

# Let us hear the conclusion of the matter

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THE MATERIALS laid before readers in this issue do not in themselves 'prove' that God wrote the Bible, in the way that a mathematical theorem can be proved, for example. All we can say is that it is reasonable to believe that the Bible is written by a superhuman Creator Who can see into the future and can exercise control over nations and individuals. There is so much evidence for believing that the Bible is of Divine rather than human origin that we think the case is compelling.

In this Special Issue we have laid particular stress on the evidence of the Jews and the prophecies that have been fulfilled in them. All thinking men recognise the unique nature of the Jews and how amazing it is that such a small and disparate people have survived as a distinct race. The Bible both explains this and claims that what has happened to them has been overruled by God. The prophecies of the Bible stand up to close scrutiny, and above all have stood the test of time. Professor Dawkins in his book *The God Delusion* makes not a single mention of Bible predictions. It is not difficult, in view of the abundant evidence of fulfilled prophecy offered in these pages, to see why he did not.

Many historical sections of the Bible have also been confirmed and vindicated by archaeological and other discoveries, when in days not long ago they were dismissed as unreliable. The reality of the ancient city of Babylon and the historicity of Sargon the Assyrian king are examples that have been discussed in this issue.

But we have to acknowledge that faith, or belief, has to be added to the evidence before the mind of a believer is convinced that the Bible is from God. The well-known verse from Hebrews 11 comes to mind: "without faith it is impossible to please [God]" (v. 6). But this recognition in no way makes such belief of a different character from what we can term 'everyday faith'. As an example, take the scientist who accepts evolution as the cause for living things. He has his evidence which to his mind all adds up to make a compelling case for believing that organisms evolved from 'simple cells' and became the multicellular

creatures we see around us, and which we humans are. But he doesn't *know* that this happened, he only *believes* it did. The fossil record does not prove his case. The evolutionist has evidence, and faith.

The Creationist also has much evidence, and faith. In essence there is no difference, but the nature of what each has faith in is vastly different. The evolutionist trusts in a materialistic force which is directed by no one. The Creationist trusts in the God of the Bible, Who is "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Ps. 103:8). He trusts in a God Who wants to have fellowship, love and joy from humankind, and Who has laid out His purpose in His Word, the Bible.

A similar conclusion can be reached if we consider Bible history. An archaeologist may come to the conclusion that the Biblical records of Assyrian and Babylonian kings are substantially correct and trustworthy, and yet may not accept the miraculous passages like Daniel's deliverance from the lions or his friends' coming out of the furnace unscathed. He can applaud the accurate history but is unable to believe the miraculous element which is an integral part of the Bible narrative. The element of faith is missing. But the believer has many reasons for his faith in the miraculous. Taking all the evidence, such as that which we have gathered in this issue, faith in the miraculous is not an unreasonable attitude of mind.

The believer's faith sees that the God of the Bible has the answer to all the pressing problems facing humanity. The great problems of personal sin and guilt are answered by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The wider problems of poverty, disease, war and world leadership find their answer in the coming Kingdom of God, which is the essence of the gospel taught by Jesus and the apostles. Such a 'world view' and hopeful message is totally absent from all purely human philosophies and theories. Above all, in the person of the Lord Jesus and his life and words we have a role model, an exemplar which, if diligently followed, can offer deep-down peace now, and the hope of everlasting life in the Kingdom we expect to be established shortly.