

**... THE ...
INFALLIBLE
BOOK**

**BY
WILLIAM GILMORE**

Author of "Following Fully," "The Gospel
of the Son of God."

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The Infallible Book

IN our Lord's prayer for His disciples, recorded in John 17, He says, "I have given them Thy Word." The Word of God was Christ's gift to these early disciples, and it is His gift to us. But the fact that we have this great gift in the homely form of a little Book which we can take up and put down at will may cause us sometimes to forget what a priceless treasure we possess.

We believe that this Book we call the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and therefore infallible. We have many reasons for our strong confidence in the Scriptures, any one of which might profitably occupy the whole time of our meeting. But instead of confining our attention to one line of proof, we shall give in brief outline five out of the

many infallible proofs that the Bible is the Word of God.

I.—Its Miraculous Preservation

One of the marks of the divine origin of the Bible is that it has been miraculously preserved to us. God who gave it at the first has watched over it and guarded it through the ages, so that we have it to-day not one verse wanting. Some have wanted to shorten it by removing parts which they considered objectionable or unnecessary, others have wanted to lengthen it by adding spurious books. They seem to think they could give us a better Bible than the one God has given us. But man has not succeeded in either taking from or in adding to the Scriptures of truth. Thousands of years ago there were thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, and there are thirty-nine now. Hundreds of years ago there were twenty-

seven books in the New Testament, and there are twenty-seven still. This complete preservation of the Bible is the more remarkable when we think of

1. ITS GREAT AGE. Human books soon become obsolete. They are born, boomed, and buried all in a few years. Some publisher has said that there is not one book in a thousand that lives five years, and not more than one in fifty thousand lives a century. But here is a Book, some of it four thousand years old, yet it bears no sign of decay. It has stood the test of time. The storms which have swept other books out of existence have only increased the demand for this one. It is still the best seller. More copies of it are printed than of any other book. It is the only Book in the world that is never off the press. It is being circulated by millions, and that in hundreds of languages. It ought to be

our aim to give the whole Bible to the whole world, for like the tree that grows by the crystal river, its leaves are for the healing of the nations. Besides, this is certainly the best way of defending the Bible—let it out and it will defend itself. But the preservation of the Bible is more remarkable still when we think of

2. THE PERSECUTIONS IT HAS ENDURED. No other book in the world has had so many enemies; wicked men have opposed it in every possible way. From generation to generation this opposition has been kept alive. Why this continued hostility to the Book of God? Why cannot men let it alone? Because the old serpent, the Devil, is the moving power behind all opposition to the Bible. He has roused against it the vice of earth and the venom of hell. Romanists have burned it, Moham-medans have cursed it, infidels have

blasphemed it, critics have twisted it, scientists have misrepresented it, Modernists have betrayed it, but the old Book still lives, and will continue to live after all its assailants are dead.

“His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.”

II.—**Fulfilled Prophecy**

A second reason why we believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, and therefore infallible, is found in its fulfilled prophecies. These prophecies predicted events which none could have foreseen but God. No man can foretell the future. Where is the wise man who can tell us what will be the condition of things in the world, say, twenty years from now? But Jehovah says, “I am God, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done” (Isa. 46. 10). Bible prophecies cannot be accounted for except upon the ground of direct revelation

from God. "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1. 2). The men who wrote the prophecies had to study them for themselves, "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter 1. 11). The Bible contains a vast number of prophecies which have been fulfilled in every detail. In some cases centuries elapsed between the prediction and the fulfilment, yet all came to pass, because the mouth of the Lord had spoken it. We have only time to mention a few of these prophecies, which may be taken as representative of all. Look at the predictions concerning the overthrow of the ancient cities of Nineveh, Babylon, and Tyre. At the time their destruc-

tion was foretold these cities were great in population, pomp, and power. Their overthrow seemed as unlikely as the overthrow of London, Paris, or New York does now. But they perished according to the Word of the Lord through His servants the prophets.

1. NINEVEH. The walls of Nineveh were sixty miles in compass, one hundred feet high, and fortified by fifteen hundred towers, yet its destruction was so complete that in the second century no trace of it remained. Thus the prophetic words of Nahum have been fulfilled: "I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing stock; and it shall come to pass that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee and say, Nineveh is laid waste, who will bemoan her?" (Nahum 3. 6, 7).

2. BABYLON. Next we have the evidence of Babylon, great Babylon.

With its massive walls, its brazen gates, its hanging gardens, its artificial lake, its magnificent temple; it was one of the wonders of the world. But it has long ago become heaps of rubbish, its only inhabitants being wild beasts, while the surrounding country is a vast desert. All this, and much more concerning it, was foretold by the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. "Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their folds there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures" (Isa. 13. 20-22). "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire." "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing without an inhabitant" (Jer. 51. 37-58).

3. TYRE. Add to this the testimony

of Tyre, once the greatest commercial city of the world. Its merchants were princes, and its traffickers the honourable of the earth. It is now a bare rock whereon fishers dry their nets. After a siege lasting thirteen years it was captured and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Two and a half centuries later Alexander pulled down what remained of the ruined walls, and cast it into the sea in order to form a causeway whereby to join the mainland with the island on which modern Tyre was built. Thus was fulfilled Ezekiel's peculiar prophecy, "I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it saith the Lord God" (Ezekiel 26. 4-5).

4. THE JEWISH PEOPLE. Again, think of the many fulfilled prophecies in connection with the Jewish people.

There are still about fifteen millions of Jews scattered among the nations of the earth. They have been persecuted, robbed, imprisoned, but the more they are afflicted the more they multiply and grow. Without prince, sacrifice, or native land they have retained their distinct nationality to this day. Their continued preservation is a perpetual miracle. How can we account for it? It is part of God's prophetic plan revealed through His prophets long ago. In Hosea 3. 4 we read, "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince, and without a sacrifice;" and in Numbers 23. 9, "Lo the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

5. OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Then we have the many prophecies concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. Hundreds of predictions find their fulfilment in

Him. "To Him give all the prophets witness." From Paradise to Patmos Christ is the grand theme of Holy Scripture. The wondrous story of His virgin birth, His virtuous life, His vicarious death, and His victorious resurrection might be all told in the language of Moses and the prophets. We have only time to mention six predictions concerning His birth, which were fulfilled in every detail.

When the curse fell upon Adam and Eve a coming Deliverer was promised who should bruise the serpent's head. Further on His descent is predicted, showing that He was to come of the seed of Abraham. Dying Israel foretold that our Lord should spring out of Judah. Isaiah limits His lineage to the House of David, and predicts His virgin birth. Micah adds that this should take place at Bethlehem. The New Testament tells the story how all

this was fulfilled, prediction and fulfilment fitting each other like lock and key. Fulfilled prophecy proves to any candid mind that the statutes of the Lord are right.

III.

A third reason why we believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, and therefore infallible, is found in

Its Marvellous Unity.

Here we have sixty-six books written by about forty different persons.

1. THE WRITERS. The writers differed in social standing and in natural and educational abilities. Among them we find kings, statesmen, judges, poets, philosophers, preachers, poor men, rich men, bond men. They wrote in different places, including the desert of Sinai, the cave of Adullam, the banks of the Chebar, the rivers of Babylon, the prisons of Rome, and the

isle that is called Patmos. They wrote at different times covering nearly sixteen centuries. The first writer was dead nearly fifteen hundred years before the last one was born. Most of them were strangers to each other. They had no opportunity of consulting with one another or arranging to write a connected book. But though sun-dered far by distance and time their writings are in unbroken agreement. The Book is one. This great fact cannot be accounted for except upon the ground that one great mind, the mind of God devised the whole. The whole Bible is an organic unity. Like a tree, or a body, it is governed by the principle of life. Each and every part is essential to the whole.

2. THE OLD TESTAMENT. The Old Testament is necessary to the New. Even the last three chapters of the New Testament cannot be understood

without a knowledge of the first three chapters of the Old Testament. The book of Revelation cannot be understood without the book of Daniel; Hebrews cannot be understood without Leviticus. As Girdlestone truly says, "There is not an isolated book in the whole collection, even that strange little book, the Song of Solomon, has threads of connection with other books. So has the prophecy of Obadiah, though it contains only one short chapter." The unity of the Bible is further seen in the way the various writers quote from, and endorse, the writings of each other. Take for example the book of Nehemiah, one of the latest in the Old Testament. It quotes from, or alludes to, several of the earlier books including Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Daniel, Zechariah, Chronicles, and Ezra. In the ninth chapter we have a

wonderful prayer recorded in which reference is made to Creation, the call of Abraham, the Exodus, the giving of the law, the manna, the water from the rock, the pillar of cloud and fire, the forty years wandering, the multiplication of Israel as the stars, the entrance into Caanan, and other historical incidents. Thus we find a great part of the Old Testament endorsed in the book of Nehemiah alone. The book of Zechariah abounds in quotations from the former prophets. We might give illustrations from other books, but these are sufficient to show that the books of the Old Testament are linked together in a unity which cannot be severed.

3. THE NEW TESTAMENT. Turning to the New Testament we find that it has its roots in the Old and cannot be torn away from it. If all Old Testament quotations and allusions were

removed from it there would not be much of a New Testament left. In the Gospel of Matthew alone there are over one hundred quotations. In Hebrews there are so many that if they were all cut out it is said there would only be left what would make three chapters. The New Testament then endorses the Old. The New Testament writers also endorse the writings of each other. We have only time to give two illustrations of this. In 1 Timothy 5. 18 we read, "The Scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and the labourer is worthy of his hire." The earlier part of this quotation is from Deuteronomy, while the latter part is from Luke's Gospel. The apostle quotes the two together as being equally Scripture. Again, in 2 Peter 3. 15, 16, Peter refers to his "Beloved brother Paul," and to "all the epistles," and places them on a

level with "the other Scriptures." Thus the Old Testament and the New Testament must stand together, for the Lord Himself said, "The Scripture cannot be broken."

IV.

A fourth reason why we believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, and therefore infallible, is that

It Claims to be Infallible.

1. THE CLAIMS OF THE BIBLE. About three thousand times throughout the Scriptures we find such phrases as "The Lord spake," "God said," "The Lord commanded," "The Word of the Lord came," "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue." These quotations from the Old Testament prove that the writers claimed to have received a Divine revelation. The same is true of

the New Testament also. The presence and power of the inspiring Spirit is claimed throughout. In John 14 we read concerning the Spirit's mission, "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you;" and in chapter 16, "He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." These declarations solve such questions as "How could the disciples remember Christ's addresses or give in detail His interviews with sinners?" The Holy Spirit was their unfailing remembrancer. They also solve the problem how the New Testament writers were able to tell us of the last days, the rise and fall of the Man of sin, the Coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the dead, and the future state. The Spirit

searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. The Holy Spirit is the author of Holy Scripture, but He used men as the instruments of His revelation. The Word of God has come to us through human personality. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." We do not profess to know just how the Spirit operated on the minds of the writers to produce the Holy Scriptures. Neither do we profess to know just how the Spirit operates on the human heart to produce conversion. His mode of working may be beyond our knowledge, but the effects of His working are clearly seen. The Bible has proved itself both infallible and indestructible. How is this fact to be accounted for except upon the ground that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God"? It is God breathed. The life of God is in it. This inspiration of

Scripture includes every part of it.

2. EVERY PART OF SCRIPTURE INSPIRED. Every book, from Genesis to Revelation, its histories, prophecies, types, narratives, miracles, parables, proverbs, are all inspired of God. It includes the record of the sinful words and deeds of men and of Satan. The Holy Spirit has faithfully recorded all such things for our instruction and warning. The record of them is therefore part of the Word of God. It includes the form as well as the substance, the words as well as the thoughts. To deny that the words are inspired is to deny the inspiration of the Bible altogether. "Thoughts are wedded to words as necessarily as soul to body." The prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, so man could not have been at liberty in the selection of words. The writers themselves believed the words to be in-

spired. Paul definitely claims inspiration both for his message and for the words in which it was expressed, "Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." The inspiration of words is further proved in the way the writers used the Scriptures. For example, in Hebrews 12 we find an argument based on a phrase "yet once more." In Hebrews 2 a similar argument is based on a word, the word "one." In Galatians 3 an argument is based on a letter "seed," not "seeds."

3. OUR LORD AND THE SCRIPTURES. Then our blessed Lord Himself teaches that the Scriptures are inspired as to their words. In the Sermon on the Mount He said, "Verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and earth shall pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." The

jot (the *yod*) is the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and the tittle is only part of a letter, therefore no stronger words could be used to affirm the inspiration of the Scriptures in every part as originally given. Then look at Christ's method of quoting them. He did not say, "It is implied," "It is thought," "It is suggested." He said, "It is written." Consider also the place the Scriptures had in His own life. To Him they were the bread of life. It was with special reference to Himself He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Again, when in conflict with Satan in the wilderness, He defeated the tempter by words quoted from the book of Deuteronomy. Further, when in controversy with the scribes and Pharisees, the Scriptures were to Him the last word. He said, "Have ye not

read?" "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." Again, in the hour of crisis, when He looked death in the face, the thoughts of His heart were expressed in words chosen from the Scriptures. Then after His resurrection, when teaching His disciples, He made the Scriptures the basis of His instruction. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Our Lord's attitude to the Scriptures was always that of devout reverence and unreserved confidence. What the Scriptures were to Him, that they must ever be to us. We are safe in following His example. If it must be Christ or the critics, we shall continue to trust Christ. We cannot accept any theory of inspiration which attributes mistakes to Him or gives us a mutilated Bible. The whole Word of God is our heritage, and we

shall keep it. The Bible alone must be our final authority, and not the ever changing opinions of men. We cannot follow the wandering stars of Modernism, but, God helping us, we shall continue to steer by the fixed light of His inspired Word till we anchor in the haven of eternal rest.

V.—Its Wonderful Power.

A fifth reason why we believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, and therefore infallible, is found in its wonderful power.

It is not a dead letter. "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The word *discerner* means *critic*. In these days we have critics and higher critics, but the Bible is still the highest

critic. When a man submits his Mind to the Word of God he soon feels its power. In this way any honest seeker after truth can prove for himself that the Bible is God's Word. Jesus said, "If any man shall do His will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." Many have honestly tried this test, and it has never failed. This is better than being occupied with infidel objections which have all been answered and refuted long ago. There are difficulties in the Bible, as there are difficulties in nature. But, as Tregelles said, "No difficulty in connection with a proved fact can invalidate the fact itself." When we have decided upon the ground of proper evidence that the Bible is the Word of God, then every difficulty must be judged in the light of that fact. Put the Bible to the test by believing it. The final test of its trustworthiness lies in the soul's experience

of its teaching and its power. There is an experience of the soul so real that nothing can gainsay it. When the healed man in John 9 said, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see," all the Pharisees in Jerusalem could not argue him out of that fact. We know that the Bible is the Word of God as surely as we know that the sun shines. In many ways we have felt its power.

1. THE BIBLE HAS A WONDERFUL SAVING POWER. This is one of the qualities which inspiration imparts to it. Paul speaks of the Holy Scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. We have no doubt that the Bible possesses this quality. We have proved in our own experience that it does what it claims to be able to do. We have been born again by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God.

It matters little who we heard speaking it, or in what book we read it. It was not man's word, but the Word of God itself which brought us to the knowledge of salvation. We have also seen it verified in the experience of others. We have seen men and women delivered from sin's tyranny and power, and filled with joy and peace through believing the Word of God.

2. THE BIBLE HAS A WONDERFUL SATISFYING POWER. Other books grow stale and cease to interest us, but the Bible never loses its freshness. Chapman said, "The Bible is always a new Book to the man who knows it best." Its unfathomable depth proves that it came from God. However deep we go, there are always deeper depths beneath. To understand it we need the power and illumination of the Spirit who gave it. But Bible study in fellowship with God is a real joy and satisfaction to the

soul. We can truly say, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." Let us read it more carefully, believe it more intensely, obey it more fully, preach it more faithfully, and it will satisfy our longings as nothing else can do.

3. THE BIBLE HAS A WONDERFUL SUSTAINING POWER. In times of trouble it has cheered us. We have come to it when sorrow has cast its gloom over us, and found in it the comfort we needed. In times of depression it has restored us. We have come to it when enemies have assailed and friends have betrayed, and found in it a balm for every wound. In times of trial it has preserved us. We have come to it when temptations fierce and strong have crossed our pathway, and found through it the power to overcome. In times of discouragement it has

strengthened us. We have come to it when cast down because of the way, and found in it the cordial for a fainting heart. We might go on to mention many other ways in which the Word of God has been our support along life's thorny road. Having this experience of the truth and power of the Bible, nothing can shake our confidence in it as the very Word of God.

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