

Wherein the Bible Differs From All Other Books

by R.A. Torrey

The Bible stands absolutely alone as an entirely unique book, with depths that are beyond human understanding and a timeless truth that is always relevant and applicable.

Scripture: Psalm 23:1, Psalm 36:6, Jeremiah 23:28, John 3:16, 1 John 4:8

Topics: "Uniqueness of the Bible", "Depth and Accuracy of Scripture"

Description

R.A. Torrey emphasizes the unparalleled uniqueness of the Bible, asserting that it stands alone in its depth and accuracy compared to all other books. He argues that the Bible's profound teachings are inexhaustible, with generations of scholars unable to fully comprehend its depths. Torrey highlights that the Bible is always ahead of human understanding and never out of date, making it a timeless source of wisdom. He also points out the absolute accuracy of the Bible's statements, which convey truth without exaggeration or omission. Ultimately, Torrey calls for a deeper engagement with the Bible, as it is the only book that can truly transform lives.

Transcript

Sermon to the graduating class of Bible Institute of Los Angeles, June 25, 1916.

"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the straw to the wheat, saith the LORD." Jer. 23:28 R.V.

THE Bible stands absolutely alone. It is an entirely unique book. All other messages compared with the message of the Bible are as chaff as compared with wheat. The attempt to compare the Bible with other books as if it were one of a class, possibly the best of the class, arises either from ignorance or thoughtlessness, or else from the fixed determination to do the Bible an injustice. We shall see this morning that there is none like it. The Bible is not a book, it is the Book. It is an often repeated incident that Sir Walter Scott, when he was dying asked his son-in-law Lockhart to read to him, and that Lockhart asked, "What book shall I read?" to which Sir Walter Scott replied, "There is but one book." Beyond a question Sir Walter Scott was right. But

some one may challenge that statement that the Bible stands absolutely alone as an entirely unique book. Anyone has a perfect right to challenge the statement and demand wherein the Bible differs from all other

books, and this morning I propose to take up the challenge and answer the question.

I. IN ITS DEPTH.

First of all the Bible differs from all other books in its depth. The Bible is unfathomable and inexhaustible. It is unfathomable not because of the obscurity of its style, but because of the profundity of its teaching. No other book is more simple in its style than the Bible. Its style is so simple and clear that a child can understand it, but its truth is so profound that we explore the Book from childhood to old age and can never say we have reached the bottom. However deep we may go there are always deeper depths beneath. For eighteen centuries many of the greatest minds the world has ever known have been sounding its depths, but the bottom is not yet reached. Men of the greatest possible intellectual reach and power have devoted a lifetime to the study of this book, but what man has ever dared to say or dreamed of saying, "I know now all that the Bible contains." If any man should say that he would be unanimously voted a sublime egotist or an egregious simpleton. Whole generations of scholars have devoted their lives to the study of this book, each generation having the advantage of the labours and researches and discoveries of preceding generations, but can even the latest generation say, "we have discovered it all now, there is nothing left in the Bible for the next generation to discover"? The whole human race has been unable not only to exhaust, but even to fathom this book. Well may we exclaim with the Psalmist, Thy judgments are a great deep (Ps. 36:6). The judgments of God, God's thoughts as revealed in this book, are beyond any man and beyond any generation of men. They are beyond the whole race. This Book, like God's other book, the book of nature, and unlike any book of man, is unfathomable and inexhaustible by men. This fact, if it stood alone would be sufficient proof of its Divine origin.

1. There are whole volumes of meaning in a single and apparently simple verse. A single verse of Scripture has often formed the basis upon which a literature of many volumes, both of prose and poetry, has been erected. This is true, for example, of John 3 : 16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." It is true of 1 John 4:8, "God is love." It is true of Ps. 23 : 1, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." What single utterance of any other book could be the foundation of so much thought and expression as these utterances of the Bible. Who but God could pack so many volumes into one little verse, or part of a verse?

2. The Bible is always ahead of man. The world is certainly making progress in its thinking. It is constantly leaving behind the scientists, philosophers, and sages of the past. But the world never leaves the Bible behind. It has never caught up with it. Show me a man who says he has outgrown the Bible and I will show you a man every time who is ignorant of the Bible and is talking of what he knows nothing about. Whence comes this Book which is always ahead of the age?

What other book ought to command the attention, the time, and the study that this book does, which is deeper than all other books, ahead of all other books, and ahead of every age. You study to-day the latest things in science and it will be out of date in less than ten years, but the Bible is never out of date. It is not only up to date, but ahead of date. If you wish to be not only abreast of the times, but ahead of the times, study the Bible. Jesus was ahead of His times because He studied so much of the Bible as then existed. Paul was ahead of his times for the same reason. Huss, and Wycliff, and Luther, and John Knox, and Wesley, and Finney, and Moody were ahead of their times simply because they sought their wisdom from this book.

II. IN THE ABSOLUTE ACCURACY OF ITS STATEMENTS.

The Bible differs from other books in the second place in the absolute accuracy of its statements. The Bible is the only book that always says all that it

means to say and never says anything more than it means to say. The more rigidly one examines the Bible and the more closely he studies it, the more will

he be filled with admiration for the accuracy with which it expresses the truth. It never overstates, it never understates the truth. There is not one word too many and not one word too few. It is the model witness: it tells "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." A very large part of man's difficulties with the Bible comes from not noting exactly what it says. Time and time again men have come to me and said, "I cannot believe this which the Bible says," and then have quoted something which they supposed the Bible said. But I have replied, "the Bible does not say that," and when we have looked it up, lo, it is some minute modification of what the Bible really says that has given rise to the difficulty. The Bible is always so absolutely exact, that I have found the best solution for very many apparent difficulties in the Bible to be to take the difficult verses precisely as they read.

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