

# The Bible: A Complete Revelation from God

In the last two hundred years, it has been far from unusual for a new religious body to appear. Most of these new groups have claimed that God has given them some new revelation and it is their purpose to carry it to the world. Events such as these may cause one to question his own faith and wonder if he really does have the complete revelation from God in the Bible. In other words, do we have recorded in scripture the essential ingredients necessary to form a belief which will bring about salvation?

## The New Testament Does Not Speak of a Revelation to Follow

The New Testament does not give any indication that there is a revelation to follow. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). All of man's spiritual needs are provided for in the scriptures (2 Peter 1:3-4). If this were not the case, Peter could not have gone on to say, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (Verse 10). John, by inspiration, says that we have all that is necessary to receive eternal life (John 20:30-31). Paul was convinced that he had preached the gospel and warned against anyone who preached anything contrary to it (Galatians 1:6-9). He also admonished the Corinthians to "stand fast in the faith" (1 Corinthians 16:13). All of these passages point strongly to the belief of the apostles in a complete revelation from God. It is no wonder that Paul warned Timothy against those who would turn away from the truth (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

## The New Testament Claims Completeness

The New Testament does make a claim to completeness. In speaking of Colossians 2:9, James D. Bales says, "Since in him 'dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily' there is no one who could bring a fuller revelation of God."<sup>1</sup> He goes on to pen these words: "Immediately after saying that in Christ 'dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,' the apostle Paul said: 'and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power.' (Colossians 2:10) Since in Christ there is nothing lacking in God's revelation of himself to man, there is nothing lacking in Christ for man."<sup>2</sup> Further, "Christ did not prophesy that anyone would take his place. Who could supersede the Son of God? He is God's spokesman to us today, and his word has been revealed and confirmed by the Spirit through the inspired men of the first century. (Hebrews 1:2; 2:3-4; John 16:12-14; Matthew 28:20; Acts 2:42.)"<sup>3</sup> The apostle Paul said that the new covenant was to be everlasting (Hebrews 13:20-21).

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<sup>1</sup>James D. Bales, *The Finality of the Faith*, (Shreveport: Lambert Book House, 1972), p. 67.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 69.

## The Faith Was Delivered Once For All Time

While all of these verses will show the Bible to be God's complete revelation to man, I feel that a proper understanding of Jude 3 is the strongest argument of all. Jude writes, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Vine says of the word here translated *faith*, "by metonymy, what is believed, the contents of belief, faith."<sup>4</sup> Of the word *once* he says, "once for all, of what is perpetual validity, not requiring repetition."<sup>5</sup>

After observing the meaning of these words, one can easily see why Woods makes the following comment: "The 'faith' for which Jude's readers were thus earnestly to contend . . . is the sum of all that which Christians are to believe and obey."<sup>6</sup> Also,

This faith has *once for all (hapax)*, not simply formerly, as the King James Version implies, but for all time, been delivered to the saints. The meaning is that the truth is delivered for all time; it is a permanent deposit, it will never be superseded, amended or modified. As it now stands it is a perfect, adequate, complete and inviolable deposit of truth, providing the means with which to confute the gainsayer, and resist the advocate of false doctrine. This deposit of truth was infallibly delivered through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 1:11; 2 Peter 1:21), and no part of it is superfluous or unnecessary.<sup>7</sup>

While all of these new religions, to my knowledge, claim that the Bible is inspired, they attempt to hold to the inspiration of their new revelation. One can well see that this will not work. There is no mention of a new covenant that is to follow the one delivered by Christ. The gospel is complete and was established to last forever. Finally, the faith was delivered to the saints during the time of Jude and that faith is complete, so there is no need for any addition to it.

## Questions

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<sup>4</sup>W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Westwood, N. J.: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1940), p.71.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p. 137.

<sup>6</sup>Guy N. Woods, *A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude*, (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company, 1955), p. 385.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

I. LISTING: List ten verses which directly or indirectly show that the Bible is God's only revelation to man and that it is all he needs.

1.

2.

3.

4.

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7.

8.

9.

10.

II. CHALLENGE:

1. Our study has showed that Bible interpretation should be approached very carefully and with great preparation. Write down some ways that you will prepare for Bible study.

2. Give reasons why/why not to study the Bible if it is not the complete verbally inspired word of God. Defend the answer. (Jude 3)

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