

Truth and Reason

Speaking the Words of Truth and Reason ♦ Acts 26:25

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Does God Exist?

THE QUESTION, "DOES GOD exist?" challenges every person. To deny His existence is, in essence, to deny the reality of the universe and life. To admit it is to acknowledge Him as the greatest of all realities.



There are two sources of information for the existence of God: (1) **the universe**, His creation; (2) **the Bible**, His revelation.

The Universe

No one would argue that the universe does not exist. Yet, it is an accepted fact that "Nothing comes from nothing" or "Something cannot come from nothing." Every effect must have a cause. All scientists, even

atheists, agree this is correct. Something, then, had to be in existence before the universe which caused it to come into being. Something has to be eternal.

As there were only two sources of information for the existence of God, there are only two alternatives as to what could be eternal: **matter** or **intelligence**. The atheist assumes matter is eternal. He believes life came from inanimate matter by spontaneous generation. The believer in God is convinced that intelligence in the form of an all-wise God is eternal and that by His intelligence He originated, designed and created the universe and all that lives in it.

The view that intelligence is eternal can be shown to be the more rational of the two by an examination of the facts. First, a comparison of mind (intelligence) to matter shows mind to be superior. Mind knows but matter is only the object known. Mind moves, directs and modifies matter.

Matter has no intelligence.

Matter is not eternal because it can be changed into energy and cease to exist as matter.

Secondly, consider the signs of purpose and design in the universe. The vastness of the universe, the minutest detail of the human body, the smallest cell of a living organism and even the atom itself display purpose and design. Could all of that purpose and design have happened by mere chance? That is what the atheist would have us believe. But "Design demands a designer" and "Purpose reflects planning." The universe speaks of the intelligent being that brought it into existence (Psa. 19:1; Rom. 1:18-22). The "fool" denies the evidence (Psa. 14:1).

The Bible

Since the being and will of God are matters of divine revelation (1 Cor. 1:21), the Bible does not argue the existence of God. Rather, it assumes it as fact in its very first verse (Gen. 1:1). Yet,

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Is the Bible the Word of God?

WHEN THE CHIEF PRIESTS and elders of the Jews questioned the authority of Jesus, He, in turn, posed a question to them about the baptism of John—“where was it from? From heaven or from men?” (Matt. 21:25). That same question needs to be asked concerning the origin of the Bible—“Where is it from? From heaven or from men?” Each person must answer it because it relates to the eternal destiny of the soul.

If the Bible were a product of man, think of the kind of men involved. They would be wicked liars who tried to foist upon the world a book they claim to be from God. Having received no worldly benefits from it, they were not only wicked but also stupid. To say man is the source of the Bible is an illogical view.

On the other hand, it is very logical and probable to believe God is its source. Man could never have known God and His will for man by his own wisdom or resources. It was necessary for God to reveal Himself and His will to him. If man was going to know what he is, where he came from, why he is here and what his destiny is, God had to reveal it to him. To do that, God revealed His word to the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-13) who, having searched the mind of God, revealed it to men, inspiring them to write it down (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

“Inspiration is a supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of God, by virtue of which their writings are given Divine trustworthiness” (*The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, Benjamin B. Warfield, p. 131). Being moved by the Holy Spirit these men wrote exactly what God wanted them to without errors or mistakes. Thus when one reads the Bible he is reading the words of God (see 1 Cor. 14:37 and 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

There are many areas which give supporting evidence for the inspiration of the Bible and show it to be from God. Consider the following.

(1) **The Unity of the Bible.** The Bible’s sixty-six books were written by about forty men over a period of approximately 1600 years yet all write in perfect harmony each complementing, never contradicting, the others.

(2) **The Scriptures Claim Inspiration.** They have an “air of infallibility” about them. Though unlearned men often did the writing, they wrote with confidence, calmly announcing they were revealing the message of the Almighty God of heaven and earth.

(3) **The Unusual Style of the Scriptures.** The Bible’s brevity is a good example of this. In it, facts are related in a small amount of text that normally men would have written volumes to reveal.

(4) **Fulfilled Prophecies.** Time and again the writers of the Bible foretold of events that would later come to pass, some even foretelling them hundreds of years in advance. Their prophecies were detailed, not like the broad, sweeping generalizations of so-called “prophets” today. Every Biblical prophecy was fulfilled and in exact detail.

(5) **Scientific Knowledge.** Negatively, one does not find superstitions or wrong ideas that were prevalent in Biblical times. Positively, its writers possessed advanced knowledge that mankind did not discover until centuries later.

(6) **Archaeological Proof.** No archaeological finding has ever disproved any portion of the Bible.

(7) **Historical Accuracy.** The Bible is without error in relation to its historical record of events.

Conclusion

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD. It bridges the gap between human and divine wisdom for in it God has revealed those things man could not know in and of himself. God has revealed all things that pertain unto life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3) and thoroughly furnished us (2 Tim. 3:16-17) so that we can live soberly, righteously and godly in this life (Titus 2:11-14) so that we might live with Him in the life to come. 🙏

Gene Taylor



Leviticus

I. General Data

- A. Name. "The name 'Leviticus' describes the contents of the book, as the law of the priests, the sons of Levi...characterizing it as a handbook for the ritual of the Old Covenant, principally associated with what in the NT is called the Levitical priesthood (Heb. 7:11)" (*Unger's Bible Handbook*, p. 106).
- B. Author: Moses. God spoke to Moses from the tabernacle at Mt. Sinai (11:1; 27:34).
- C. Time span: One month (cf. Ex. 40:17; Num. 1:1).
- D. Theme: Holiness.
 1. The book is a collection of enactments and commands designed to enable the sinless God to dwell among His imperfect subjects.
 - a. They must be holy to walk with God.
 - b. The laws of Leviticus are designed to separate Israel from the world and consecrate them to God.
 2. God instructs them, "You shall be holy; for I am holy" (11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7,26). The holiness of God is manifested by:
 - a. Showing the seriousness of sin.
 - b. Emphasizing the importance of the Law (the one Divinely revealed standard for character and conduct).
 - c. Announcing the penalties for violations of the Law (illustrating the inflexibility of Divine holiness).
 3. The word "holy" is found in Leviticus no less than 94 times.
 4. Walking with God is based on holiness which includes sacrifice and separation (cf. Rom. 12:1-2).

E. Purpose.

"When we view the nation of Israel as a civil as well as religious nation, the laws given them through Moses will be easier to understand.

"Most nations of the world today are regulated by a civil constitution of secular laws. These laws are established by government officials to preserve internal order, protect from external aggression, provide for the collection of taxes for maintenance and to guarantee other needed functions. However, the regulations and laws relating to churches, worship and service to God arise from within the Bible or within the various religious bodies. Therefore, our lives are directed by two different kinds of laws arising from two different sources, God and civil government.

"It was very different for the nation of Israel when the Law of Moses was given. All laws they would need as a civil nation as well as a people devoted to worshiping and serving God are in the first five books of the Bible...The people of God were a Theocracy with God controlling their entire lives from birth to death" (Norman Midgette, *Today Magazine*, Vol. I, No. 5, p. 12).

F. A Summary.

1. Leviticus follows Genesis and Exodus in a very logical sequence. In Genesis is God's remedy for man's ruin—the seed of woman. In Exodus is God's answer to man's cry—the blood of the lamb. In Leviticus is God's provision for man's need—a priest, a sacrifice, and an altar. Israel could now communicate with God through a priest, have their sins rolled forward by a sacrifice, and be reconciled to God at the altar. Such a message is the heart of the Pentateuch.
2. In Genesis man falls, in Exodus he is redeemed, and in Leviticus he is cleansed to worship and

serve God in holiness. From the tabernacle, since Exodus concluded with its completion and the presence of God filling it, comes the legislation, laws, contained in Leviticus. The Law comes from the mouth of God to be relayed to the people and recorded by Moses (“And the Lord spoke to Moses” or its equivalent is found 36 times in the book).

3. Leviticus concerns itself with two things. First, the removal of the defilement which separates man from God (ch. 1-16). God established a system of sacrifices to be offered by consecrated priests to appease His wrath against their sins. Second, the restoration of the lost fellowship between man and God (ch. 17-27). The book, as already seen, emphasizes the holiness of God while instructing His children to be holy as He is holy. God cautions the people to keep His covenant and promises that if they do He will abide with them and they with Him (26:3-13). A failure to obey, though, would bring Divine retribution (26:14-39).

II. An Outline of Leviticus

- A. Removing the Defilement of Sin (ch. 1-16).
 1. The law of sacrifice (1:1 - 7:38).
 - a. Commands to the people (1:1 - 6:7).
 - b. Commands to the priests (6:7 - 7:38).
 2. The consecration of the priests (ch. 8-10).
 3. The clean and unclean—the laws of purification (ch. 11-15).
 4. The Day of Atonement (ch. 16).
- B. Restoring the Fellowship Between Man and God (ch. 17-27).
 1. The sanctity of blood (ch. 17).
 2. Separation from sin—laws concerning morality (ch. 17-20).
 3. Regulations concerning the priests (ch. 21-22).
 4. Feasts to the Lord (ch. 23).
 5. Regulations concerning worship and reverence (ch. 24).
 6. Sabbatical and jubilee years (ch. 25).
 7. God’s promises and threats (ch. 26).
 8. Keeping God’s vows and paying tithes (ch. 27).

III. The Lessons of Leviticus

- A. The sacred nature of worship.
 1. Even though in our time many people approach worship in a casual manner, Leviticus reminds us that worship is a serious and sacred thing.
 2. The details given in the book by God concerning worship surely denote the importance of worship.
 3. God’s attitude toward worship is found in the recurring phrase “a sweet aroma to the Lord” (1:9,13,17; 2:9; 3:5; 8:21).
 4. The example of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-3).
 - a. These two priests viewed worship with less than the proper attitude.
 - b. They failed to appreciate the serious nature of the commands God had given in respect to worship.
 - B. Respect for discipline.
 1. Nadab and Abihu were sons of Aaron yet he “held his peace” (10:3) when God brought judgment and sentence upon them.
 2. Aaron respected the law of God and would not support his children in wrongdoing or charge God foolishly.
 3. We must stand with God today in difficult matters such as disciplining the erring in spite of friendship or kinship.
 - C. The holiness of the people of God (19:2; 21:8).
 1. God gave detailed instructions in respect to holiness to the High Priest, the priesthood, and the people.
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2. Since the church today is the priesthood of God serving under the High Priest, Jesus Christ, it must be holy (1 Pet. 1:16; 2 Pet. 2:9).
 3. Serving God in holiness is an eternal principle that does not change regardless of law or dispensation.
 4. Righteousness in Leviticus compared to righteousness in the New Testament.
 - a. Respect for parents (19:3; Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20).
 - b. The sinfulness of idolatry (19:4; 1 Cor. 10:14; Col. 3:5).
 - c. Performing benevolence (19:9-10; James 1:27; Gal. 6:10).
 - d. The sinfulness of stealing (19:11; Eph. 4:28).
 - e. The sinfulness of lying (19:11; Col. 3:9).
 - f. The sinfulness of respecting persons (19:15; James 2:1,9; 1 Tim. 5:21).
 - g. The sinfulness of talebearing (19:16; 2 Thes. 3:11; 1 Pet. 4:15).
- D. Condemnation of immorality and sexual deviation.
1. Reading chapters 18-20, one might think they were written for our day and time.
 2. Homosexuality is condemned (18:22) as well as bestiality (18:23).
 3. The penalty for various acts of immorality is death for the adulterer (20:10-12,14), the homosexual (20:13), and the deviate (20:15-16).
- E. Condemnation of the occult.
1. As the world becomes more irreligious, there is a rising interest in the occult and the mystic.
 2. The occult is an instrument of Satan used to direct people away from the truth and cause them to think that their destiny lies in the hands of someone or something other than God.
 3. The book severely condemns these sinful practices (19:26,31; 20:6,27).
- F. The reward of godliness.
1. In 26:3-13, God promises:
 - a. Blessings in the soil (vv. 4-5).
 - b. Peace in the land (v. 6).
 - c. Power to overthrow enemies (vv. 7-8).
 - d. Closer fellowship with Him (v. 12).
 2. All of these promises are conditional (26:3).
- G. The nature of sacrifice.
1. Five offerings which serve as types (The first three were voluntary, the last two were compulsory).
 - a. The burnt offering (ch. 1). Typifies Christ offering Himself without spot.
 - b. The meal offering (ch. 2). Typifies the perfect manhood of Christ as the emphasis in this sacrifice was on the **life** that was offered.
 - c. The peace offering (ch. 3). It speaks of a restored communion resulting from the perfect sacrifice of Christ.
 - d. The sin offering (ch. 4). Typifies Jesus as sinbearer (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - e. The trespass offering (ch. 5). Typifies Christ as the one ever able to forgive all our sins.
 2. The meaning of the sacrifices to Israel. "...they were a means of approach to God. This is evident from the underlying connotation of the broadest Hebrew word for sacrifice ('qorban' from the root 'qrb' – 'to draw near or approach')...Sinful, guilty man needed some way to draw near to the infinitely holy God with assurance and acceptance. This was Divinely provided in a sacrificial system presided over by the Levitical priesthood" (*Unger's Bible Handbook*, p. 107).
 3. The meaning of the sacrifices today. "For the NT Believer the chief import of the OT sacrifices is typological, i.e., they were symbolically **predictive**, expressing a need which they could not satisfy, but which the coming promised Redeemer they prefigured would fulfill (Eph. 5:2; 1 Cor. 10:11; Heb. 9:14)" (Ibid, p. 108).

Leviticus Study Questions

1. What does the word "Leviticus" describe?

Chapter 8

2. Why were Aaron and his sons chosen to be priests?
3. Describe the clothing Aaron was to wear.
4. What was the first sacrifice offered? What was its purpose? What animal was used for it?
5. What was the second sacrifice offered? What was its purpose? What kind of animal was used for it?
6. What was the third sacrifice offered? What was its purpose? What kind of animal was used? What, besides an animal, was also offered?
7. What sacrificial meal was prepared and eaten at the door of the tabernacle?
8. What were Aaron and his sons prohibited from doing for seven days? Why?

Chapter 9

9. What offerings were to be made on the "eighth day," i.e., the day after the seven days of consecration? What was their purpose? Who offered them?
10. Which of the above sacrifices was for Aaron? Why did they need to be an offering for him?
11. Which of the above sacrifices was the "people's offering?" Why was it sacrificed?
12. What did Moses and Aaron do following the sacrifices? What happened after that? How did the people react to the actions of God?

Chapter 10

13. What was the specific sin of Nadab and Abihu? What was their sin in terms of the general principle involved? What lessons can be learned from this incident?
14. Why do you think the punishment of Nadab and Abihu was so swift and fatal?
15. Following the incident with Nadab and Abihu, what directions did Moses give the other priests?
16. Why was it especially important for priests to use neither wine nor strong drink when engaged in their work at the tabernacle? What application, if any, can be made concerning the use of intoxicating beverages today?
17. What of the sacrifices were to be eaten by the priests? Why were they to eat these things?
18. Why did Moses become angry with the priests? What satisfactory explanation was given by Aaron?

Chapter 19

19. Since this chapter begins with the command, "You shall be holy..." (v. 2), how does the requirement of holiness affect the whole of a person's life?
20. What statement, repeated throughout the chapter, shows the reason these laws were to be obeyed? How is that statement a valid reason for holiness in life today?
21. Why must God's people be holy? (v. 2) Is that a compelling reason for holiness even today? (cf. 1 Peter 1:15-16)
22. What law shows God's care for the poor?
23. Compare verses 17 and 18 with Matthew 5:43-45. Is there any real difference on this point between the Old Testament and the teaching of Jesus?
24. How were old people to be treated? (v. 32)
25. What statements of this chapter teach common fairness?

- Gene Taylor

Is Jesus Christ the Son of God?

IN THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER OF the gospel of Matthew, Jesus is in Caesarea Philippi with His disciples. "When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.'" (Matt. 16:13-18).

The fundamental teaching of God's revelation to man is that Jesus is the Son of God. It is the basis of the New Testament Scriptures (John 20:30-31), the theme of New Testament preaching (see Acts 2:36; Acts 17:1-3; 1 Corinthians 2:2), and the foundation upon which Jesus built His church (Matt. 16:18). The Scriptures contain many facts that give positive evidence that Jesus is the Son of God.

Consider what they reveal about His life while He was on earth. They show that He had an immeasurable influence on people, that His teachings were

the greatest words ever spoken (John 7:44-46) and that His life was sinless (Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:21-22; John 8:46). Even His enemies admitted His innocence (Acts 2). Compare that sinlessness to the rest of mankind and you will find Him to be the only person ever to live in sinless perfection (Romans 3:10,23).

Consider also what the Scriptures say about the miraculous works Jesus performed. Those works, done by the power of God (John 3:2), gave evidence that He was from God and supported His claim to be the Son of God (John 5:36). In expressing his purpose for writing his gospel, the apostle John revealed that he included several miracles on Jesus to show that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:30-31). No one, not even his enemies, ever denied the ability of Jesus to work miracles.

The Scriptures also tell how Jesus fulfilled every one of the more than three hundred Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Jesus used these as proof of His identity (Luke 24:25-27; John 5:39-40). It would have been impossible for an impostor through manipulation of events to appear to be genuine because many of those prophecies were minute in their details and others, such as His birth and death, were impossible to control. Someone has

calculated the possibility of fulfilling those prophecies as being one chance in 8,400 followed by 129 zeros.

"The greatest evidence the Scriptures give that Jesus is the Son of God is His resurrection from the dead."

The greatest evidence the Scriptures give that Jesus is the Son of God is His resurrection from the dead. If one accepts it as true, then every claim of Jesus is verified. If He was raised from the dead, there can be no question of His divinity. Romans 1:4 says the resurrection demonstrated to all that He is the "Son of God with power." That resurrection had been foretold in prophecy (Psalms 16:10). Though efforts were made to explain it away, the undeniable fact that Jesus was raised from the dead shows without doubt He is God's Son.

Conclusion

Why not consider the testimony of His sinless life, His miraculous works, His fulfillment of prophecy and His resurrection from the dead. Realize the facts presented in Scripture are true. Acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God. Agree with the apostle Peter, who said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:16). 🙏

Gene Taylor

From page 1:

one's faith is not to be a blind faith. It is to rest upon true and convincing evidence honestly and fairly considered. Still, there are limitations to evidence and proof.

The existence of God cannot be proven empirically, that is, it cannot be determined by the five senses. A good deal of reality, though, cannot be proven by empirical means. Such things as love, beauty, etc., are real but cannot be proven empirically either. In that same way, faith comes into the picture.

By its very definition given in Hebrews 11:1, faith is "the evidence of things not seen." We may not be able to see God or touch Him but we can know He exists by His creation and by His revelation, the Bible, in which He has revealed Himself and His will to man. We must believe that He is real, that He "is." Hebrews 11:6 states, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and

that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." We must also believe in the truth of His word (John 17:17) to be pleasing to Him. It is the truth of God, and our obedience to it, that allows us to be free from our sins and to have the hope of eternal life (John 8:32).

Conclusion

The Psalmist wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork" (Psa. 19:1). There is evidence all around us of the reality of God. It is up to each of us to examine that evidence and come to a conclusion about the existence of God.

What about you? Why not honestly consider all of the evidence that is before you? When you do, we believe you will conclude there is a God in whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). If you will believe in Him and obey His will, He will grant you life eternal. ☺ **Gene Taylor**



The influence of John Calvin and the doctrines he formulated are found in nearly all of the Protestant denominations. They have also crept into the thoughts and teachings of those who claim to follow the New Testament pattern for work and worship.

Since Calvinism's influence is so widespread, it behooves every responsible person to see whether or not its teachings are in harmony with Scripture.

Our book, Calvinism Analyzed and Answered, considers the doctrines of Calvinism then compares and contrasts them to Scripture to see if they stand or fall in light of God's word.

It is now available on our web site. Visit us at:

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Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

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