

INTRODUCING YOUR BIBLE

by Dr. Desmond Ford

Study 1

Is the universe friendly or unfriendly?
What is the meaning of life?
What am I doing here? Where am I going? How can I understand myself?
Is there a God? If so, does God love me, and what should I do to please him? If there is a loving God, how is it that this world is full of trouble and sorrow?

These are some of the questions that everybody asks, but many people, like Pilate, are content with the asking, and do not seek the answers. This series of studies aims at directing you to the only source from which such answers can be gleaned.

Almost all our questions are dependent upon the prior answer to the one supreme inquiry of life: "Is there a personal God who cares about me?"

If blind matter and unfeeling force are alone responsible for the universe, then human life indeed is no more than "a dusty scuffle across a parched terrain," "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, and signifying nothing."

Should this be the case, we would not be concerned with "right" and "wrong," but only with the "pleasant" and "unpleasant," the "easy" and the "hard." Certainly there would be no valid reason for studying the Bible, and endeavoring to bring our life into harmony with its principles.

Therefore, before exploring the pages of a volume which purports to be divinely inspired, let us first consider whether any Divine Being exists.

The former president of the New York Academy of Sciences, A. Cressy Morrison, wrote as follows in a well-publicized article:

Suppose you put ten pennies, marked from one to ten, into your pocket and give them a good

shuffle. Now try to take them out in sequence from one to ten, putting back the coins each time and shaking them all again. Mathematically we know that your chance of first drawing number one is one in ten; of drawing one and two in succession, one in 100; of drawing one, two, and three in succession, one in 1,000,

and so on; your chance of drawing them all, from number one to number ten in succession, would reach the unbelievable figure of one in 10,000,000,000.

By the same reasoning, so many exacting conditions are necessary for life on the earth that they could not possibly exist in proper relationship by chance. The earth rotates on its axis 1,000 miles an hour at the equator; if it turned at 100 miles an hour, our days and nights would be ten times as long as now, and the hot sun would burn up our vegetation each long day while in the long night any surviving sprout might well freeze.

Again, the sun, source of our life, has a surface temperature of 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and our earth is just far enough away so that this 'eternal fire' warms us just enough and not too much! If the sun gave off only one-half of its present radiation, we would freeze, and if it gave half as much more, we would roast. . . .

It is apparent from these and a host of other

examples that there is not one chance in billions that life on our planet is an accident.

"Seven Reasons Why a Scientist Believes in God," *Reader's Digest*, October, 1960.

By this statement, a famous scientist asserts that the evidence for God compared with the evidence for atheism is more than a billionfold in favor of the former.

Common sense asserts the same—it is no more difficult to believe in a personal God who made all things, than it is to believe that I, a personal being and creation, exist.

My existence demands His. It would require a Supreme Mind to create the human mind. This fact of God has to be accepted before anything at all makes sense.

If there is no Divine Being, then all is accident, and reason is nonexistent. This being the case, all that takes place in the brain is entirely by chance, and therefore its conclusions are not to be relied upon.

The atheist, if consistent, should never attempt to use reason to disprove God, for reason presupposes order and planning, and therefore a Planner.

Because of these self-evident facts, the Bible never wastes space arguing about God's existence. Instead it declares, "In the beginning, God."

The glories and beauty of nature, and the wonders of the human body and mind testify that not only does God exist, but that he loves us.

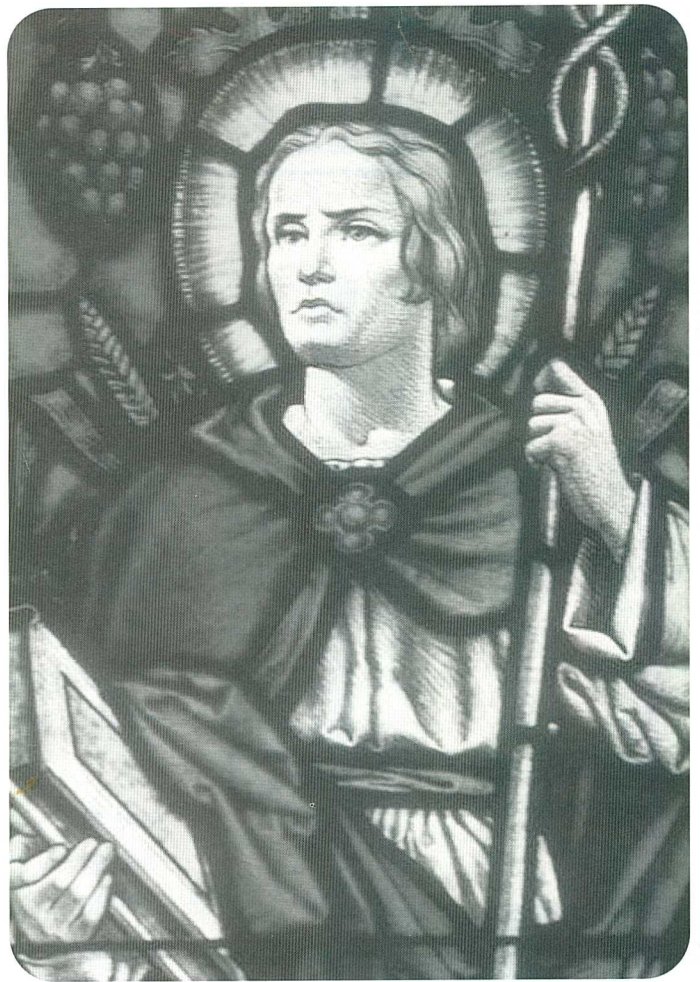
Would not a loving Creator desire to have something to say to his earthborn children? We would certainly expect God to tell us his will for us, and to answer as many of our questions as he knew to be for our best good.

Such a revelation would, of necessity, have to bear heavenly credentials, and yet leave room for doubt. A revelation without strong evidences in its favor would influence none, whereas one which was as strongly attested as though God himself stood before his creatures might cancel humanity's freedom, and compel rather than solicit obedience and worship.

We might further anticipate that such a revelation would be best in a written form with a group of people entrusted with its care.

Only written records would suffice, because that which is handed down by word of mouth invariably changes in the process, and in so important a matter as a Divine Revelation, accuracy would be imperative.

If such a revelation were also accompanied by concrete embodiment of its truth, for example, a Man whose life and person were entirely in harmony with God's prescribed will, then it would not only make abstract truths more readily understood, but it would also provide the impetus of holy example.



There is only one such revelation as described above in existence today.

The Bible not only claims to come from God, but it bears its own credentials sufficient to authenticate it to any honest reader.

It was entrusted over the centuries to a race of religious people to preserve its basic records, and from this race appeared One whose entire life and Person were in complete accord with the requirements of God's written message to humanity.

This one was Jesus Christ.

As the Bible has no parallel among other sacred books, so Christ stands without a peer among the religious leaders of mankind. No other founder of a worldwide religion claimed to be God incarnate. No other one claimed to be without sin.

It is true of Jesus Christ alone that after he died "he rose again" (1 Corinthians 15:4 KJV) and "appeared unto many" (see Matthew 27:53). God was not content with telling his children to be kind, good, and true. Instead, God sent his Son who was Truth, Goodness, and Love incarnate, to show us the way we ought to live.

It was "the Spirit of Christ" (1 Peter 1:11) who inspired the prophetic writers of Scripture. May that same Spirit guide to truth and happiness every prayerful reader of the following studies.