

Can the Bible be Trusted?

Isn't the Bible Corrupted?

What Does the world say about the Bible?

- * *“The Bible may be the truth, but it is not the whole truth and nothing but the truth.” **Samuel Butler***
- * *“The Bible has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blooddrenched history; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies” **Mark Twain***
- * *“Whenever we read the obscene stories, the voluptuous debaucheries, the cruel and torturous executions, the unrelenting vindictiveness with which more than half the bible is filled, it would seem more consistent that we called it the word of a demon than the Word of God. It is a history of wickedness that has served to corrupt and brutalize mankind.” **Thomas Paine***

Common Doubts of Non-believers?

- * *Bible is based on mythologies we regard as nonsense*
- * *Bible is wholly unscientific*
- * *Bible is filled with contradictions*
- * *Bible has lost its reliability due to translation errors over time*

None of these arguments are true and the Bible is trustworthy

Biblical Testimony

- * Bible is not just stories
 - * 2 Peter 1: 16-21
 - * 2 Timothy 3: 14-17

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“If the biblical critic tells me something in a gospel is legend or romance, I want to know how many legends and romances he has read. ... I have been reading poems, legends, myths all my life, **I know what they are like. I know not one of them (gospels) is like this**”. - C. S. Lewis

Bible is Not Mythology

- * Many claim Biblical stories resemble other ancient stories
 - * Noah's flood
- * Miracles don't happen therefore the Bible is myth

Is the New Testament a Record of Actual History?

In order to show that the New Testament is a reliable document, we need to show 2 things:

1. Do we have accurate copies of the original documents that were written in the first century?
2. Do those documents speak the truth?

Jesus quoted every book of the Jewish Scriptures (except Esther*). If we show that the New Testament is true, we get the Old Testament thrown in as a bonus.

Do We Have Accurate Copies of Writings that are Collected in the New Testament?

First, we don't believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, lived, was crucified, died, was buried and rose from the dead because the Bible says so.

- Thousands of Christians existed before the letters in the Bible were written (Acts 2:38-41)

We believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, lived, was crucified, died, was buried and rose from the dead because Mark said so, Matthew said so, John said so, Luke said so, Peter said so, James said so, Timothy said so and Jude said so.

Is Not Having the Original Manuscripts a Problem?

We don't have the original manuscripts of any ancient document, but we believe that we know what the originals said. Why?

1. More Manuscripts
2. Earlier Manuscripts
3. More Abundantly Supported Manuscripts

The Historical Support for the Bible is Better!

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| New Testament | 1st Cent. A.D. (50–100 A.D.) | 2nd Cent. A.D. (c. 130 A.D.f.) | 5,000 | 99+% |
| (Table from Norman Geisler's Christian Apologetics, p. 307, red text color added for emphasis) | | | | |

* current data is 5,800 Greek and ~20,000 other manuscripts

More Abundantly Supported Manuscripts

- * 2nd and 3rd century church fathers quoted the New Testament almost 39,000 times!
 - * Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian
- * Why is this important?
 - * In 311, the Roman emperor Diocletian ordered 3 edicts against Christians: Destruction of churches, of manuscripts and books, and killing of Christians
- * Even though thousands of manuscripts were destroyed, we could still reconstruct virtually of all of the old Testament from the church fathers' quotes.

Is the NT Historically Reliable?

1. Do we have early testimony?
2. Do we have eyewitness testimony? Multiple eyewitnesses?
3. Are the eyewitnesses trustworthy?
4. Do we have corroborating evidence from archaeology or other sources?
5. Do we have any enemy attestation?
6. Does the testimony contain events or details that are embarrassing to the authors?

The answer to all these questions is a resounding **YES!**

An Argument from Silence

- * In the first century, a Jew's entire life centered around the temple
- * Jesus nearly caused a riot when he predicted that the temple would be destroyed
- * Luke tells Theophilus that he is making an accurate account; yet when Acts concludes there is no mention of the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, therefore, Acts has to have been written prior to AD70
- * Also, both Paul and James are alive. They died between 60-65 AD.

The New Testament was written within the lifetime of the eyewitnesses!

Once We Have Faith in the NT, We Get the Old Testament Too

- * Jesus quoted from every Old Testament book (except Esther)
- * On the road to Emmaus, He showed how from Moses through all the prophets that the Old Testament was all about Him
- * Over 350 Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus; more to come when He returns

The Best Ancient Creation Story

- * Many ancient creation stories, they have been abandoned as mythology
 - * The world being barfed out of the mouth of a fish
 - * Conceived from two Gods
 - * Breathed from the nostrils of a dragon
 - * You don't see many modern scientists that hold on to these stories
- * Do see a world filled with people; both Christians and rational scientists
 - * They are not two mutually exclusive realms - creation science

The Flood

- * There are over 200 stories of a global flood from all over the world
 - * India, Turkey and Egypt, China, Korea, to places separated and isolated, like Australia and Hawaii, to places on the other side of the planet, like Canada, Alaska, South and Central America
- * Stories are very similar and their similarity tells us something very powerful
 - * 88% there is a single favored family, chosen for salvation
 - * 66% the family is warned in advance
 - * 95% they are warned of a Global flood
 - * 70% they use a boat to escape destruction
 - * 67% there is an effort to save animals on the boat
 - * 57% the family and boat end up on the top of a mountain

The Presence of Miracles

Naturalist Augment;

- * **Miracles belong in the realm of the supernatural**
- * **Since there are miracles in the Bible**
- * **The Bible is unbelievable**
- * **Bible's claims that God exists cannot be true.**

This is circular reasoning;

- * **Starting assumption**
 - * **There is no supernatural**
 - * **Nothing supernatural is possible**
- * **Since God reigns in the supernatural, there is no God**

The Presence of Miracles

Biblical Augment;

- * If there is a Creator of the universe**
- * He must be all powerful**
- * He must operate outside the natural laws**
 - * The laws did not exist before creation**
 - * This is supernatural**
- * The Creator is capable of performing supernatural events**
- * Miracles are possible by the Creator**

Bible is Not Unscientific

Argument: Cannot believe the Bible because they think it is unscientific

Truth claims of scripture just don't make sense anymore, and that science has disproved much of what is written in God's Word.

- * **People who want to discredit the Bible, would argue that all scientific answers should be found in the pages of scripture**
- * **Bible given to us by God**
 - * **Understand who He is**
 - * **Who He has designed us to be**
 - * **Spiritual manual (our origin has something to do with God's plan for our lives)**

The Bible has Not Been Corrupted over Time

Argument: Anything this ancient has to be corrupted over time

Answer:

- * Bible is the most reliable and treasured of all ancient texts
- * Was preserved with passion and attention to detail
- * Other ancient histories
 - * Why do we blindly accept other ancient histories without question?
 - * No one questions the writing of ancient poets or historians
 - * These writers have far less to support their accuracy than the Bible

You Trust the Other Stuff!

- * F. F. Bruce: "There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good attestation as the New Testament."

Biblical Transcription Care

- * Jews & Christians knew what the documents were
- * Scribes and authors meticulously wrote every word
- * Other scribes monitored work
- * Very strict system of rules for the transmission/copying of scripture
 - * *No word or letter, not even a yod, must be written from memory*
 - * *Copy must be the exemplar, from which the transcriber ought not in the least deviate*
 - * *Fifth book of Moses must terminate exactly with a line*

Dead Sea Scrolls

Caves of Qumran

Found a complete copy of Isaiah Chapter 53

*“Thus, in one chapter of 166 words, there is only one word (three letters) in question after a thousand years of transmission-and this word does not significantly change the meaning of the passage.”**

*Geisler, Norman L. and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1968

The Ebla Archive

Syrian clay tablets 2300 B.C.

Critics once said Canaan was not used at that time and was used incorrectly in the early chapters of the Bible

- * Ebla demonstrated that personal/place names in the biblical accounts are genuine

The word 'tehom' ('the deep') in Genesis 1:2 was said to be a late word demonstrating the late writing of the creation story

- * 'Tehom' was part of Ebla, in use some 800 years before Moses

Archeological Findings

Hittites were once thought to be a Biblical legend

- * Hittite capital and records were discovered at Bogazkoytheir, Turkey*

Many thought the Biblical references to Solomon's wealth were greatly exaggerated

- * Recovered records show that wealth in antiquity was concentrated with the king and Solomon's prosperity was entirely feasible*

It was once claimed there was no Assyrian king named Sargon (Isaiah 20:1) because this name was not known in any other record

- * Sargon's palace was discovered in Khorsabad, Iraq. The very event mentioned in Isaiah 20, his capture of Ashdod, was recorded on the palace walls.*

Archeological Findings

“In summary, archaeological discoveries show at point after point that the biblical record is confirmed and commended as trustworthy. This confirmation is not confined to a few general instances”

Joseph P. Free Ph.D. Archaeology and Near Eastern Studies

The Bible is Infallible

Proverbs 30: 5-6

- (1) The Bible can be demonstrated to be reliable
- (2) So we can believe what we read about Jesus
- (3) So we can see that Jesus is God
- (4) Jesus said that the Bible is more than reliable, it is the Word of God,
- (5) Since it comes from God, the Bible is infallible!

The Bible is Reliable

“The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation through-out the centuries.”

Sir F. G. Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*