the Bible as God’s Word Trustworthy: Are there other Inspired Works?

Zanesville, OH | February 24, 2019 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** 2 Tim. 3:16-17

**Intro**:

* There are many creeds, doctrines and books circulated today in the religious realm that claim to be inspired of God and holy and as such we must treat it as we would the 66 books of the Bible. Among these books are three well-known that have claimed inspiration for decades and even centuries. These include the Quran, the Book of Mormon and the Apocrypha. **Are these books in fact inspired or are they just the works of men?**

**Are there other Inspired Works?**

1. **The Bible vs. The Quran** 
   1. Muslims hold to the belief that God (Allah) revealed messages to the “final” prophet Muhammad over a period of 23 years beginning in 609 A.D. via the angel Gabriel. Most Muslims believe this to be his “greatest miracle” and proof that he was a prophet.
   2. Muhammad himself never actually wrote the words down and compiled the book but companions serving as scribes, compiled the book sometime after his death in 632 A.D. This, they believe to be the culmination of divine messages beginning with Adam.
   3. The Quran does affirm that Jesus was born of a virgin, a great miracle worker and one who performed many great deeds. However, it categorically denies His deity and His death and resurrection (cf. Surah 4:157).
      1. *“And [for] their saying, "Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain.”*
   4. The word Quran appears some 70 times throughout the book and it means recitation. The bible opens up itself for criticism but the Quran is not to be questioned or criticized. It is widely known that the Quran must not be read in any other language than Arabic. The Quran is also dominant in one main genre.
   5. As a result, Muslims who lives in countries and places where Arabic is not their main language is kept from reading and probing their own “sacred” text. It is also known that Muhammad may have altered some of the messages of the Quran since it was dictated to him.
2. **The Bible vs. The Book of Mormon**
   1. A young man, Joseph Smith, claimed that he was visited by God the Father and Jesus Christ during the 1800’s. Later, he stated that he was visited by an angel who showed him the “golden plates” which was the foundation for the text later known as the Book of Mormon. Mormons and advocates of the Book of Mormon suggest that it is *“another testament of Jesus Christ.”*
   2. Mormons believe the Bible is God’s word and that the Book of Mormon is simply an addition or supplement to the 66 books we already have. Naturally, they believe that both the Bible and the Book of Mormon is inspired of God.
   3. However, the Book of Mormon contains various mistakes and contradictions with the bible. Here a list of examples:
      1. Rather than God confusing *"the language of all the earth"* at the tower of Babel as the Bible records (Genesis 11:9), the Book of Mormon contends that the language of Jared, his brother, as well as their friends and family members *"were not confounded"* (Ether 1:33-37).
      2. Contrary to the Bible prophecy concerning the Lord's birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), and the fulfillment of that prophecy in Matthew 2:1, the Book of Mormon reads: *"And behold, he (Jesus) shall be born of Mary at Jerusalem"* (Alma 7:10, parenthetical comment and emp. added). The writer of the Book of Mormon was simply wrong.
      3. The Bible tells us that at the crucifixion of Jesus, darkness covered the land for three hours (Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). However, the Book of Mormon states three different times that there was darkness *"for the space of three days"* (Helaman 14:20,27; 3 Nephi 8:3, emp. added). Of course, this is a big difference.
      4. Finally, whereas the Book of Mormon has people wearing the name Christian in about 73 B.C. (Alma 46:13, 15), the Bible clearly reveals that the disciples of Christ *"were called Christians first in Antioch" (*Acts 11:26, emp. added). This was in approximately A.D. 40, and thus represents a difference of over 100 years.
   4. These examples clearly illustrate the Book of Mormon containing errors that oppose the Bible. As such, it came from man and not from God and there is no external evidence supporting the claims of the Book of Mormon.
3. **The Bible vs. The Apocrypha**
   1. The word apocrypha simply means *“Hidden”* and it can mean that they are ingenuine, of unknown authorship and of doubtful origin. The term is widely used of the 14 books generally believe to have been written during the “silent period” of the biblical chronology.
   2. There are others who suggest that there are more than these 14 books or some who say the amount should be less. There is no real consensus on how many of these books are recognized as authentic and inspired.
   3. Some religions and denominations, however, claim that the 14 books falling in the intertestamental period did in fact come from God and the should be considered a part of the canon. This they call the *“deuterocanonical books.”*
   4. Yet, the Jews never accepted these books into the canon. They always held to the 39 books which they commonly refer to as the Law of Moses, Prophets and the Psalms. Jesus Himself referred to the OT in this way (Lk. 24:27, 44). He never referenced the Apocrypha.
   5. The NT makes no concerted effort to quote, allude or draw analogies from the Apocrypha. It’s allusions and quotations are drawn directly from the 39 books that make up the OT.
   6. The 27 books we have today are those that were widely circulated during the 1st – 5th centuries A.D. There was no manuscript evidence for “other books” that some may have thought to be inspired.
   7. Despite all this, the Apocrypha like the Quran and the Book of Mormon contain a number of errors contradictory to the Bible. Judith affirms Nebuchadnezzar as King of the Assyrians who ruled in Nineveh (Judith 1:1, 5). Baruch claims the Jews were to be in captivity for seven generations but it was only for seventy years (Baruch 6:2).