

Bible Inspiration—Victory Over All Attacks

Intro: Jeremiah was instructed by God to write all the words He would speak against Israel, Judah, and all the nations in a scroll (recorded in Jer. 36.) Jeremiah instructed Baruch to read to the people what was in the roll in the Lord's house. The scroll was read to King Jehoiakim. Jer. 36:22-23 ²²Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him. ²³And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth." Even though Jehoiakim destroyed the roll, he could not destroy God's Word; Jer. 36:28 ²⁸Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned."

The Bible (God's Word) has been attacked through the years. The only way in which it has survived is because it is God's Word, thus a mark of inspiration.

I. GOD'S WORD WILL ENDURE.

A. Things in this world do not endure.

1. Change is the nature of our world.
2. Even antiques wear out.

B. God's Word never wears out.

1. Isa. 40:8 ⁸"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."
2. Mat. 24:35 ³⁵"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
3. 1 Pet. 1:25 ²⁵"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

II. GOVERNMENTS.

A. Antiochus Epiphanes:

1. King of Syria
2. In 175 BC ordered the Jews, on pains of death, to destroy their Scriptures and worship the Greek gods.
3. This led to Judas Maccabaeus revolt.
 - a. He saved the books.
 - b. He won independence for the Jewish nation.

B. Rome:

1. From the time of Trajan (98-117) to Constantine virtually every ruler was opposed to Christianity.
2. Valerius Diocletian
 - a. Ruled from 284-305 (resigned, but died in 313)
 - b. He ordered Christianity outlawed, its leaders killed, and their Bibles burned (started at 303).
 - c. Two years after his edict had been in force, he stated "I have completely exterminated the Christian writings from the face of the earth!"
3. Constantine
 - a. The next emperor after Diocletian.
 - b. Legalized Christianity and paid for fifty new hand-written copies of the Bible.

- C. Mohammedism went all the way to Paris (the battle of the Tours in 732, also called the Battle of Poitiers and, by Arab sources, the Battle of the Palace of the Martyrs) to destroy the Bible and Christianity until they were pushed back.
- D. Hitler and the Nazi party.
- E. Communistic nations.
 1. Communism replaces God with the state.
 2. Modern liberalism does the same (it replaces God with the state).

III. SUPPOSED SUPPORTERS.

A. Judaism attempted to destroy the Bible.

1. Judaism held the Old Testament against all, yet it was one of the strongest threats to the New Testament one can find.
2. They did everything possible to keep the New Testament from coming into being and from being in the world.

B. Roman Catholics.

1. They had Bibles burned.
 - a. They often claiming the translation was vulgar.
 - b. Thousands of copies were burned. “Of the estimated 18,000 copies printed between 1525-1528, only two fragments are known to remain” (Thiessen 84).
2. They condemned the reading of the Bible.
 - a. The Fourth Rule of the Council of Trent stated that the indiscriminate circulation of the Scriptures in the common vernacular would generate “more harm than good.” Therefore, those reading or possessing the Bible “without . . . permission may not receive absolution from their sins till they have handed [copies of the Scriptures] over to the ordinary” (Schroeder 274).
 - b. In 1543 an act was passed forbidding absolutely the use of Tyndale’s version, and any reading of the Scriptures in assemblies without royal license (Newman 262).
3. The executed individuals who translated the Bible into the common language.
 - a. John Wycliffe died in 1384 but because he translated the Bible, they dug up his bones and burned them in 1427.
 - b. Jan Hus translated the Bible into the Czech language in 1416 leading to his being burned at the stake.
 - c. William Tyndale burned at the stake in Belgium in 1536.

C. The Modern-day Modernist and Rationalist.

1. Documentary Hypothesis (mid-18th century):
 - a. By the 17th century, *scholars* rejected the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.
 - b. They accepted that it was the product of a long evolutionary process.
 - c. In 1780, Johann Eichhorn formulated the view that there were 2 sources for Genesis (later expanded to the entire Pentateuch).
 - (1) Jehovist (shortened to “J”)
 - (2) Elohist (shortened to “E”)
 - d. Later Wilhelm De Wette identified a third source called Deuteronomist (shortened to “D”) only found in Deuteronomy.
 - e. Later the Elohist was split into Elohist and Priestly (shortened to “P”) source.

- f. This view (and variations of it) was popularized in 1878 by Julius Wellhausen in his book *History of Israel* Vol. 1.
- g. It is now known primarily by the acronym JEDP.
- 2. Johann Selmer (1725-1791)
 - a. Argued that Biblical events must be judged in light of human reason/experience.
 - b. Jesus miracles and His deity were denied along with all Divine actions.
- 3. David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874)
 - a. He was associated with the Tubingen School (“which revolutionized study of the New Testament, early Christianity, and ancient religions”).
 - b. In his book *Life of Jesus* (1835), he attempted to show the Gospel accounts were myths.
- 4. Jesus Seminar
 - a. Founded in 1985 by Robert Funk (John Dominic Crossan—liberal Roman Catholic priest one of the leading members).
 - b. Was a group of 50 *scholars* and 100 *laymen* who voted by various colored beads to decide on the historicity of the deeds and sayings of Jesus.
 - c. They did not believe in (among other things):
 - (1) The Deity of Jesus
 - (2) The resurrection of Christ
 - (3) Any miracles
 - (4) The substitutionary atonement of Christ’s death
 - (5) That the Bible was inspired of God.
 - d. Their agenda was, “I do not believe Jesus is God, so I am going to remove anything that records Jesus saying or teaching that He is God from the gospels.”

IV. INFIDELS

A. Voltaire (real name: Francois Marie Arouer)

- 1. A French skeptic (1694 – 1778)
 - a. No one in Europe did as much to destroy faith in God’s Word.
 - b. France rejected the Scriptures, tied a copy of the Bible to the tail of a donkey, and dragged it through the streets to the city dump, where it was ceremoniously burned.
 - c. He predicted, “In less than a hundred years the Bible will be discarded and Christianity swept from the earth” others have it recorded, “100 years from my day there will not be a Bible in the earth except one that is looked upon by an antiquarian curiosity seeker.”
- 2. It has been stated:
 - a. In 50 years (others state 25 years) after his death his house was used by the Geneva Bible Society.
 - b. His printing press was used to print Bible.

B. Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

- 1. At one time a Quaker preacher, in 1787, he went to France and became an infidel.
- 2. He wrote, *The Age Of Reason*.
 - a. It was an attack against the Bible.
 - b. He said it would destroy Christianity and the Bible.

c. It can barely be found today while the Bible proliferates.

C. Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1899)

1. An agnostic, eloquent lecturer who toured the nation attacking the Bible.
 - a. It is recorded that he was paid as much as \$5,000 for some speeches.
 - b. Thousands thronged to hear him.
2. He was greatly influenced by Voltaire and Paine along with others.
 - a. Initially a deist.
 - b. Became an agnostic.
 - c. He was enamored with Darwin's theory of evolution and argued that if carried to their legitimate conclusion would destroy the Bible.
3. In 1885, he prophesied that in 25 years no more church buildings would be built.
4. He is also quoted as saying about the Bible, "In 15 years, I will have this Book in the morgue."
5. His influence died when he died.

V. PHILOSOPHERS

- A. Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, et. al., are dead and gone and their works to a great extent are gone.
- B. Yet, the Bible is still the most published book.

Conclusion: No doubt there are many more that have attacked the Bible and tried to destroy it in various ways. A fitting conclusion is the *poem* written by John Clifford:

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door
and heard the anvil ring the vesper chime:
When looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he; then said with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, I thought, the anvil of God's Word
For ages skeptics' blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed — the hammers gone!

Works Cited:

- Newman, A. H. 1902. *A Manual of Church History*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society.
Schroeder, H. J. 1950. *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*. St. Louis, MO: B. Herder.
Thiessen, H. C. 1949. *Lectures in Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.