"A More Sure Word"



2 Peter 1:16-21
2/1/09

Introduction: v.19



- ***The written Scriptures are more sure, more reliable, more dependable than anything else in life!***

Why? Because Scriptures are the very Words of God!

Because the Scripture is God's Word…

I. Scriptures are more trustworthy than one's own <u>personal experience</u> (v.16-18)

II. Scriptures are <u>as necessary as</u> <u>light</u> is in the midst of darkness (v.19)

III. Scriptures are <u>not</u> the production of <u>man's own understanding</u> or <u>imagination</u> (v.20)

IV. Scriptures are the Divine production of <u>God's Holy Spirit</u> (v.21)

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I. Scriptures are more trustworthy than one's own <u>personal experience</u> (v.16-18)

v. 16
"<u>For</u> we have not followed. . ." – Peter's work of <u>reminding</u> (v. 12-15) God's people of the truth of Christ was not in vain and would endure even after his death <u>because</u> of the absolute trustworthiness of the Scriptures the Christian faith rests upon.

"Cunningly devised fables" – cleverly concocted myths. Peter did not propagate "wise-guy" manipulative stories.

His message was <u>not</u> a subtle, crafty, well-disguised, made-up bunch of stories in order to manipulate people and gather a following (like so many of the cult leaders of our time, Joseph Smith [the founder of Mormonism] being one example of a manipulative story teller).

"Made known" – "This word is a somewhat technical tern for imparting a new revelation – something previously hidden but now revealed" (MacArthur, Study Bible note).

"The power and coming" – Christ's powerful appearance on earth was not a myth. His powerful miracles and His powerful messages which were displayed at His first coming were not contrived stories in Peter's mind, but he was an actual on-the-scene eyewitness of Christ's kingly sovereign majesty.

v. 17

"For He received from God the Father honor and glory" – a reference to Christ's transfiguration in the presence of Peter, James, and John up on a high mountain (probably Mount Hermon).

Matthew 17:1-2, 5

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. . . . While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

Brief exposition of Matthew 17:1-f

"Transfigured" - aorist passive voice - The Father transformed the incarnate Son to give the disciples a preview of the same glory Christ will display when He comes to establish His future eternal kingdom.

"Transfigured" - metamorphoo - to undergo a change in form, to be totally transformed

According to Luke 9:29, this alteration of Christ's appearance occurred "as He prayed". As Jesus prayed, the disciples slept (Lk. 9:32), and when they awoke "they saw His glory."

"As the sun" - John saw the blazing glory of Christ in Rev. 1:13-18 and described "His countenance" as being "as the sun shineth in his strength" (at high noon) (Rev. 1:16).

This is the same bright, brilliant intense supernatural light that blinded Saul of Tarsus in Acts 9:3.

"Many years later, John recalled this event as the Spirit led Him to write: "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). (cited by Wiersbe, p. 61)

(Jesus is called: "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person" (Heb. 1:3).

"Raiment was white as the light" - Mark includes this detail - Mark 9:3 - "And His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them."

Such whiteness speaks of the absolute purity, holiness and righteousness of Christ, just as the white garments of the saints signify their righteousness in Christ (Rev. 3:4, 5; 6:11; 19:8, 14; cp. Is. 1:18).

This display of Christ is a picture of His glory (Lk. 9:32) that will be manifested at His second coming (Rapture) (Mt. 16:27, 24:30, 25:31; cp. Jn. 1:14, 12:41, 17:24; I Pet. 1:11, 4:13).

When Christ returns He will destroy the Antichrist "with the brightness of His coming" (II Th. 2:8)

V. 3

"Moses and Elijah" - Two men representing the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah).

These two prophets of old (Moses and Elijah) appeared (somehow, miraculously materialized **"in glory"** - in glorified form) and spoke with Jesus concerning **"His decease"** (lit. "his exodus") from the earth by death at Mt. Calvary in the city of Jerusalem (Lk. 9:31).

V. 4

Peter instantly wakes up out of his slumber and impetuously requests permission to build three tabernacles (tents, booths, or shelters, like that built in the Old Testament) - **"one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah**".

When Peter said this, he did not realize what he was saying (Lk. 9:33b).

Why does Peter ask to build such things?

Peter, being a Jew, recalled the bright, Skekinah glory that filled the O. T. tabernacle (Exod. 40:34-38). Now, seeing the splendid glory of Christ, he asks to build three tabernacles to house the glorified Christ as well as the glorified Moses and Elijah.
What is wrong with such a request? Answer: Peter gives Jesus, Moses , and Elijah "equal billing." He wrongly puts them on par with the Son of God. So now the Father comes on the scene and straightens this matter out.

V. 5
This **"bright cloud"** overshadowed (enveloped) them - while the words were in Peter's mouth, suddenly this extremely brilliant cloud (like a white fog) falls upon them, sending a fearful feeling through their "spines" (Lk. 9:34), and a voice (which Peter never forgot - II Pet. 1:17, 18) began to speak out of the cloud.

The voice of God the Father said: **"This (one) [not the other two - Moses and Elijah) is my beloved** (Eph. 1:6) **Son" --** The Father proclaims the UNIQUENESS of the Son! Jesus was not a mere prophet (like Moses and Elijah).

"In whom I am well pleased" - As Jesus testified - "I do always those things that please Him" (Jn. 8:29).

These are almost the identical words the Father spoke at Christ's baptism (Mt. 3:17).

2 Peter 1:18

"We heard. . . we were with him" – Peter's experience was real. James & John could bear witness.

v. 19

As <u>real</u> as that experience was, Peter says in effect, we have something more real. As certain as it was for Peter to see and hear what he did, he says we have something more <u>certain</u>. That experience confirmed the promises of the Old Testament, but Peter says we have something of a great confirmation – that being the <u>Holy Scriptures</u>!

Peter here places Scripture above experience; what God said in His Word, the Bible, over what God said from the holy mountain!

"More sure" – more certain, more firm, more reliable.

"The prophetic word (Scripture) is more complete, more permanent, and more authoritative than the experience of anyone" (MacArthur, Study Bible note).

We are to base our beliefs on <u>Scripture</u>, not experience or emotional feelings.

Experience cannot dictate doctrine. In other words, we are to test any experience by doctrine, not test doctrine by experience. We must "try the spirits" (I Jn. 4:1; Is. 8:20).

<u>The Bible</u>

For feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving.
My warrant is the Word of God;
Naught else is worth believing.
Tho' all my heart should feel oppressed
For want of some sweet token,
There is One greater than my heart,
Whose Word cannot be broken.
I'll trust in God's unchanging Word,
Till soul and body sever;
For tho' all things shall pall away,
His Word shall stand forever!

II. Scriptures are <u>as necessary as</u> <u>light</u> is in the midst of darkness (v.19)

"Ye do well that ye take heed" – You are doing very well to pay attention to God's written Word. To not forget it, or neglect it, but to mentally <u>hold on to it</u>.

Hold on to God's Scriptures and don't let go; let His Book be always retained in your heart.

Hold on to it as you would hold on to a lantern that provided light in a dark, dingy, dusky, murky place where things are obscure and hard to discern (cp. Rogers, p. 583).

Hold on to God's Word as you would require light (if you wanted to see clearly) until morning when the sun would rise.

"Until the day dawn" – Perhaps a reference to the day of Christ's return in glory, when all things will be perfectly clear.

What is the **"day star"**? It is the star which brings a new day for the world – namely the <u>sun</u>. Until the sun rises--not merely over the horizon but in our hearts—we must cling tightly to God's Word.

In this world which lacks clarity, where many issues of life seem uncertain and foggy, your only chance at discernment is to know your Bible.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Ps 119:105)

III. Scriptures are <u>not</u> the production of <u>man's own understanding</u> or <u>imagination</u> (v.20)

"Knowing this <u>first</u>" – *proton* – first in <u>priority</u>. Of all things that you can "<u>know</u>," know this first and foremost!

No prophecy contained in written Scripture stems from someone's own imagination. Scripture does not originate in one's own (*idios*) interpretation of life, morals, eternity, etc.

No true prophecy as recorded in Holy Text originated with man.

"It was a mark of a false prophet (cp. 2:1) to speak 'his own thing' from himself" (Rogers, p. 584).

"Interpretation" – "The genitive (ablative) here indicates source. Peter is talking about the divine origin of Scripture, not about its proper interpretation" (Green, cited by Rogers, p. 584).

The word almost comes to mean <u>inspiration</u> (2 Tim. 3:16).

v.21 "<u>Men</u> of God spake": Even though it was God's Word, it was <u>men</u> who wrote/spoke it.

EX: Jesus credited Moses with commands of God (Mk. 7:10). He credited Isaiah with prophecy of God (Mt. 13:14). Peter credited Paul with Scripture from God (II Pet. 3:15-16).

Even though Scripture came from the very mouth of God, He in His wisdom used the instrumentality of men. God, in using men, controlled and directed them, not stifling their own personalities or using them as machines or robots but as conscious, sober instruments.

On the one hand, while it can be said that man had <u>nothing</u> to do with the production of Scripture (he was passive), on the other hand, he did have an active part in its production.

This is a paradox.

[NOTE: However, man's part was also controlled by God - what occurred was "passive activity," in which God so worked in the writers that He gave them the will and the ability to write what He wanted (cp. Phil. 2:12-13).]

Throughout the entire life of a prophet or apostle, God's providential control prepared him with the particular talents, education, and experience which would be needed for the message which he was to give orally or by writing (Boettner, p. 24).

--God used the extensive education and patience of Moses to write the Pentateuch.

--God made use of the worshipful tender heart of David to write most of the Psalms.

--God employed the wisdom of Solomon to write Proverbs.

--God utilized the heavy heart of Jeremiah to write Lamentations.

--God applied the loving heart of John to write the Gospel and Epistles of love that bear his name.

--God exercised the detailed thinking of Dr. Luke to write Luke and Acts.

--God put into service the logical mind and appropriate religious background of Paul to write Romans and his other deep epistles.

[Remember, however, that it was God who equipped these men with the qualifications and personalities which they had.]

"God is One who in His infinite power can use as His agents and instruments fallible human beings, who can bring into His employ all the gifts, talents, and characteristics of those human beings, and yet can cause them to pen His own Word, and keep that Word utterly separate and distinct from their

own sinful nature and the consequent imperfections which are the result of that nature" (Young, Thy Word is Truth, p. 74).

3) Chosen men -

"Holy men of God" - men whom God had set apart for the special task of writing His Word.

God chose specific men to write His Word. These prophets and apostles proved that they were authorized to write Scripture by the signs and miracles that God did by their hands. God always vindicated His messengers (Ex. 4:28-31; II Cor. 12:13; Heb. 2:3-4).

When God chose select men to write His Word, He assured them that He would put His words into their mouths (EX: Moses - Ex. 4:11-16; Jeremiah - Jer. 1:5-9).

IV. Scriptures are the Divine production of <u>God's Holy Spirit</u> (v.21)

"In old time" – in the Old Testament

'Not. . . by the will of man" – while utilizing a prophet's mind, vocabulary, and personality, the words written down did not find their origin in man's will. Rather, God utilized men to write down His will. What He desired us to know, He revealed to His prophets.

All other "books" that purport to be from God (other than the Holy Scriptures) stem from a source other than God, and "the proof is in the pudding."

"The emphasis in the phrase is that no part of Scripture was ever at any time produced because men wanted it so. The Bible is not the product of human effort. The prophets, in fact, sometimes wrote what they could not fully understand (1 Peter 1:10, 11)." (MacArthur).

Scriptures are <u>not</u> a product of <u>human</u> investigation, reason, or origin.

Men wrote as they were "<u>moved</u> by the Holy Ghost."

"Moved" - lit. "borne alone"; "carried along." The Spirit lifted them up, causing them to be led to write what God wanted. "The metaphor here is that the prophets raised their sails and the Holy Spirit filled them and carried their craft along in the direction He wished" (Rienecker, p. 773)

<u>Biblical</u> View of Inspiration

2 Tim. 3:16
All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

<u>Definition</u> of Inspiration: Inspiration describes the unique process of the Holy Spirit in which He controlled and directed the hearts, minds, and wills of chosen men as they wrote exactly and totally what God wanted, so that the original manuscript was without error or omission.

Inspiration was the unique process of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:26).

The Holy Spirit guided every word that was penned by the apostles and prophets.

David wrote "by the Holy Ghost" (Mk. 12:36).

"The Holy Ghost" spoke by Isaiah (Acts 28:25-26).

God spoke "by the prophets"
(Heb. 1:1-2).

Cp. I Cor. 2:13; II Pet. 1:20-21.

The word translated "inspiration" is derived from the Greek Word "theopneustos" ("theo" meaning "God"; "pneustos" meaning "breathed").

Because the word is passive in its usage, it should be translated "breathed of God" or "God-breathed."

Scripture was "produced by the creative breath of the Almighty . . . it was God-given" (Boettner, Studies in Theology, p. 21).
The word "pneustos" which refers to both "breath" or "spirit" implies the divine creative action of God.

Just as the universe has its source in the God who spoke it into existence (Heb. 11:3; Ps. 33:6), and just as man's life had its source in the creative breath of God (Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4), the Scriptures came to man in the same way--right out of the mouth of God! Therefore, they are exactly what God wanted written.

NOTE: The word "God-breathed" does not suggest that God breathed into Scriptures that already existed; rather, He breathed the Scriptures out of Himself.

Isaiah 45:23 - "The word is gone out of my mouth."

Matthew 4:4 - "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

1) "Wrote" - "All Scripture": The word translated scripture is from the Greek word "graphe," which refers to that which was written. The word "graphe" refers to sentences, phrases, and words! (not just ideas).

Inspiration can only be applied to the writings, and not to the writers (i.e., God did not inspire the writers but the Scriptures).

2) Exactly what God wanted - "All Scripture" - the word "all" refers to every individual, written part.

Every detail of the Bible was inspired! Right down to the words, letters, and distinguishing parts of letters! This is called "Verbal Inspiration."

"Christ did not say of His thoughts, but of His words that they are spirit and life" (John 6:63). -- Luther

The message of Scripture at times depends on a single word. Therefore, God inspired every detail.

Cp. Gal. 3:16 - singular as opposed to plural
Cp. Jn. 8:58 - present tense as opposed to past
NOTE: God put specific words into the mouths of His prophets - Jer. 1:7-9; Num. 22:38, 23:12, 16; II Sam. 23:2.

NOTE: The grammatical/syntactical study of Scripture is based entirely upon the acceptance of verbal inspiration. (Those who have a low view of Scripture don't preach expositionally, and don't care about the details of the Bible)

"Without error" - Jesus claimed authority for every letter that was written, even the parts of written letters (distinguishable marks that differentiated one letter from another were also inspired!) See Mt. 5:18 -

"Jot" = the smallest Hebrew letter, called the yodh y (See Ps. 119:73).

"Tittle" = a part of a letter that would distinguish one letter from

another (compare the daleth d with the resh r).

"John Wesley said, `If there be any mistakes in the Bible, there may as well be a thousand. If there is one falsehood in that Book, it did not come from the God of truth'." (Ryrie, Inerrancy, p. 26).

"Without omission" - The Scriptures are complete. All that God intended for us to have, He has given.

The Scriptures, as God gave them, are free from all errors, defects, or imperfections.

This is called "inerrancy."

Since the Bible was
1) inspired, it is
2) inerrant

(because God could not make a mistake); and because the Scriptures are inerrant, they are 3) infallible (incapable of failing or leading you astray; the Bible is wholly true and wholly authoritative - Jn.17:17).

Eight Rational Proofs for Inspiration

1. Unity - The Bible was written by means of 40 different writers, in three languages (Hebrew and Aramaic - O.T.; Greek - N.T.), over a 1,500 year period, and yet the Scriptures have only one theme: namely, Jesus Christ and His salvation of mankind through His sacrificial and substitutionary death (See: Lk. 24:25-27; Jn. 5:39, 46; Acts 10:43, 18:28; I Cor. 15:3).

2. Prophecy - Fulfilled by Jesus at His first coming (Mt. 5:17; Lk. 24:27; Jn. 19:24)

   EX: Ps. 22 - written about 1,000 B.C.
   Is. 53 - written about 750 B.C.

3. Honesty - Shows people as they really are. The Bible's heroes are not "sugar-coated!" Rather, the faults of even the greatest are brought out (Abraham, Moses, David, Peter).

   The Bible also describes sin as it is; heaven and hell as they are; and God as He is (example of the tension between election and free will - If man wrote the Bible, he would have relieved it).

4. Durability - The Bible has lasted through the ages, though attempts have been made to exterminate this Book as no other (EX: Jer. 36:1-2, 27-28).

   Voltaire, the French infidel, said: "Another century, [and] there will not be another Bible on earth." After his death, his printing press was used to print Bibles!

5. Power - To change (transform) lives.

6. Freshness - George Mueller said: "I read through the Bible 100 times, and each time it is new to me."

7. Scientific Accuracy –
   The earth is round (a circle) – Is. 40:22
   The earth hangs on nothing – Job 26:7
   The life of the flesh is in the blood (Gen 9:4; Lev. 17:11)
   Circumcision on 8th day – Lev. 12:3

Universal flood
Uncountable multitudes of stars – (Gen. 15:5, Jer. 33:22)
100 billion stars in our Galaxy alone!
Plants and Animals reproduce only after their Kind (Species) Gen. 1 etc

8. Historical Accuracy – Proven by – Recent Archaeological discoveries (cities discovered customs proven etc.)
Proven by – Comparing the Bible with other Historical writings contemporary with the Bible
Ex. Josephus- cp. Acts 12 – Herod's speech and Death
With Josephus. Antiquities Book XIX chap. 7:2-5 & 8:1-2

Because the Bible is inspired by God, it is therefore profitable, authoritative & complete. This is Paul's point in II Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: [17] That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

THE POWER OF THE BIBLE

The Holy Spirit can use the Bible to totally change (transform) our lives
See how the following word pictures show the unique power of the Bible:

1. The Bible is a Sword (Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17)

   a. The Holy Spirit's offensive and defensive weapon is the Bible (Eph. 6:17). God is speaking by no other means today.

   b. According to Heb. 4:12, the Bible as a sword is:
      (1) Living ("quick" KJV)
      (2) Powerful
      (3) Piercing ("sharper...piercing")
      (4) Penetrating ("dividing asunder")
      (5) Convicting ("discerner [judge] of the thoughts and intents of the heart")

2. The Bible is a Mirror (James 1:23-25)
   It reflects the mind of God and the true nature and condition of man.

3. The Bible is a Seed (Mk. 4:1-20 *v. 14)
   As a seed, the Bible produces life, growth and fruit.

4. The Bible is water (Eph. 5:26)
   The Bible cleanses and quenches thirst.

5. The Bible is a Lamp and Light (Ps. 119:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 105)
   It offers protection from danger and guidance into the right way.

6. The Bible is a hammer (Jer. 23:29)
   It has ability to tear down (humble) and build up (edify).

7. The Bible is a Fire (Jer. 20:9; Lk. 24:32).
   It convicts, judges, and purifies.

8. The Bible is Milk (I Pet. 2:2)
   It causes growth.

9. The Bible is Meat (Heb. 5:14; I Cor. 3:1-3)

It gives strength.