**The Inerrancy of the Bible, No. 1 – BD42-02**

This morning we’re going to look at the subject of the inerrancy of the Bible; that is, is the Bible a book without any mistakes when it was originally written? The Bible does claim divine inspiration for its very words in those original manuscripts and for the entire content. The entire Bible claims to be inspired. This is called the doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration. If this doctrine is true, and the Bible does teach it, then we have in the Bible an inerrant revelation from God. God has revealed Himself to us in a book in which He allowed no mistakes of information, no false conceptions to be conveyed. The Holy Spirit superintended the words and the content. Whatever modern discussion may be, the Bible will be the final word pertaining to the spiritual realm. Its information, if this doctrine is true, is beyond question. No matter what you or I may think, when the Bible has spoken, we have the mind of God.

However, today the Bible is under attack relative to its inerrancy. The argument is that since fallible men wrote the book, it is impossible for the Bible to be free of error. This of course ignores the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. Polls taken recently indicate that well over half of the evangelical clergymen, and I don’t mean the liberals. I mean the Bible-accepting clergymen. Well over half of them say that they are not firmly convinced concerning the inerrancy of the Bible.

The question we face then is: Can we trust the Bible? If it does have mistakes in it, at what point are the mistakes to be found? How will we recognize them? At what point this in the Bible we cannot trust? At this point it is true, we can trust it?

Some try to minimize this issue by claiming it doesn’t make any difference. The idea is even if the facts are wrong, it is teaching spiritual truths, and the spiritual truths come through whether the facts are right or wrong. But if the Bible writers were mistaken, or if they were lying, how do you and I know that the spiritual truth, that their mistakes and deceptions that are supposed to teach are really true? We can’t. The words mean something and we must seek to say what the writers mean.

I want to acquaint you this morning with the nature of this attack among our own camp of conservatives—the people who accept the Bible as the Word of God but who edge on the idea that it is inerrant. I think you should first of all be acquainted with what our own conservatives, with whom we are sympathetic, have to say. Then if we have time this morning, we will get to some of the specific mistakes that the liberal brings up to say, “Here’s where the Bible is wrong.”

The issue among conservative questions is over this matter of inerrancy. The conservative Christians fall under two groups. One of them is the fundamentalists. That is the old name which meant those who stood against the liberalism and the modernism of the 1920s when liberalism was taking over whole denominations. Fundamentalism stood on certain basic points against liberalism. One of the basic points was the inerrancy of Scripture. The Bible was inspired and it was inerrant. The fundamentalist said you cannot say you are a Christian in the New Testament sense of the Word unless you hold to the inspiration of Scripture and the inerrancy of the Word.

Now this point of view is opposed in the conservative camp by a group which is referred to by the neo-evangelical group. This group came into existence several years ago and basically, without going into too many details, the neo-evangelical felt that fundamentalism had to be involved in the social needs of people as well as preaching the gospel. So the movement was begun. Let’s get fundamentalists out into social action that the liberals have been long since engaged in. Well, of course, fundamentalists have been in social action. They’re the ones who have been in the forefront of every mission field in the world, in the hospitals and the orphanages, and the relieving suffering, and the provision of human needs. And they have done this all over this nation as well. But they have never made the mistake of saying when you improve a person’s housing, when you fight racism, or when you seek peace on the international scene, that this is equated with salvation in the Word of God which is what the liberal says.

Now the neo-evangelical wants to find a common ground of cooperation with the liberal. The place that he wants to find this common footing is with social action activities. None of those things in themselves are objectionable. Humanity does have these needs. But as you read in the New Testament you’ll find that these things are always accomplished through individual believers who are oriented to the Word of God, and they do this on the basis of that separation unto the truth of the Word and not by crossing over into the line that they are going to improve society. Within the circle of the own experience they act as believers according to doctrinal principles, but they do not expect to change society. They do not expect to resolve the ills as much as they may speak out against them.

**Slavery**

For this reason, Paul when he found a runaway slave in Rome did not say, “Good, I hate slavery. You’ve escaped from your master. Don’t go back.” Instead he sat down and wrote the book of Philemon and sent it with this slave back to his master. Paul’s changing of this was left with the privacy and the priesthood and the freedom of the slave owner as a believer to take the act to free this man, which he may well have done.

So between fundamentalism and neo-evangelicalism there stands this confrontation on the issue of the inerrancy of Scriptures. Is the Bible in its words without mistake? And in its content without error. Many neo-evangelicals use some means to avoid standing for the inerrancy of Scriptures. They want this common ground with the liberals. When you take a look at the liberal world and you say now what is it that is the biggest conflict, the biggest difference, we as conservatives have with the liberals, it comes back to authority. Well what is the authority? The authority is the Word of God. If you say that the Bible is the final authority, that’s one thing. If you say the Bible is partly the authority, but we must use reason to analyze the mistakes out of the Bible.

So if an evangelical says, “I want to get together with a liberal,” he will immediately see that the first thing he has to do is to tone off this business that every word of the Bible came from the mouth of God and therefore it’s right. Once he can move off from saying that everything that the Bible is right in its words, then he has opened vast doors on matters where the liberal claims the Bible is wrong, and the conservative can go along with him. So in our own camp, the neo-evangelicals make certain concessions about the Bible.

**Creation**

For example, they say that the Genesis creation account is not necessarily historical. It may be a poetic type of presentation. It may be a piece of legend that is presented to convey a spiritual truth, but they are willing to accept the fact, as the liberal says, these are not historical accounts. There never was an actual Garden of Eden. There never was an Adam and Eve who began the human race. There never was an actual of a 24-hour six-day creation period in which God brought into existence the world as we know it. They also hedge on the question of the flood, that it was not a universal flood as the Scriptures indicate.

So neo-evangelicalism has increasingly held to plenary inspiration but they reject verbal inspiration. Inspiration of Scripture they hold to, but they do not hold to the inerrancy of Scripture.

Dr. Lowery, professor of Dallas Seminary, puts it in these words: “In other words, some because of apparent difficulties in the Bible, such as historical and chronological problems, are concluding that these sections are not inerrant, though inspired. One hears more and more these days, ‘I believe the Bible is inspired, but I cannot believe that it is without error.’ Inspiration, yes. Verbal inspiration, no. Why is it so? … For some it is the result of honest wrestling with problems which have shaken their faith. For others we cannot help but feel that it is part of the current worship of intellectualism as a sacred cow and a necessary step in achieving the approbation of godless intellectuals, so called.”

In order to deal with this problem, the neo-evangelical comes up with a concept that has been sometimes called the double revelation theory. This theory presents the idea that there are two kinds of inspiration. John Whitcomb, scientist, Christian, creationist, has said concerning this concept among neo-evangelicals, in order to get around the inerrancy problem: “Briefly stated, this theory maintains that God has given to man two revelations of truth, each of which is fully authoritative in its own realm: the revelation of God in Scriptures and the revelation of God in nature. The theologian is the God-appointed interpreter of Scripture, and the scientist is the God-appointed interpreter of nature, and each has specialized tools for determining the true meaning of the particular book of revelation which he is called to study.”

**The Double Revelation Theory**

This is the double revelation theory. God has revealed the Scriptures and the theologian tells you what that means. God has a revelation in nature and the scientist has to tell us what that means. When the scientist has spoken in his realm, the theologian can’t go over and say, “Wait a minute. You’re wrong. The Bible contradicts what you’re saying,” because the scientist is the authority in the realm of natural revelation. This way, what they have done is to say that inspiration and inerrancy are two different things; that inspiration applies to matters of life and faith, but inerrancy does not apply to peripheral matters. They separate that there are certain things in the Bible which are major matters and some which are peripheral matters. What are peripheral? Well, how the universe came into existence. Where the solar system came from. The origin of the earth. The creation of man. How far the flood went. Minor factors of history. So neo-evangelicalism basically is motivated by the desire to present a position of intellectual acceptability to the liberal world.

Now there is among neo-evangelicals a strong pride of scholarship that will come through as you read their writings, particularly when you read what they have to say about the fundamentalist ministers. Now this is what Acts 17:32-33 describes and decries for us. Luke, in writing about Paul’s experience, says, “And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, ‘We will hear thee again of this matter,’ so Paul departed from among them. Here the apostle Paul coming to the intellectuals at Athens, speaking on Mars Hill, and in that moment of time they had the greatest opportunity of their lives. They had now come up against the one man in all of their experience that could have given them divine viewpoint. Because of their arrogant intellectualism, because of their snobbery of scholarship, they looked down their nose at Paul, and when he said it is possible for a dead person to come back to life, they smiled at him and said, “Well, that’s fine young man. Come back again and we’ll listen to you again sometime.” And they walked off. And when they did, they walked straight into hell. That was their opportunity, and little did they realize it but that was the moment in time when they could have come to the realization of the truth.

So this pride of scholarship is very great among the evangelicals and it is a very hazardous thing. Dr. Harold Ockenga is the founder of neo-evangelicalism. In Christianity Today, October 10th, 1960 issue, he wrote, concerning the desire on the part of neo-evangelicalism for this contact with scholarship. He says, “The desire to win a new respectability for orthodoxy in the academic circles by producing scholars who can defend the faith on intellectual ground.” Now I’m not going to go into it this morning and review the background of fundamentalism for you, but I’ll just tell you that some of the greatest scholars that every lived were fundamental ministers. They were fundamentalists, and they were the most respected biblical scholars that ever took breath on the face of this earth. So this is rather an inane statement but this is the thinking behind neo-evangelicalism, that we must come to scholarship so that the liberals will respect us for our intellectualism.

Dr. Edward John Carnell, who one time was president of Fuller Seminary, wrote a book called The Case for Orthodox Theology. He spent one-third of this book in belittling the mentality of fundamentalism and downgrading their fundamentalism as being incapable of meeting the liberal on his own ground. So what they called for is scholarship, but scholarship means degrees among neo-evangelicals from status schools. These are schools of infidelity. 1 Corinthians 2:14 tells us that we don’t come to a knowledge of God through this kind of intellectualism. Consequently, the neo-evangelical and his intellectualism pays more attention to what an unbelieving liberal theologian will say than to what the Bible says. The neo-evangelical says that there’s hope now for us fundamentalists because they have finally produced in the conservative camp some men who have got some mentality to be able to do some scholarship. This obsession for intellectual acceptability by the liberal world has practically placed scholarship and science in authority over the Scriptures.

Dr. Ockenga, in an associated press dispatch, December 8th, 1957 says, “The evangelical believes that Christianity is intellectually defensible, but the Christian can’t be obscurantist in scientific questions pertaining to creation, the age of man, the universality of the flood, and other debatable biblical questions. The neo-evangelicalism is willing to face the intellectual problems and meet them in the framework of modern learning.”

**The Flood**

You notice that Dr. Ockenga says that it’s debatable whether there was a universal flood. It’s debatable concerning the creation. It’s debatable concerning the age of man. What he is implying is that man may be millions of years old. This little quote is also from Dr. Ockenga: This was a quotation in The Sword of the Lord. Dr. Ockenga said, “I contend that it makes no difference whether God used literally an anthropomorphic handful of dust or whether he used some creature already in existence when He formed man from the dust of the ground. Such creatures are dust of the ground and no more. As to God’s ability to do either, I strongly affirm it. I hold that the Bible does not tell us what method He used by which He did create.”

Now this, of course, is a threshold of theistic evolution. That is, the concept that God created some creature—he was a pre-human creature. More and more neo-evangelicals move to this direction, and please remember: If you have not gotten it straight yet, get it straight now that the mass ecumenical movements led by conservative leaders are neo-evangelicals. This is the theological background that is tearing people apart and, as usual, splitting churches and pitting believers one against another as these things always do, and it’s because of the false premise upon which they’re founded to begin with. These people are functioning from the point of view increasingly that God had some pre-anthropoid type of creature, and he developed …, and finally he came to a point where God leaned down and breathed into his nostrils, and this animal creature received a human soul and became a human being. That’s what he means that God does not tell us the method by which He created.

Dr. Bernard Ramm wrote a book called The Christian View of Science and Scripture, and in it he says, “If the difference between the sciences and the Bible were to grow to a very large number and were of the most serious nature, it would be questionable that we could retain faith in Scripture. True, we may believe some of the Bible in spite of science, but certainly the situation would change if we believed all of the Bible in spite of science.” Now here’s the neo-evangelical statement that if science contradicts the Bible too much, we must say that there must be something wrong with the Bible. Science cannot be all that wrong. But science can be all that wrong, and science has been demonstrated to be all that wrong. There has been many a time that a scientist has eaten crow. If there’s anything a scientist (as well as the liberal) has been well fed on over the ages, it’s crow, because they’ve come to definitive positions only to be proven wrong with the Word of God to stand their critical attack again and again.

Quoting Dr. Carnell again, “The Genesis account implies an act of immediate creation. But the same account also implies that God made the world in six literal days. Since orthodoxy has given up the literal day theory out of respect for geology, it would certainly forfeit no principle if it gave up the immediate creation theory out of respect for pagan theology. The two seem quite parallel.” We don’t give up something because geology comes along and says this is what it must be if the Scriptures speak clearly in the other direction. We hope for geology to get enough information to see why it is mistaken.

Another quotation by Dr. Carnell: He says, “Orthodoxy does not deny that nature is progressively changing, and what is this but evolution. It may be, at least I’m not concerned to deny it, that within limits science must define for us there has been organic evolution—genetic derivation of one order or species of living beings from another. The convergence of many lines of evidence has satisfied the great majority of scientific men that at the present it is so.”

**Evolution**

Now we have spoken to you a little bit on these Sunday mornings about evolution, what it’s based on, what its concepts stem from, and how inane this increasingly is being demonstrated to be, let alone the contradiction to the very first and second laws of thermodynamics which indicate that everything is created with full power and that from then on everything deteriorates and breaks down to simpler forms, not to more complex forms as evolution must claim. Science itself denies the concept. But Dr. Carnell here, a leading evangelical theologian, has clearly declared to us a great sympathy for the concept of evolution.

Another quotation from Dr. Carnell: “Scripture only requires us to say that the physical antecedent of man was not denoted man until God performed the miraculous act of divine inbreathing.” Now there again is the ground for theistic evolution. God created a pre-hominoid, and he carried him on, and developed him to the point until this animal became a human being by the conversion act of God. That is not the teaching of the book of Genesis. That is an accommodation to the thinking of liberal theologians and of unbelieving scientists.

So the neo-evangelical leaders reflect a very dangerous subservience to science and to unbelieving scholarship. 1 Corinthians 1:19-21 speak of this as well as 1 Timothy 6:20-21. The neo-evangelical has a willingness, consequently, to accept authority from science and questioning on the basis of that the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scriptures. In general the neo-evangelical feels that the Christian’s view of the Bible should be in line with what he calls modern discoveries. The liberal’s position of naturalistic explanation of miracles is the thing that the neo-evangelical tends to move toward. Many a young person comes out of college and he doesn’t realize why he thinks certain things, like the fact that he might want to come up and say, “Well, I think there are laws. There are natural explanations for miracles. We just don’t know enough about miracles. We call them because we don’t know the laws behind this, and we really are working with natural laws.” Well the place they pick that up is because somewhere along the line in their education over these past years neo-evangelicalism has been corroding the mind of Christian teachers so they begin projecting this to their students. And all of a sudden this youngster comes home and he’s thinking in terms of a distorted point of view that is contradicted by the Word of God. When the Lord uses the word “miracles” in His Bible, He means something that overrides natural laws.

So the issues of inspiration are actually given a secondary place to neo-evangelicals and there is upon salvation. As you look upon neo-evangelical movements you’ll find this to be true. The emphasis is to de-emphasize Scripture, to de-emphasize the authority of the Word of God, to make as little issue over the fact that when the Bible speaks, all of their mouths are closed. But they will make a great emphasis upon evangelism and salvation, and they will make a great emphasis upon social needs of humanity. That’s the thrust. This, of course, gives them the ground that they’re looking for of a common stand with the liberal, and consequently in the overall thrust you come out with a conglomerate gospel which the Word of God says is under the anathema of God. It’s under the judgment and the curse of God.

So I don’t care if you yourself are preaching a true gospel. If the people that you are associated with in the movement are preaching a gospel of social action salvation, you have brought yourself under the judgment and the anathema of God because you are lending dignity and credence and acceptability to what God has rejected. All of this stems from the desire among the neo-evangelicals to make conservative biblical Christianity respectable in intellectual circles; to make certain that the Bible will never be contradicted by something that science may discover.

You can see why, in our conservative camp, neo-evangelicals tend to reject the idea of verbal inspiration. They use the word “plenary” but they will avoid the word “verbal.” In a survey taken by the neo-evangelical magazine which is called Christianity Today, it was begun to give expression to this point of view within the conservative camp. A survey taken by this magazine indicated, “The survey revealed regarding theological beliefs among American clergymen that there were 12% liberal, 14% neo-orthodox, 35% fundamentalists, and 39% conservatives (or neo-evangelicals). The most alarming admission of the report was that the issue which distinguished the fundamentalist clergy (… the conservative neo-evangelical clergy) was the doctrine of Scripture. Fundamentalists subscribe to total or complete inerrancy whereas those who were considered conservative either did not subscribe to total inerrancy or had doubts about the doctrine.”

The observation of a liberal named L Harold DeWolf, who wrote a book called Present Trends in Christian Thought: Mr. DeWolf made this observation concerning the trend in the conservative camp today. He says, “There is a noticeable though indecisive change in the doctrine of biblical inspiration and authority. Some of the new evangelicals, unlike most of the fundamentalists, avoid teaching verbal inspiration of the Bible, stressing rather plenary, or full inspiration. This marks a movement to a more flexible position.”

This is a liberal, mind you, who is looking upon the conservative camp and he sees exactly what’s happening. He says there is this group called obscurantist fundamentalists who insist that the Word of God is without mistake—it is inerrant. There is this other group that is becoming flexible and is moving with the times and with modern scientific discoveries and understandings, and is willing to say that the words of the Bible may contain mistakes after all. Now that happens to be the issue that is before us.

So today there are two conservative views of the interpretation of Scripture and that’s what I’m trying to get at this morning so that you will understand when you hear the other camp speaking, you will know the frame of reference from which they’re speaking. We have two views in our camp. The neo-evangelical—for them the Bible is an authoritative record of all that God wants to make known to us. It is not God’s purpose however, he says, to secure inerrancy in peripheral matters—the things that he considers irrelevant to faith and life. The other side is the fundamentalists, or whatever you may want to call them. You may want to put your own name on them. I know that fundamentalism in a fanatical sense has some bad meanings, and I trust that you understand that I’m not talking about snake charmers and snake handlers.

**Fundamentalism**

However, I notice that Mr. Big sometimes out there when he speaks about fundamentalism has quite consistently referred them to the snake handlers. The only snake handling that has come within the realm of our experience in this ministry is in summer camp when we beat the brains out of copperheads that keep coming in. But that’s about the extent, and man we don’t handle them too much. And I stand right there and I watch the staff who are kind of funny characters sometimes, and they think it’s cute to take a dead snake and milk its fangs to see what they can do with the venom. I have to stand there and watch to see if they throw it in the fire. That’s as close as we want to handle snakes, on the end of a nice long pole.

But that isn’t the kind of fundamentalists we are, so let’s get over that and let’s not take that sneaky attack because it’s unbecoming of the leadership to even imply that.

The fundamentalist says the Word of God includes all that God intended for us to have is His full revelation, and that it includes peripheral information, and that every word is inspired, so the Bible is free of all error, discrepancies, and inaccuracies in its original manuscripts. So the neo-evangelical view of Scripture is a blatant contradiction of the view of Jesus Christ and of the Scripture’s own claim concerning itself about its own words. The Bible everywhere indicates that its words are “Thus saith the Lord.”

Now if God is untrustworthy in these peripheral matters, if we can’t trust Him to tell us whether He actually an Adam and Eve and they actually propagated the human race, if we can’t trust God to tell us that he actually covered this earth so that the highest mountains were covered with water entirely in the flood that wiped out the hybrid generation of half-angel and half-human being and started over with those eight human beings, then we can’t trust this God in anything. If He cannot be trusted in these so-called peripheral matters, how do we know He can be trusted in the things that are going to determine whether we spend eternity in heaven or hell? We have a lot at stake there. And where are we going to find it? From that liberal who goes out there and says, “I’m going to think this through. And I’m going to sit down and by my reason I’m going to analyze how I should do this. And after I’ve done this, I’m going to tell you this my friend: If you get out there and work for humanity’s needs, you’re going to go to heaven.” Now you know who came up with that idea, and it was not God. If the Bible authors were unreliable in their peripheral matters, we can’t trust them in doctrine.

**What is Peripheral?**

The issue is how to determine what is peripheral. That’s a problem in itself. Do you know what the liberal says is peripheral? The virgin birth. What difference does it make, as one of the men said who led in prayer at one of the ecumenical evangelistic campaign meetings? He stood up there to lead in prayer, and you ask him, “What do you think of Jesus Christ?” And he says, “Well, I think He was the son of a prostitute and a Roman soldier.” And the liberal says, “What difference does it make? Sure we can lead in prayer. It’s the spirit. It’s the effect. The spiritual truth still comes through.” Does it? Jesus Christ never said that we are to distinguish between the authority of the facts of history, geography, science, and the authority of doctrine recorded. Even Jesus quoted from an Old Testament that He had as a result of copies upon copies that had been handed down. And within that Old Testament there were problems of copying, but He treated that Scripture as indeed the very words of God.

The neo-evangelical rejects verbal inspiration because he wants to accommodate the liberal’s pride of intellect, and here’s this resistance on the part of the liberal to biblical authority. So, they make room for all the liberals’ human viewpoint. Do you know where this is going to go? You may perhaps project it for yourself, but the time is going to come and we have the signals all around us that this is exactly where we’re going. The time will come when those in the conservative camp on the neo-evangelical side are going to begin doubting some of the other basics of the Word of God. They’re going to go well beyond inerrancy. They’re going to go well beyond these things that deal with the authority of Scripture because once you have destroyed the authority of the words of God, then you will go far afield, and that’s exactly where in time they will go because they are bound and determined that they are going to get together hell-bent one way or another with the liberal. They are not going to offend. They are going to get him to working together. They’re going to move with him. And the liberal says, “Beautiful. Beautiful. All I want is religious action. And any time I can get with the conservatives, I’ve got the biggest kind of religious action going …

**Scientific Accuracy**

Now there are certain types of errors just briefly this morning that we’ll look at that the liberals say we have in the Bible. Number one is scientific inaccuracy. I want to point out right off the bat that many of the so-called errors of science in the Bible are really conflicts with the liberal’s philosophy of science rather than the facts of science. If you hold to the philosophy of evolution, and then you read that the Bible says that God created man, you will say that the Bible has a scientific mistake. It’s not because it’s a mistake in the Bible. It’s because it’s in conflict with your philosophy of science. And you philosophy of science says that there can be nothing supernatural.

For this reason, the liberal says that the teaching about Adam and Eve is a ridiculous scientific error, but they have never been able to prove it otherwise. Science is restricted to the empirical realm in which we live. We have to operate with science through our senses. It is built upon repeated observations and experiences by which we reach new principles and concepts. Science can demonstrate, for example, the similarity of the hands of a man and the hands of a gorilla or an orangutan or a chimpanzee, only man’s is better. Science demonstrates that. An animal can’t his hands like man can. This is amazing. Here’s a hand, obviously with similarity, but distinctions.

**Philosophy**

Now science looks at that. It comes up with all the facts and all the analysis and all the bone structure, and then it makes a decision. How does it make a decision on the interpretation of this? On the basis of your philosophy. And may hold the philosophy of evolution, do you know what you’ll say? You’ll say that out here began this animal, and gradually it improved and improved until it came from the paw of an animal to the hand of a man. How did you come to that conclusion? On the basis of your philosophy. Or it may be devolution. You may say it began with the beautiful hand of Adam, and then he had some relatives that got way out there, running stills out in the woods and boozing it up and living it up high, and they gradually degenerated until finally some of them became chimpanzees. And some of them became orangutans. And some of them became some of your friends, and so on down the line. Now that’s called devolution. How did you come to that conclusion? On the basis of your philosophy. What fits your philosophy?

If your philosophy is that things go from a good point to a lesser point, you go that way. If your philosophy is that things go from a simple point to an improved point, like evolution, you go that way. But you could also say that there is one Creator who made the animal’s paw and the human hand. And because they had a common Creator, He used a basic common good design adapted to the creature that He was making. Now that is also a philosophy, but it is one which is confirmed by Scripture.

Many of the attacks that you find of so-called errors of science in the Bible are just exactly that. So always say, “Wait a minute. Are you talking about established scientific laboratory facts, or are you talking about your philosophy of science? Is that where the conflict really is? Nobody can repeat in a laboratory the creation of the world as an experiment. Any comments about the origin of the world must stem from your frame of reference, from your own viewpoint. If your frame of reference is that the Word of God is authoritative and that its words are accurate, then that’s the way you will decide the origins of the world. That’s the way that you will interpret the scientific facts that you have before you. Scientific theories are always changing as new data forces these changes. So there is new interpretation, and obviously the scientist has very little basis for coming up to something in the Bible and saying, “This is a scientific error,” because about the time he says that, more complete information will prove how true the Bible is.

**Language of Appearance**

Sometimes the Bible writers use language of appearance. The critics have said, for example, the Bible writers speak about the four corners of the earth. So the critics have said, “There’s a mistake in the Bible. We know that the earth is not flat as that statement implies.” But how many of you call your wife outside and say, “Look at that beautiful sunset. I’m going to get up early and watch the sun rise.” Now you know the sun doesn’t rise and you know the sun doesn’t set. It’s the earth that’s turning that makes that appearance, but you are using language of appearance. You think the Bible writers were telling us that the world was flat? No, they were using the language of appearance just the way you and I do.

**1 Corinthians 15:39**

One time, 1 Corinthians 15:39 used to come under considerable attack as one of the great scientific errors of the Bible. The apostle Paul says, “All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fish, and another of birds.” And the liberal critic said, “That’s wrong. We know that all flesh is made up of protoplasm, and all flesh is of one kind. Paul was in error. This is a gross scientific mistake.” Well we have since learned about cytoplasm and about the nuclei of cells, and we have discovered that, sure enough, they do distinguish into these distinctive categories of different kinds of flesh, and they are not the same at all. Paul was right. The liberal’s intellectualism was wrong while trying to catch up with what God had already revealed.

Another point of attack is historical accuracy. So much of the Bible’s references to history are tied up with its teachings of doctrine that if you deny and throw suspicion upon the historical references of the Bible, you also cast doubt upon the doctrinal teachings. The New Testament rests on the assumption that the Old Testament is true. The climactic events of the Bible are recorded as matters of historical reality: creation, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, His ascension into heaven, and so on.

**Archaeology**

Archaeology, again, has constantly testified to the remarkable accuracy of the Bible, and the details of history, geography, and topography. However, H. G. Wells scoffed at the biblical account of Solomon’s wealth. And here’s a beauty: He said, “Solomon was a petty Jewish king. The outgrowth of Jewish story telling with the mythological tendencies and the increscient of crude simple-minded people.” Now this is a typical expression of scoffing that Solomon was a very wealthy man, that he was an extremely wise man, and that he was a tremendously powerful king in his day.

One of the examples that demonstrates this was the fact that for some time the critics had known that how Jerusalem was situation relative to the Gulf of Aqaba and the Mediterranean Sea. And down on the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba is Ezion-Geber, a port city. Now for some time the scholars knew that Solomon had a seaport here at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba at Ezion-Geber, and they knew that his caravans came down here near the Dead Sea. They came down the Jordan valley and came up on the plateau segment, and they came down to Ezion-Geber. And they put his trading materials on board ship and they sailed to Egypt and to Ofer and other places where they were going to trade. Then the return trip was again by sea, up again to the port at Ezion-Geber, and then this time they followed what is called in Scripture the King’s Highway, and then over to Jerusalem by camel caravan.

Now the critics said, “Just take a look at that. He’s supposed to be such a smart man. For a man who was so smart, Solomon was really dumb, because obviously he could have started up further and gone a short distance to the Mediterranean Sea and then sailed right down to Egypt to the Nile River and done his trading. Why would he go all the way down this dusty rough trail through this hard country to go all the way down here to get on board and to sail then? Well an archaeologist named Nelson Glueck found Solomon’s mines in Edom south of the Dead Sea. He found crude furnaces where there were these veins of iron and copper that were in this area that Solomon possessed. What we have discovered now is that the crude refinery was done right here at the site where the ore was dug, and then in crude form it was transported a short distance down to Ezion-Geber, and there Solomon had built this town in a valley that had prevailing winds. He set his furnaces in such a way that these winds acted as a forced draft for the complete refining, the last stage of the refining of his metals, before he transported them for trade purposes. This technique of refining metal was lost for centuries until the modern times when the Bessemer converter was invented for producing steel.

Here’s the rationale and the wisdom of what Solomon was doing. Why in the world would he have dug his ore, taken it all the way back to Jerusalem, taken across country, especially where he didn’t have conditions ideal for refining the metals? Whereas here it was all readily at hand.

Now the Word of God has demonstrated again that this man was indeed smart. His refined metals he would then transport. He traded for peacocks and gold. Gold was so common in Solomon’s constructions that it became practically a base metal. He had so much of it. Now that was wealth. He was wealthy, he was smart, and he was very powerful.

The critics like to claim that Daniel was mistaken—in error. They said that Daniel really lived during the Babylonian and Persian Empire periods. He didn’t know that Nabonidus was the last emperor of Babylon. But the book of Daniel says that Belshazzar was the last ruler, and he ended up that night with the handwriting on the wall when the Persians came in under the wall and conquered Babylon. So they claimed that Daniel was written during the 400 years between the Old and New Testaments. A university professor, Dr. Dougherty found some cuneiform tablets, and for a long time this was one of the liberal’s favorite attacks on the Bible—the big mistake that Daniel had made. Then lo and behold Dr. Dougherty in studying the cuneiform form tables discovered that indeed Nabonidus was the last king of Babylon, but that he did not care to rule so he appointed his son Belshazzar as co-ruler, and Nabonidus went off to work on the Hanging Gardens, and Belshazzar ran the kingdom. For this reason, Daniel was absolutely accurate when Belshazzar said, “If you can interpret the hand-writing on the wall, Daniel, I’ll make you third in the kingdom.” They used to joke about that too—third ruler in the kingdom. Because Nabonidus the father was the number one ruler, Belshazzar was the number two ruler, and Daniel would have had to been number three. The critics were wrong.

**Grammatical Inaccuracy**

One more is grammatical inaccuracy. Errors in grammar are usually departure from customary usage. The writers of the Bible were not trying to imitate classical style. You know that language usage changes over the years. What may be once standard form now becomes wrong form. What may be wrong may now become correct. God used the language style of the human authors to communicate His word in a way that people would understand. Whatever grammatical structures that author would normally use, if it communicated the divine truth of the Word of God, that’s what He used, and that’s what the spirit of God permitted him to use.

So the Bible contains the living speech of people to whom it was addressed, and grammatical forms were varied from the norm as per the individual writer. For this reason we have the Bible in the speech of intelligent educated men, in the speech of shepherds, some of it in poetry, and some of it in prose, but it is all inspired and it all communicates accurately the divine message.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1971