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# The Bible: Is It a Fax from Heaven?

Vishal Mangalwadi

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In his novel *The Da Vinci Code*, Dan Brown wrote that since 'the Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven', it cannot be the Word of God.<sup>1</sup> Can the president of the United States of America use a speechwriter to craft his State of the Union address? Can he have dozens of associates amend, rewrite, revise, and edit that speech? If, in an emergency, the president asked someone else to deliver his speech to the Congress, would it still be the president's word?

*The Da Vinci Code* assumes that the Creator cannot do what a president can do. Worse, it assumes that since the Creator cannot communicate, the

human mind cannot know the truth. It creates a myth to revive Gnostic/Tantric teaching that we can experience enlightenment by silencing our minds through mystical sex. Dan Brown implements Joseph Campbell's recommendation that having lost its hope of finding truth, the West ought to invent stories to imagine the meaning of existence.

If it is true that we cannot know what is true, then what happens to America's 1776 Declaration of Independence? The Founders said, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' Are these truths self-evident to the human mind? A postmodernist would be absolutely right in insisting that the Declaration of Independence was wrong. These 'truths' are not 'self-evident'.

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1 Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (NY: Doubleday, 2003), 231.

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Human equality is not self-evident anywhere in the world—not even in America. Women and blacks were not treated as equal in America. Equality was never self-evident to Hindu sages. For them, inequality was self-evident. Their question was, why are human beings born unequal? Hinduism taught that the Creator made people different. The higher castes were made from his head, shoulders, and belly, and the lower castes were made from his feet. The law of karma accentuated these basic differences. The Buddha did not believe in the Creator, but he accepted the doctrine of karma as the metaphysical cause for the inequality of human beings. Nor were unalienable rights self-evident to Rome.

During Jesus' trial, Pilate, Rome's governor and chief justice over Israel, declared: 'I find no basis for a charge against this man.'<sup>2</sup> Pilate then said to Jesus, 'You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?'<sup>3</sup> Wait a minute! Do you have the power to crucify someone whom you declare to be innocent? Isn't it self-evident to you that he has an unalienable right to life?

Or take the case of the apostle Paul. A number of Roman commanders, judges, governors, and kings tried him. Everyone agreed that he was innocent. Did anyone set him free? No, they kept him imprisoned for years to please his accusers and try to extract bribes from him.<sup>4</sup> It was not self-evident to any of

them that Paul had an unalienable right to liberty.

Equality and human rights are not self-evident truths. In his original draft, Thomas Jefferson penned, 'We hold these truths to be *sacred and undeniable*.' That was the truth. That's why the Declaration grounded the 'unalienable' rights in the Creator rather than in the state. The most honest declaration would have been, 'We hold these truths to be divinely revealed.' Revelation is the reason why America believed what some Deists ascribed to 'common sense'.

To be precise, these truths appeared common sense to the American Founders because their sense was shaped by the common impact of the Bible—even if a few of them doubted that the Bible was divinely revealed.

### I Does all of this matter?

Yes, it is a matter of life and death. Jesus and Paul were highly respected public servants. Yet even their lives were not safe in a culture that had lost the very notion of truth. Jesus told Pilate that he had come to reveal truth.<sup>5</sup> What an opportunity! Pilate could have said to his accusers: 'I have never met anyone who knew truth. Now that you have brought him to me, I will keep him at least for a while to learn all about truth.' But Pilate had no patience for 'nonsense'. How could this carpenter know truth when the greatest Greek philosophers and Latin poets were clueless?

By Pilate's time, Europe had lost

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<sup>2</sup> Lu. 23:4 NIV

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 19:10.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 24:26–27.

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<sup>5</sup> Jn. 18:37.

hope of knowing truth and even interest in seeking it. Like the postmodern West today, Pilate believed that no one knows truth—not in any rational sense that could be explained in words. The Gnostics who talked about ‘experiencing’ mystical truth used the same type of mythical verbiage as Dan Brown. And this is far from a theoretical discussion.

What happens to a culture that is clueless about what is true, good, and just? Pilate answered that question when he declared: ‘I have the power to crucify you or set you free.’ When we believe truth is unknowable, we rob it of any authority. What is left is brute power wielding arbitrary force. Whether a person or an ethnic minority is guilty or innocent becomes irrelevant. His or her right to life depends exclusively on the whims of whoever has power. Any nation that refuses to live under truth condemns itself to live under sinful man.

Dan Brown is quite right that the Bible is not faxed from heaven. It is very different from other books like the Qur’an that claim to be inspired. It usually does not use the phrase ‘the Word of God’ as other ancient and contemporary ‘revelations’ do. For example, unlike the Prophet Muhammad, none of the writers of the four Gospels claims to have received their information in a prophetic trance by revelation from God or from an angel. Nor do the Gospel writers claim that a spirit entity used them as channels for ‘automatic writing’.

Private revelations cannot generally be confirmed as divinely inspired. They may be supernaturally inspired, but how would we know if they are from God or from the devil, angels, or

demons?<sup>6</sup> Most books of the Bible are not revelations received in a subjective, trancelike experience.<sup>7</sup> The Gospels, for example, claim to be objective public truth. They bear courageous witness to the public events of Jesus’ teaching, miracles, prophecies, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—witnessed by five hundred people.

The Gospel writers—the evangelists—challenged the interpretations of Jewish scholarship and a brutal Roman state. They opened themselves to cross-examination. Matthew, Mark, and John gave eyewitness accounts as evidence for their truth. Luke described how he systematically researched the facts, carefully checking them out with eyewitnesses. This is a very human, scholarly way of writing indeed!

Can men record the Word of God? The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: ‘When you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you

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<sup>6</sup> In Acts 10:9–19, Peter received a revelation in a trancelike vision. Subsequent events in chapters 9 and 10 confirmed that the vision was from God.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel, who did receive private visions, did not try to get his contemporaries to believe his prophecies. ‘I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself’ (Daniel 7:28). ‘Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my colour changed, but I kept the matter in my heart.’ Later generations, including Jesus Christ, believed him because his prophecies turned out to be so true that many modern scholars thought his book must have been written centuries after Daniel’s time.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Thess. 2:13, emphasis added.

accepted it not as the word of men but as *what it really is, the word of God*.<sup>8</sup> Documented fulfilment of earlier prophecies provides strong evidence of writers communicating 'the word of God'. J. Barton Payne, for example, details 1,817 Bible predictions involving 8,352 predictive verses (27 per cent of the Bible).<sup>9</sup> Systematic fulfilment of short- and midterm prophecies have given strong encouragement that the canon reflects the word of God as spoken by prophets.

## II Can the Words of Men be the Word of God?

Ill-informed critics assume that Christians believe the Bible because the Roman Catholic Church councils declared it was God's Word. The reality is that the church believes the Bible because Jesus lived and died 'in accordance with the scriptures'.<sup>10</sup>

The Gospels make it clear that Jesus did not have a martyr complex: he did not want to die.<sup>11</sup> He could have escaped arrest in the garden of Gethsemane. In fact, at the moment of his arrest, Peter gave Jesus an excellent opportunity to escape into the dark, but Jesus rebuked him.<sup>12</sup> Jesus could also have saved his life during his trial, for his judges found him innocent. Instead of trying to save his life, Jesus laid it down. And he did it for one reason alone: so that the Scriptures may

be fulfilled.<sup>13</sup> Why did Jesus take the Jewish Scriptures so seriously that he chose to die to fulfil them?

Scientists have just begun to discover awe-inspiring communication that happens in communities of the single cell creatures we call amoeba.<sup>14</sup> We are far from figuring out why life is so inseparably related to information and its transmission. From the very beginning, the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament) reveal a God who speaks: 'And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.'<sup>15</sup> Thus the Jewish worldview sees language as foundational to reality. We human beings speak because we are made in the image of a Spirit who said, 'Let us make man in our image'.<sup>16</sup> Man became a 'living soul' when God breathed his spirit ('breath') into a body of clay.<sup>17</sup> Thus, human language has both spiritual and physical aspects.

The Bible teaches that God is love. Love includes communication. Both Old and New Testaments teach that God speaks to us because he loves us. He gave us the gift of language so we may know and love him and one another as his children. Love, Jesus taught, was the whole point of divine revelation, that is, communication.<sup>18</sup> In the Judeo-Christian understanding, love and language are aspects not of

9 Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (NY: Harper & Row, 1973).

10 1 Cor. 15:2-3; Lk. 24:44-48.

11 Lk. 22:41-42.

12 Lk. 22:49-51.

13 Mt. 26:54; Mk. 14:49.

14 <http://www.cosmicfingerprints.com/blog/intelligent-bacteria/>; John Tyler Bonner, *The Social Amoeba: The Biology of Slime Molds* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2008).

15 Gen. 1:3.

16 Gen. 1:26.

17 Gen. 2:7.

18 Mt. 22:37.

chemistry but of our *psyche* or soul. Our chemistry is designed to facilitate love, knowledge, communication, and worship.

### III Jesus, Daniel, and the Jewish Scriptures

Jesus treated the Hebrew Scriptures in the same way as did the Hebrew prophet, Daniel, an administrator in Babylon. Daniel was a young contemporary of the prophet Jeremiah in whose day, many prophets claimed to receive revelations from God. The prophets who predicted peace and prosperity for Jerusalem enjoyed religious and political patronage. Yet their prophecies turned out to be false. Jeremiah, on the other hand, called his nation to repentance. Otherwise, he said, God would bring doom and destruction through the Babylonians. Jeremiah was condemned for treason and almost killed, but subsequent events proved him right. Daniel, therefore, took Jeremiah's prophecies seriously.

Decades after Jeremiah was gone, Daniel kept reading Jeremiah's scrolls, even though Jeremiah's work was not yet in the Jewish canon. The more Daniel read, the more convinced he became that since Jeremiah's predictions had come true, he was a prophet from God.<sup>19</sup> Finally Daniel became so convinced that Jeremiah's words were God's words that he was willing to be thrown into a den of lions.<sup>20</sup>

Here is what happened: Jeremiah prophesied that Jerusalem would be rebuilt seventy years after its destruction.<sup>21</sup> That was about the time when the Medo-Persian coalition defeated Babylon. Jeremiah's prophecy, in conjunction with dreams of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel himself, helped Daniel understand the significance of that momentous event. He believed 'the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet'<sup>22</sup> and began to pray for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.<sup>23</sup> Then the king was duped into issuing a devastating edict: No one was to pray to any god except to the king for thirty days. The penalty for violation was the lions' den!

Daniel, by then administrator-in-chief for the empire, knew that his rivals had engineered that edict specifically to destroy him. He had to choose. Would he stop praying for the dead city of Jerusalem to save his life, or would he trust Jeremiah's words at the risk of his life? The deeper question was, who was sovereign—God or the king?

Daniel had no other basis for disobeying the king and risking his life except his confidence that Jeremiah's words were God's words. God was sovereign over history. God had used Babylon to destroy wicked Jerusalem to fulfil the words spoken by numerous prophets, beginning with Moses. Now God was going to use the Persian emperor to rebuild his temple, notwithstanding the schemes of Daniel's rivals.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Deut. 18:21, 22.

<sup>20</sup> Deut. 4:7, 29; 9:26; Jer. 29:7, 12–13; 31:4–14, 23–28; 50:4; Lam. 2:18, 19.

<sup>21</sup> Jer. 25:11–12.

<sup>22</sup> Jer. 1:1–3; 25:3; 2 Chr. 36:21; Ezra 1:1; Dan. 9:2.

<sup>23</sup> Dan. 9:2.

<sup>24</sup> 2 Chr. 36:21–23; Isa. 44:24–28; 45:1, 13.

Daniel believed Jeremiah's prophecy. Therefore he kept his practice of opening his windows to Jerusalem and praying three times a day. Daniel was arrested, tried, and thrown into the lions' den. After a sleepless night, the king was astonished to discover that something—or rather, someone—had kept the lions from harming Daniel. His miraculous escape so moved the king that he issued an edict encouraging Jews to return to build a temple for the living God in Jerusalem and pray for the king!<sup>25</sup>

As Daniel did, Jesus treated the words of the Hebrew Scriptures as God's Word. He lived by the Scriptures,<sup>26</sup> died, and was buried according to the Scriptures, and on the third day he rose again 'according to the Scriptures'<sup>27</sup> and his own prophecies.<sup>28</sup> Jesus' apostles, including Peter and Paul, followed Jesus in teaching that the Hebrew Scriptures were written by men but inspired by God.<sup>29</sup>

Did Jesus lay down his life to fulfil the Scriptures because he was but a first-century Jew conditioned by his culture's mistaken view of the Scriptures? Or was the Old Testament his

own Word? In that case, Jesus would be teaching the lesson that John Locke drew from it, that is, to use our gift of language responsibly, to say what we mean and mean what we say, and to keep our word, as God does, whatever the cost.<sup>30</sup>

Even a superficial reading of the Gospels is sufficient to show a sceptic that Jesus' culture rejected him because he overturned their understanding of the Scriptures.<sup>31</sup> He was anything but a product of his culture. He spoke not as an exegete, but as someone with a unique authority to expound God's original intention behind the words of Scripture.<sup>32</sup> The Jews persecuted Jesus because he claimed to have greater authority than Moses,<sup>33</sup> who had received the '*very words of God*'.<sup>34</sup>

#### IV Is the New Testament the Word of God?

The epistle to the Hebrews exhorts the Jewish followers of the Messiah to 'remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you'.<sup>35</sup> How could the apostles' words be regarded as '*the words of God*'?

The apostles already believed that God's word created the universe.<sup>36</sup> They had seen Jesus' words still the storms, heal the sick, and raise the

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**25** See passages such as Daniel ch 9 and 6, Ezra 1:1: 'In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that *the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled*, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing (emphasis added).'

**26** Mt. 4:1–10.

**27** 1 Cor. 15:2–3.

**28** Mk. 8:31–33; 9:30–32; 10:32–34.

**29** 2 Pet. 1:19–21; 2 Tim. 3:15–16.

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**30** Mt. 5:37.

**31** Mt. 22:29.

**32** Mt. 7:28–30.

**33** Mt. 19:1–11.

**34** Rom. 3:2; Heb. 3:1–6.

**35** Heb. 13:7 NIV (emphasis added).

**36** Gen. 1; John 1:1–3.

dead. Jesus assured them: 'The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.'<sup>37</sup> He promised that if they would abide in his word, they would know the truth, the truth would set them free,<sup>38</sup> and that their prayers would be answered if they remained in his word.<sup>39</sup> Having seen Jesus' words raise several people from death, what were the apostles to do with his claim that the day was coming when the dead would hear his voice, and those who hear would rise again and live eternally?<sup>40</sup>

To make matters worse, the apostles thought the Messiah would conquer Rome, but Jesus predicted he would be crucified and three days later be raised again. The apostles witnessed Jesus' words come true. Their first hand experiences of Christ's death and resurrection compelled them to conclude that Jesus' words were God's words. Jesus was the eternal, creative Word of God (*logos*) become flesh.<sup>41</sup> Jesus himself used the testimony of the Scriptures—more than his incredible miracles—as the proof of his divinity.<sup>42</sup>

In his prayer to his Father, Jesus said, 'For I have given them [the disciples] the words that you gave me.'<sup>43</sup> He breathed his Spirit upon the apostles,<sup>44</sup> assuring them that the Holy Spirit

would remind them of what he had taught them<sup>45</sup> and would guide them into all truth.<sup>46</sup> Jesus did not send them merely to teach and preach what they had heard and seen. He also gave them authority to heal the sick and cast out demons with their words.<sup>47</sup> The apostles became the servants or 'ministers of the word'.<sup>48</sup> They devoted themselves to 'the ministry [service] of the word'.<sup>49</sup> God's Spirit confirmed the apostles' words by supernatural signs and wonders.<sup>50</sup> What would you have thought if you saw Peter's words heal a man born lame?<sup>51</sup> Even unbelievers treated the words of the apostles as the words of God.<sup>52</sup> The apostles' contemporaries interpreted the growth of the church as the growth of the word of God: 'And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of disciples multiplied.'<sup>53</sup> Following Jesus' example, the apostles sealed their words with their blood. They did not struggle for personal survival, because Christ's word assured them of their eternal survival.

Contrary to Bible critics, such as Dan Brown, the church did not invent the Word of God: the church was 'built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets', that is, on the New and the Old Testaments.<sup>54</sup> Ill-informed

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37 Jn. 14:10.

38 Jn. 8:32.

39 Jn. 15:7.

40 Jn. 5:24–25.

41 Jn. 1:1, 14.

42 Jn. 5:39.

43 Jn. 17:8.

44 Jn. 20:22.

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45 Jn. 14:26.

46 Jn. 16:13.

47 Mt. 10:1–8.

48 Lk. 1:2.

49 Acts 6:4.

50 Acts 2:42–44; 5:12; 14:3.

51 Acts 3:1–10.

52 Acts 13:7.

53 Acts 6:7.

54 Eph. 2:20.



sceptics assume that the Bible—especially the New Testament—was deemed to be the Word of God in AD 325 by the Church Council of Nicaea, which collated the canon of Scripture. The following verses show that Jesus believed that his message was God's word. His apostles believed that what they were preaching was God's word. Long before any church council met Christ's original companions and followers in Jerusalem accepted the apostles' words as the Word of God, just as the Thessalonian believers accepted Paul's words as the Word of God.

How could the apostle John say to his readers that they already knew the truth and did not need anyone (not even a church council) to determine for them the Word of God?<sup>55</sup> The first and second century church already knew which books had genuine apostolic authority behind them. They did not require canonization of the apostles' writings by a church council to begin laying down their lives for the Word of God. They had been affirming their faith in these writings, by choosing martyrdom, for more than two hundred years before Constantine.<sup>56</sup>

The Old Testament canon existed before Jesus' time. Canonization of the New Testament became necessary only because spurious books began to appear, claiming to have been written by the original apostles. Canonization did not turn Paul's epistles into God's word. The purpose of canonization was to refute the spurious works as inauthentic, such as the alleged 'Gospel of

Thomas' and the 'Gospel of Barnabas'.

It is important to note that only one book in the New Testament, the Revelation (to John), claims to have been received supernaturally in visions, and this book met with the toughest scrutiny before being included in the canon. A book with a similar title, *The Revelation of Peter*, was rejected. Why? Because Christianity is about public truth, not about private, subjective, unverifiable, secret, inner, 'religious' experience. Private intuition may indeed be from God, but it has to be publicly authenticated before the public can follow it. The Revelation of John was included in the canon precisely because it is not a 'fax from heaven'. John 'saw,' 'looked,' and 'heard' certain things and then wrote down his eyewitness account—exactly as he did in the gospel of John.<sup>57</sup> The church canonized books with known apostolic authority to undercut the deception of power-hungry 'religious' prophets, apostles, and mystics.

The authorship of Revelation has been disputed, but it is clear that if someone other than John the apostle forged the book in John's name, then

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**57** In Revelation 1:11 John is told: '*Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches.*' Although John was 'in the spirit' when he saw his visions, it is very clear from the book that John's rational functions were never arrested. His book is not 'automatic' spirit writing. This is eyewitness testimony. Revelation 1:2 states that John '*bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.*' In John's writings, *marturew*—'bear witness' means 'eyewitness'. See John 1:32: And John (the Baptist) bore witness: '*I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.*'

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**55** 1 Jn. 2:19–21.

**56** Rev. 20:4.

the forger would have made an effort to establish his credentials as an apostle. The author of the book of Revelation simply states that his name was John, and he expects the intended readers to recognize his apostolic authority.

The point is this: the church does not believe the Scriptures because the Council of Nicaea canonized some books. Roman Catholics acknowledge that Church councils have sometimes been wrong. The Council of Nicaea did not create the Bible. The process of canonization of the New Testament began with a heretic, Marcion (AD 90–160), who identified a widely accepted canon in order to challenge it. In response to such attempts, the church affirmed the New Testament canon in order to repudiate heresies.

Inclusion in the canon was not dependent on unverifiable 'divine inspiration' but on verifiable matters. The first was apostolic authority, including implied apostolic authority as in the case of the books of Mark, Luke, Acts, and the epistle to Hebrews. Equally important was theological harmony with the Old Testament canon that Jesus confirmed as the Word of God. The Gnostic forgeries did claim apostolic authorship, but they did not and could not claim harmony with the Old Testament. For example, John's Revelation is a very deliberate unpacking of the book of Daniel. In Revelation 5, for example, the Lamb of God receives the title deed of the earth that had been promised to the Messiah in Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. The chapters that follow become the key to explaining how Jesus was the Messiah prophesied by the Old Testament.

## V Can the Natural also be Supernatural?

The church fathers knew that fallible men had authored the books of the New Testament. The Council of Nicaea wrestled with a worldview issue raised by Gnosticism: Could the natural (material/physical) be simultaneously spiritual, nonmaterial, supernatural, and good?

The Gnostics presupposed that the natural realm was evil. Therefore, they concluded that human words cannot be God's word; the Christ Spirit could not become incarnate; Christ could not have died on the cross; it was the evil, material body of a man—Jesus—that was crucified; the Christ Spirit was laughing at the folly of his enemies as they were crucifying Jesus, thinking that they were killing the Christ. The Council of Nicaea rejected this Gnostic worldview in favour of the Old Testament teaching that the material world—the tangible, physical expression of God's words—was good. Man (male and female) really was made in God's image; the human body was good.

God could become man, and our physical bodies can be, and ought to become, the temple of the Holy God.<sup>58</sup> Just as Satan could enter Judas to do evil,<sup>59</sup> God's Spirit can and does use human beings to speak his words<sup>60</sup> and do his will. The work and words of men and women can be human, satanic, or divine. Just as Jesus could be fully man and fully God, so man's words could be

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58 1 Cor. 6:19.

59 Jn. 13:27.

60 Isa. 59:21; 1 Cor. 2:13.

God's words. If a president can take a speechwriter's words and make them his own, why couldn't Paul communicate God's words? He can, just as an ambassador can speak the king's words.<sup>61</sup> It is absurd to claim that Jesus was the greatest prophet, as Dan Brown implies, and to simultaneously claim that the Scripture Jesus believed in, to the extent of laying down his life, was merely a human hoax.

The church fathers did not understand the mystery of human language any more than we do. Nor did they conclude that the New Testament was God's Word based on abstract philosophical arguments. They relied on eyewitnesses who saw the words of Jesus and his apostles make the lame to walk and the blind to see, drive out demons, and raise the dead back to life. The Holy Spirit confirmed Jesus' and the apostles' words with signs and wonders, just as God's supernatural acts had confirmed Moses' words.<sup>62</sup>

Future generations may understand language better than we do. Contem-

porary medicine has just begun to study the healing power of human words. However, at present, even our science fiction is clueless about how words could possibly bring a dead person back to life or, as Einstein marvelled, how our minds and words could comprehend the physical universe. In his essay 'Physics and Reality,' (in *Journal of the Franklin Institute* (vol. 221, issue 3, March 1936, 349–382) Einstein wrote that the fact that the laws or truths that govern this universe can be put into words 'leaves us in awe, but which we shall never understand.... For the eternal mystery of the world is comprehensibility.... The fact that it is comprehensible is a miracle.'

Rome's collapse meant that Europe lost its soul—the source of its civilizational authority—and descended into the 'Dark Ages'. The Bible was the power that revived Europe. Europeans became so enthralled with God's Word that they rejected their sacred myths to hear God's Word, study it, internalize it, speak it, and promote it to build the modern world. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the West is again losing its soul. Will it relapse into a new dark age or humble itself before the Word of the Almighty God?

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61 2 Cor. 5:20.

62 Ex. 7:2–4; Dt. 6:22; Acts 2:22, 43; 14:3.