

## **More Sure: The Bible as a Trustworthy Treasure**

2 Peter 1:16-21

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*A person's willingness to submit himself or herself to the authority and teaching of the Bible alone is held up by Peter as the unique, powerful and exalted way for all those following the apostolic faith.*

**David R. Helm<sup>1</sup>**

**Opening Point:** The forest and the trees. It can be very helpful sometimes, especially between longer series of lessons, to take a break, take a breath and focus on some of the more fundamental things about biblical Christianity. We will take this time, tonight, to focus on something very important and very beautiful. We will focus on the Bible as a trustworthy treasure.

### **I. Introduction—Can we trust the Bible?**

#### A. About ourselves?

1. I would argue that one of the most striking arguments for the truthfulness of the Bible is what it has to say concerning humanity.
  - a. See Romans 3
  - b. We also see this in how the Bible accurately (embarrassingly) records the flaws of many of its heroes, like Abraham, Noah, etc...

#### B. About the past?

1. One of the most staggering things about the Bible is how it is continually being validated by archaeology as to its truthfulness regarding the past.

#### C. About the future?

1. Trusting the Bible for an accurate description of the future seems to be the particular problem addressed in this passage.
  - a. 2 Peter 3:3-10
2. I think we can relate.
  - a. What the Bible says about the past can be investigated and verified.
  - b. Can what the Bible says about the future be investigated and verified?

### **II. I Witness as an Eyewitness—2 Peter 1:16-19**

#### A. What the Bible is NOT!

1. The Scriptures are not cleverly devised fables.
2. What does this mean?
  - a. The Bible is not like the ancient Greek myths.
  - b. The Bible is not like the writings of Aesop or simple morality plays.
3. Why is it important to assert the true nature of the Bible?
  - a. Because a growing number of people outside the Church think that it is a book of fables.
  - b. Because an unfortunate number of people within the Church treat the Bible like it's a fable.

#### B. How can Peter be so sure that the Bible is true?

1. Because he saw the Lord transfigured in his presence.
  - a. Matthew 17:1-13
2. Because he heard the voice of God.
  - a. Notice how Peter describes this!
    - i. We heard this from "the majestic glory!" (μεγαλοπρεπής)
    - ii. Peter quotes God.
    - iii. Peter relates where he was when he heard this.

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<sup>1</sup> David R. Helms, "1 & 2 Peter and Jude: Sharing Christ's Sufferings." Wheaton: Crossway, 2008. Page 212.

3. Because he was an eyewitness of the miracles of Jesus.
  - a. **1 Peter 5:1** Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed...

C. What is it, specifically, that Peter says that we can trust?

1. The power of the Lord (dunamin)
2. The return of the Lord (parousian)

D. What is the result of this?

1. We have been given a glimpse into the time when the prophetic promises of God are fulfilled.
2. We have the prophetic word made more sure.
  - a. Is this (NASB) the best translation?
    - i. I think the idea of this passage is better explained by other translations.
      - i. NKJV—the prophetic word confirmed.
      - ii. ESV—the prophetic word more confirmed.
3. What's the idea, here?
  - a. The prophetic word (being confirmed by the expert eye-witness testimony of the Apostles) is more sure and therefore:
    - i. It is not a cleverly devised fable.
    - ii. It is worthy of your full attention and trust.
      - i. As a light in the darkness.
      - ii. As long as we need to wait for its promises to be fulfilled.
    - iii. It is what it claims to be...so what does it claim to be?

### III. Men Spoke from God—2 Peter 1:20-21

A. No prophecy of scripture is a matter of the prophet's interpretation.

1. What does the phrase "prophecy of scripture" mean?
  - a. It emphasizes the portions of Scripture that predict the future.
  - b. It involves the portions of Scripture that do not predict the future.
    - i. **2 Peter 3:15-16**

B. No prophecy of scripture is an act of the prophet's will.

1. What does this mean?
  - a. This means that humans didn't decide to write what was later to be called the Bible.
  - b. This means that humans have no authority over the Bible.

C. Scripture prophecy is the work of the Holy Spirit.

1. What we have in the Bible is a truly supernatural book.

D. Scripture prophecy results in men speaking from God.

1. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

*[Speaking about the greatness of the Bible] Nothing is wanting to make life useful and comfortable, death safe and desirable, and to bring down something of heaven upon earth. But this true wisdom can be found nowhere else. If you wander from the scripture, in pursuit either a present peace or future hope, your search will end in disappointment. ... Rejoice therefore, that such a treasure is put in your hand; but rejoice with trembling. Remember this is not all you want [that is to say, "require"]; unless God likewise gives you a heart to use it a right, your privilege will only aggravate your guilt and misery."*

**John Newton Works 2:212**