

## PROVING THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE

We know by the internal witness of the Holy Spirit that the Bible is the Divinely inspired word of God, but how do we prove that to unbelievers? The Bible has many unique features which are unknown to most unbelievers.

The Bible had over 40 authors and was written over a period of 1600 years in 3 languages . yet it is amazingly linear, with *no contradictions*. We have over 5,000 New Testament manuscripts in Greek dating back to A.D. 125-130. 97-99% of the New Testament is beyond reasonable doubt in translation and no doctrine is based upon these disputed passages. Other ancient writings have only 4-35 original copies and yet they are considered beyond reproach!

A.N. Sherwin-White, not known for ever promoting Christianity stated, %It is astonishing that while Greco-Roman historians have been growing in confidence, the twentieth-century study of the Gospel narratives, *starting from no less promising material*, has taken so gloomy a turn.+

Most of the New Testament is eyewitness testimony, written shortly after the events happened. A case for historical accuracy can easily be made.

We can't use Bible quotes to directly prove the authenticity of the Bible. Just because a quote states that it is the Divinely inspired word of God won't prove it to an unbeliever (even after we prove the existence of God.) We can however, use the information contained in the Bible to prove its claims.

### Archeological proof

Every time we dig in the ground we further the proof of the Bible. %As a matter of fact, however, it may be clearly stated categorically that no archeological discovery has ever controverted a single biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible.+(Dr. Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert*)

David was considered a myth or literary fiction by secular scholars until stones referring to the %house of David+and %king of Israel+were found in 1993 in Tel Dan in Galilee. Another stone created by King Mesha of Moab in the ninth century B.C. referred to %the House of David.+

The walls of Jericho were found to have fallen *outward*, as the Bible states, during digs between 1930 and 1936. City walls always fell inward as the invading army pressed in on it.

In 1961 an inscription was found referring to Pilate in Cesarea during the time of Tiberias which provided for the first time extra-Biblical proof of his existence.

In 1992 the burial grounds of Caiaphas and his family were unearthed in Jerusalem, yet again corroborating the Biblical account.

Several examples of skeptics turned Christians after attempting to disprove the Bible abound. The British archeologist (and Bible skeptic) Sir William M. Ramsay explored the sites of Paul's journeys and compared them with the book of Acts at the turn of the century

and as a result became a Christian. Many of those unsaved around you fall into this category. They don't believe because they have not investigated the truth.

I began with a mind unfavorable to it [the book of Acts], for the ingenuity and apparent completeness of the Tübingen theory had at one time quite convinced me. It did not lie then in my line of life to investigate the subject minutely; but more recently I found myself often brought into contact with the Book of Acts as an authority for the topography, antiquities, and society of Asia Minor. It was gradually borne in upon me that in various details the narrative showed marvelous truth. + Sir William Ramsay

All together, Luke names 32 countries, 54 cities, and 9 islands without error. He also gave correct titles for these officials: Thessalonica . . . politarchs, + Ephesus . . . temple wardens, + Cyprus . . . proconsul, + Malta . . . the first man of the island. +

- Where did Moses get all of his knowledge (to write the first five books of the Bible)?

**Dead Sea scrolls**

In 1947 an Arab shepherd boy discovered a cave near Qumran near the dead sea containing numerous ancient Hebrew scrolls. Other caves were searched and the following was found: every single book of the Old Testament with the exception of the Book of Esther, multiple copies of Genesis, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah. The existence of these scrolls proves that the Bible is virtually identical in translation to the original text, with only minor spelling variations (ex. color, colour)!

The Masoretic scribes (Essenes, 200 B.C. to 68 A.D.) meticulously copied scrolls by hand. They were required to be in the right frame of mind and, if they wandered, the scroll would be destroyed even if it was not in error. For a complete description of the lengths they went to, see Cracking the Bible Codes + by Jeffrey Satinover.

In 1991 one of the more recent scrolls released refers to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

**How Did Jesus View the Bible**

New Testament writers often quoted Old Testament Prophets as if God had directly spoken. (Gal 3:8, Acts 4:24-25, Ps 2:1) Jesus used Scripture as the final authority, quoting it when He was tempted three times, "It is written" + He also stated, "I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. + (Matt 5:18) One of the most profound statements He ever made concerning this was, "The Scripture cannot be broken. + (John 10:35) One cannot discount the Bible without discounting Jesus as well.

**Medical proof**

The existence of the germ was not discovered until around 1890, yet the Bible, specifically the Torah, contains advanced instruction in dealing with infectious diseases and other germ-related problems. Where did this knowledge come from? How can you possibly explain this apart from God? Here is a sampling.

Exodus 15:26	"If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you. + <i>Egyptian medical practices were quite poor.</i>
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Exodus 29:4, 40:31-32	the people must wash before worship ( <i>King James I never took a bath</i> )
Leviticus 4:11-12	internal organs and waste of sacrificed animals were to be burned outside of camp
Leviticus 6:28	destroy any cracked vessels, metals pots are to be scoured and rinsed in water
Leviticus 7:24	do not eat of any animal that dies naturally, of disease, or is killed by animals
Leviticus 11:35	anything touching a carcass is unclean
Leviticus 14:43-46	the priest must examine all sick (leprosy) individuals and pronounce them clean before they could return to the public
Leviticus 15:13	wash in running water for cleansing
Numbers 19:14-17	anyone in a tent with a dead person or touches one is unclean for seven days
Numbers 19:20	those infected could not be in contact with the rest of society ( <i>quarantine</i> )
Deuteronomy 23:12	use a latrine outside of camp

### Astronomical proof

Length of lunar month . The Jewish month, the length of which was very critical to the obeying of the law, was given to them by God (through Moses, as additional information not to be written down.) This number was 29.53059 days. In 1968 NASA updated their calculation to 29.53059 and in 1996 with the aid of satellites changed it to 29.530588. How did the Jews have the exact lunar cycle dating back to the time of Moses?

### Predictive prophecy – unique to the Bible

Only the Bible contains predictive prophecy. Mohammed made one prophecy, that he would return to Mecca, which he conveniently accomplished. Biblical prophecy is very specific and in many cases generations passed before the fulfillment. Prophecies ranged from historical to relating to the Jewish people, to the Messiah Himself.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is the most outstanding example of predictive prophecy about Christ. Its contingencies could not have been rigged in advance in an attempt to produce fulfillment. They involve His life, His rejection in ministry, His death, His burial, and His reactions to the unjust judicial proceedings. +Paul Little, *Know Why You Believe*

Jeremiah 31 refers to the restoration of Israel as a nation. This was regarded as ridiculous until 1948.

### What is the Canon?

Canon comes from the Hebrew and Greek words that mean a measuring rod, a standard. The canon of scripture (the Bible) is based upon five key questions:

1. Was it written by a prophet of God?
2. Was he confirmed by an act of God?
3. Does it tell the truth about God?
4. Does it have the power of God?
5. Was it accepted by the people of God?