

doesn't care about me." Looking at our world of evil and suffering, it is easy to understand why Leslie Weatherhead said, "*Sometimes non-religious people seem to have all the best arguments.*" *It takes faith to believe God is good.*

Some talk of seeing God's love in things like beautiful flowers and the Spring rains. But beautiful flowers covered the fields and hills around Nazi death camps and Spring rains can wash a busload of children off the road to their deaths. Nature is cruel. This is why the earliest nature religions had grotesque images of God and offered child sacrifices to appease his anger and secure His blessings. The Bible came from:

{a} Revelation After the Garden of Eden God **revealed** Himself to people through creation, conscience and personal contacts with some people like Noah. Around 2000 BC He formed a nation out of Abraham and promised its people would bless the whole world. (**Gen. 12**) He interacted with Israel for 1400 years and revealed Himself in all kinds of ways – words; visions; miracles like parting the Red Sea; inspiring people to write truth, etc.

{b} Inspiration The revelations in *Genesis* were passed down orally from generation to generation until the time of Moses. The alphabet had been formed around 2000 BC (*when He called Abraham*) and Moses was trained in "**all the wisdom and learning**" Egypt had to offer. (**Acts 7:22**) God's Spirit led him, and men after him, to write an accurate record an interpretation of God's dealings. This produced the OT writings.

{c} Recognition As the OT was closing around 400 BC God led the Jews to study their many writings to recognize the Scriptures that came from Him. When Christ came, the 39 OT books we follow were considered to be "from God."

"(Jesus said) You make the Word of God void by teaching the traditions you have passed down." (Mk. 7:13)

Why We Believe the Bible There are many reasons why we believe the Bible comes from God and is our authority in religion and life. {a} Over 1100 times it ***claims to be God's word***. If it is not, we should discard it as being foolish or dishonest.

{b} ***People of all ages and cultures*** benefit from it. (Something no other book can do.) Today, in hundreds of churches and denominations all over the world, PHD graduates and preschoolers are studying the same Bible.

{c} Read it and you will ***see for yourself*** that it is different. Dwight L Moody said, "I know the Bible is inspired because it inspires me. I do not read the Bible as much as the Bible reads me."

But the number one reason is {d} ***Jesus believed it and called the Word of God*** (**Mark 7:13**). One out of every six things he ***taught*** came from the OT. Scholars tell us the only thing he taught that was not in the OT was that God could be the Father of individuals.

When Satan ***tempted him***, he quoted his Bible (**Lk. 3**). When people ***questioned him***, he did not say I "think" or "it could be", he said "***it is written***" or "***have you not read***" – referring to the OT.

Jesus ***died clinging to his Bible***. Jesus was on the cross for six hours and He turned it into a pulpit and spoke seven times. Five of the seven were either quotations of or allusions to his Bible. Jesus lived by the Bible therefore he could die by the Bible – so can we.

After the Battle of Gettysburg, they found the skeletal remains of a soldier who had crawled into the high grass wounded, to die. His hand was on top of *Psalm 23* in his Soldier's Bible, which says: