

THE BIBLE: WE KNOW IT IS TRUE

The Evidence Confirms It!



2 Peter 1.20-21 "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

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Part I.
Seven Reasons—
Why do we know that the Bible is true?

1. **The Bible Says So!** The Bible says that it is God's inspired inerrant Word (2 Timothy 3.16; 2 Peter 1.20-21; 1 Timothy 5.18 which quotes Matthew 10.10 and Deuteronomy 25.4).
2. **Jesus and Writers Say So!** Jesus and writers of the Bible said it is God's Word and therefore true.
 - Jesus accepted the creation of Adam and Eve (Matthew 19.4), Jonah and the fish (Matthew 12.40), the flood during the life of Noah (Matthew 24.38-39), the miraculous feeding of Israel during the Exodus (John 6.49), and the details of the three and one-half years of famine during Elijah's life (Luke 4.25). He also said that every detail would be fulfilled (Matthew 5.17-18; John 5.39; 10.35).
 - Old Testament prophets and writers said God spoke through them (Genesis 15.1; Exodus 9.20-21; Numbers 23.5; Deuteronomy 18.20-21; 1 Samuel 15.10; Isaiah 16.13; Jeremiah 46.1, 13,25; Ezekiel 1.3; 3.1; Daniel 9.2; Zechariah 1.1; Micah 1.1).
3. **Fulfillment of Prophecy Demonstrates It Is True!** The prophecies with their fulfillments demonstrate that only God could have made them and had them recorded. Many of the prophecies predicted events that people did not want to believe.
 - The conflict between the Messianic line and Satan and his followers (Genesis 3.15; Matthew 4.1-11; John 12.31; Revelation 12 and Revelation 20).
 - The person of Jesus Christ.
 - ◆ The seed of Abraham (Genesis 12.1-3; 22.18; Matthew 1.1; Galatians 3.16)
 - ◆ The continuity of Israel (Genesis 12.1-3; Romans 9-11; Revelation 21.12)

- ◆ The pre-existence of Christ (Micah 5.2; John 1.1; Colossians 1.17)
 - ◆ The virgin birth of Christ (Isaiah 7.14; Matthew 1.18-25)
 - ◆ The birthplace in Bethlehem (Micah 5.2; Matthew 2.1; Luke 2.3)
 - ◆ A ministry of miracles (Isaiah 35.5-6; Matthew 9.35)
 - ◆ Entrance into Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9.9; Luke 19.35-37);
 - ◆ The death of Christ for sins (Isaiah 53; John 1.29; John 19.6-7), including
 - Christ rejected (Isaiah 53.3; John 7.5,48)
 - Wounded (Isaiah 53.5; Matthew 27.2)
 - Silence (Isaiah 53.7; Matthew 27.12)
 - Executed with thieves (Isaiah 53.12; Matthew 27.38)
 - Prayed for others (Isaiah 53.12; Luke 23.34)
 - Pierced His side (Zechariah 12.10; John 19.34)
 - Buried in a rich man's grave (Isaiah 53.9; Matthew 27.57-60)
 - History — Nineveh (Nahum 1.8, 10; 2.6; 3.10,13,19) destroyed in 612 BC.
 - History — Isaiah the prophet wrote around 700 BC. He predicted that a king named Cyrus will arise and authorize the Jews to rebuild the Jerusalem temple. When Isaiah wrote the temple was intact. By 550 BC Cyrus was king of Persia and Media. He conquered Babylon in 539; in that year he ordered the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple (Isaiah 44.28; 45.1).
4. **Unique Unity Demonstrates It Is True!** The unique unity of the Bible demonstrates that it is vastly different from all other books. Only God could have authored it.

- There are 66 books written by 40 authors (kings, peasants, philosophers, fisherman, a physician, statesmen, scholars, poets, and plowmen who lived in countries and times separated from each other) over a period of 1600 years.
 - The human authors had different heritages, prejudices, cultures, problems, and pressures. The entire Bible reads as if one author planned and wrote it. The messages center on Christ. The content which includes God, man, Christ, salvation, authority, Israel, origins, and the future is consistent throughout.
5. **Accuracy Shows It Is True!** The accuracy of the Bible demonstrates that it is different from all other books. No book covering this range of topics and written by so many different people could ever begin to approach this degree of accuracy, unless of course God was the author. Archaeology, science, and history have never proved the Bible to be inaccurate.
 6. **Bible's Survival Confirms God's Protection!** The Bible's survival, circulation, translation, and influence on people and literature demonstrate that it is different from all other books. God has protected it, promoted it, and persuaded people with it.
 7. **Jesus' Resurrection Authenticates His Deity!** Jesus' resurrection clearly proved that He is the Son of God (John 20.26-29; Romans 1.4) and therefore truthful in everything He said (Titus 1.2). He said that the Scripture (Old Testament Bible) is absolute truth and without error (Matthew 5.17; Luke 24.44-48). Furthermore, He said that God would reveal more Scripture (New Testament Bible) to His apostles (John 14.26; 16.13). Examples of this are John 20.30-31, 1 Corinthians 2.10, and Revelation 1.1-3. Compare this point with point 2 above.

Part II.
**The Canon — Why do we know that the right books
make up the Bible?**

Canon means a reed, measuring rod, later a standard, a rule of faith, a list or index. When used in theology it refers to the list of the books of the Bible.

Old Testament Canon

1. The basis for accepting a writing as canonical: The Hebrew people knowingly formed their canon of sacred writings in obedience to God and according to spiritual common sense (Deuteronomy 17.18,19; 31.9; Joshua 24.25,26; 1 Samuel 10.25; 2 Kings 22-23; Ezra 7.6, 10, 23-26; Psalm 1.2; 119; Malachi 1.1).
 - Each book was recognized by its own authorship, content, and quality at the time it was written and added to the body of Scripture. No council looked over a group of possible writings and chose the books they liked.
 - The ancient peoples possessed a "sensitivity to the inviolability of authoritative documents" (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, "The Canon of the Old Testament," Fisher, 1.387, Zondervan), so the Hebrews understood about a canon.
2. What actually happened:
 - God used certain men to write His Word: (Jeremiah 36.10, 27, 28, 32; Malachi 1.1; 2 Peter 1.20-21, and many others). The individual books of Scripture were placed together so they could be preserved, read, copied, and used in life (Deuteronomy 31.9; Ezra 7.6, 8, 10; Nehemiah 8.1, 8; Matthew 5.17-18; 2 Timothy 3.14-16).

- The Hebrew people recognized the Scripture to be God's written Word at the time it was written and not because of a council decision. Daniel 9.2 with Jeremiah 25.11-14, 2 Timothy 3.14-16, and 2 Peter 3.15-16 clearly state this.
- The Hebrew Old Testament as we have it now has three divisions: Law, *hrt* Torah; Prophets, *Myxybn* Nebiim; and Writings, *Mybtk* Kethubim. They were reckoned as 22 books (Josephus) or 24 books, while the English version has four divisions with 39 books—Law, History, Poetry, Prophecy. The Hebrew combines some books that the English separates. For example, Ezra and Nehemiah, Ruth and Judges, and Lamentations and Jeremiah. Both the Hebrew and English have the exact same contents. Jesus, in Luke 24.44, referred to the threefold organization of the Scriptures when he spoke of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. (Gleason Archer, "The Canon of the Old Testament" in *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Moody Press, 1979. 66-72).
- But Jesus also spoke of a twofold organization—Law, *hrt* Torah and Prophets, *hrt* Nebiim—in Matthew 5.17; 7.12; 11.13; 22.40; and in Luke 16.16, 29, 31; and 24.27. This organization was likely earlier than the threefold division and more common: "The twofold division of Moses and the other books was early and natural. It was found in the second century BC at Qumran and persisted through the NT and LXX into Christian circles." (R. Laird Harris. "Chronicles and The Canon In New Testament Times." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. Volume 33, Number 1. March 1990. 83).

- We know that the law contained the five books of Moses. Psalms may have been the only book in the writings (Luke 24.44). Josephus considered the writings to consist of Psalms, Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes; the remaining non-Moses books were in The Prophets.
 - The Masoretic Text is the best Hebrew Text. This text is likely that which came back from the Babylonian captivity with Ezra and Nehemiah and others (Ezra 7.6-10; Nehemiah 8.1, 2, 8). The Masoretes were Old Testament scholars who, between AD 500 and 950, took the consonantal text of the Scribes and preserved it for us by placing vowel points, brief marginal comments, and accents in the text. They did not change the consonantal text.
3. Christ accepted the Hebrew canon (Luke 24.44; 11.51; and possibly Matthew 23.35 with Genesis 4.8 and 2 Chronicles 24.21).
 4. Paul accepted the Hebrew canon (Romans 1.2; 3.2; 4.3; 1 Timothy 5.18; 2 Timothy 3.14-16).
 5. Peter accepted the Hebrew canon (2 Peter 1.20-21).
 6. The New Testament calls the Old Testament Scripture (Matthew 21.42; John 5.39; Acts 17.2; 1 Timothy 5.18; 2 Timothy 3.16; 2 Peter 3.15-16).
 7. Extra-Biblical testimony to the Old Testament canon:
 - Ecclesiasticus (about 130 BC) recognized "The Law, and the Prophets and the other books of the fathers" (The Prologue to Ecclesiasticus, in *The Apocrypha*).
 - Josephus lived earlier than the Masoretes (AD 37-95). He was aware of the same books and the threefold division of the Hebrew canon, though the arrangement of the Prophets and Writings varied from the later arrangement by the Masoretes. He wrote in *Contra Apion* 1.8 that no other books were added after the time

of Artaxerxes, King of Persia (464-424 BC). "For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, [as the Greeks have,] but only twenty-two books, (8) which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; and of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; but as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books [Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes] contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews immediately, and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain Divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be willingly to die for them." (F. Josephus, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*, electronic ed. of the new updated ed. Garland, TX: Galaxie Software, 1999)

- The Dead Sea Scrolls, which are documents written about 250 BC to AD 50 and were found near the Dead Sea between 1947-1956, "in general confirm the accuracy of the existing Hebrew text" (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, LaSore 1.403). From cave four alone, manuscript portions from every Old Testament book except Esther were found (*The Expositor's*, Fisher 1.396).
 - Rabbis held biblical discussions over many years (at least AD 70-135) at Jamnia, a town west of Jerusalem. They simply worked with what was already known as Scripture and discussed questions about the content of the Scripture. This council did not choose the books of the Old Testament (Robert C. Newman. "The Council of Jamnia and the Old Testament Canon." *Westminster Theological Journal*. Volume 38, Number 3. Spring 1976. 320-34).
 - Bishop Melito of Sardis prepared a catalog of the canon about AD 170. He included all the books except Esther.
8. Conclusion: Psalm 119; Titus 1.2; 2 Timothy 3.14-17; and Psalm 130:5, "I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, And in His word do I hope." We know that the Old Testament Scriptures, as we have them today, are God's revealed and inspired Word. That knowledge gives us confidence. We ought to believe and apply God's Word.

New Testament Canon

1. The basis for accepting a writing as canonical: the church at large accepted a writing as authoritative when it was written and circulated. A council did not choose. Each book had to
 - Be written by an apostle or one closely associated with an apostle.
 - Show evidence of inspiration by God—genuine spiritual value and no false doctrine.
 - Be widely read by the church.

2. What actually happened: An apostle or one associated with an apostle wrote God's message exactly as God directed. The book (epistle or gospel) was then read, copied, circulated, and read by more and more churches and individuals. Before very long the particular writings had wide familiarity and acceptance as Scripture by the churches.
3. The need to think more clearly about the canon was probably encouraged by challenges to writings that were accepted as Scripture.
 - Marcion (c AD 140), who rejected the Old Testament and Jewish parts of the New Testament. He included ten Pauline epistles and part of Luke.
 - Which books to read in church.
 - Persecution (Edict of Diocletian in AD 303 which ordered the destruction of Scripture).
4. Early lists of the canon and references to it include Polycarp (AD 115) referred to Old Testament and New Testament as Scripture, the Muratorian Fragment (AD 180) named 22 of the New Testament books, Marcion (AD 180) named eleven, Irenaeus (AD 180) names the fourfold gospel, Eusebius (ca 265-340) says all 27 were generally recognized with James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2-3 John disputed by some, Athanasius of Alexandria listed the exact 27 (AD 367), Jerome and Augustine (AD 383, 387) listed the 27.
5. The New Testament writers recognized both the Old Testament and New Testament as Scripture (2 Timothy 3.16; 1 Timothy 5.18; 2 Peter 3.15-16).
6. The so-called official recognition of the New Testament canon as we have it was made at the Council of Hippo in AD 393 and the Council of Carthage in 397. They only recognized that which was already the general practice of the church.

Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are not and never have been part of the Old Testament or New Testament Canon.

1. The Apocrypha: The word means “hidden” or “concealed.” They are of differing value, accuracy, and purpose. They were never accepted until the Roman Catholic counter reformation Council of Trent in 1546. Jerome had rejected them, who translated the Bible from Greek and Hebrew into Latin (Vulgate). The Apocrypha includes Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, The Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch and The Epistle of Jeremiah, Additions to Daniel—The Song of the Three Children, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon—, Maccabees, and The Prayer of Manasseh.
2. Pseudepigrapha: The word means “false writings” and refers to books that have fictitious authorship or falsely claim to have apostolic authorship. Examples of pseudepigrapha include The Gospel of Peter, The Gospel of Nicodemus, The Acts of John, The Acts of Paul, and The Apocalypse of Peter. “... but for a practical demonstration that the Church made the right choice one need only compare the books of our New Testament with the various early documents collected by M. R. James in his *Apocryphal New Testament* (1924), or even with the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, to realize the superiority of our New Testament books to these others.” (*The New Testament Documents, are they reliable?* Bruce 27, Eerdmans, 1972).

Part III.
**Evidence— What do we know that supports
the accuracy of the Bible?**

When analyzing written evidence or texts, there are three kinds of evidence used to determine the accuracy or reliability of the book or document:

1. Bibliographic evidence—the quality and number of documents.
2. Internal evidence—the agreement and support within the documents of each other.
3. External evidence—the evidence outside of the documents themselves that affirms what the documents say.

All three evidence tests demonstrate that the Bible is accurate and reliable—more accurate and reliable than any other ancient book.

Bibliographic evidence

1. Bibliographic evidence asks three questions about the manuscripts:
 - How many?
 - What kind?
 - How old?

This evidence concerns manuscripts (MSS): the number of MSS, the quality of MSS, the age of MSS, and the time interval between the original writing and the copy.

Bibliographic evidence seeks to answer the question “Is the present text or copy the same as the original author wrote?” Bibliographic consideration is commonly called textual criticism. The manuscript evidence demonstrates agreement with all the fundamentals of the faith.

2. Old Testament bibliographic evidence:
- We do not have as many Old Testament manuscripts as New Testament manuscripts.
 - The MSS we have are very good quality. The copy tradition is excellent. Both the Talmudists (AD 100-500) and Massorettes (AD 500-900) were meticulous in their copying, care, and preservation of the Hebrew text. Changes of any kind were kept out. The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) found in the Qumran caves verify the accurate transmission and the preservation of the Hebrew Bible. The DSS include thousands of fragments along with many scrolls of biblical and non-biblical literature which were written or copied between 250 BC and AD 50. The Hebrew Bible of the Massoretic period is the same Hebrew text (with few minor variations) that the Qumran scribes were familiar with. Most variations found in the Hebrew texts of the Old Testament are insignificant; none bring any foundational doctrine into question. Gleason Archer writes on page 19 in *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*: "Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in Qumran Cave 1 near the Dead Sea in 1947 were a thousand years earlier than the oldest dated manuscript previously known (A.D. 980), they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text. The 5 percent of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling. Even those Dead Sea fragments of Deuteronomy and Samuel which point to a different manuscript family from that which underlies our received Hebrew text do not indicate any differences in doctrine or teaching. They do not affect the message of revelation in the slightest."

- Age and closeness in time to the original Hebrew text: the best Massoretic Text (MT) is dated around AD 900. The DSS gave us a Hebrew text 1000 years older and therefore 1000 years closer to the original.
3. New Testament bibliographic evidence:
- There are some 24,000 MSS and portions of MSS.
 - The quality is excellent; the changes are few and minor. No fundamental doctrine is changed by any MSS variant.
 - Age and closeness in time to the original: There are many MSS that were written within 100 to 400 years after the original. There is a papyrus fragment (John 18.31-33,37-38) in the John Rylands Library that has been dated to the period 100-140 AD—within possibly 50 years of the original.
 - Besides Greek MSS there are about 15,000 copies in the various versions—that is, the New Testament translated into another language such as Syriac, Coptic, and Latin. In addition, the church fathers quoted the New Testament freely. Almost the entire New Testament can be reproduced from just the writings of the fathers.
 - The New Testament is clearly the best documented text when compared to other ancient writings. The Iliad by Homer was written in 900 BC. There are only 643 copies. The earliest copy was made about 400 BC. The textual tradition of the Iliad ranks a distant second to the New Testament tradition when you consider MSS numbers, age of documents, and quality of texts. Tacitus was a Roman who lived from about AD 55-117. His two long works are *Histories* and *Annals*. Only four and one-half of the fourteen books of *Histories* survive, while only ten of the sixteen books and two partial books of *Annals* survive. The text for both depend on one ninth century MSS and one eleventh century MSS.

Internal evidence

1. Internal evidence deals with what the text says. The question that internal evidence answers is "Is the author making reliable, consistent, non-contradictory, and truthful statements?" Involved in this determination is the competence and character of the author, the source of the information, the closeness in time and place of the author to the events, and the presence of other evidence or witnesses who confirm or disprove what he wrote.
2. Internal evidence supports the nature and attributes of God, the gospel accounts (the Synoptics [Matthew, Mark, and Luke] and John), the inspiration of Scripture, miracles, the resurrection of Jesus, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the creation the heavens and earth and all life—in fact all the statements of the Bible.
3. There are no contradictions, though some claim that the Bible does contradict itself. Often, supposedly contradictory statements simply complement each other; an author may choose to exclude some information that another author chose to include; at other times an author's perspective or emphasis may be a little different from another writer. All present the truth. When added together the larger view is clear. A consistent study of the Bible demonstrates its consistency and cohesiveness.
4. One false claim is that God is a different God in the Old Testament from the God of the New Testament: in the Old Testament God is a God of wrath and destruction and in the New Testament He is a God of love. The critics say that the destruction of Sodom and the destruction of the Canaanites shows a primitive and weak deity, while the New Testament God speaks of love to one another and turn the other cheek. They are simply showing their presuppositions and faulty hermeneutics (principles of interpretation).

In answer to this claim we can say that

- Matthew 22.37 summarizes the Old Testament—love God and our neighbor.
- Matthew 9.13 and 12.7 say that God desired love and mercy more than sacrifice.
- Ezekiel 18.23 says that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked.
- Genesis 6.3 records that God gave 120 years for the people to repent.
- Genesis 15.16 tells us that God gave the Amorites hundreds of years to repent.
- Deuteronomy 7.8 says that God's love motivated His action toward Israel.
- Psalm 103.13 and 17 note that God has fatherly compassion and everlasting loving kindness to those who fear Him.
- John 3.16-17 teaches God loves the entire world of mankind and offers salvation, while John 3.18-19 and 36 teach that wrath comes only toward the person who rejects God's love and salvation—the unbeliever.
- Romans 2.5-6, 2 Thessalonians 1.6-9, and Revelation 6.15-17 all teach about God's wrath—wrath toward those who reject His mercy.
- Matthew 23 shows God's judgment of religious leaders who reject Him.
- Matthew 10.34 says that Christ had a mission that will divide and bring a sword.

We can conclude that God is very patient and gracious in the Old Testament; He judged only when people repeatedly rejected Him. He is the same in the New Testament. Both sections of the Bible present God as holy and gracious and loving; God is consistent with his character in the way He treats people.

5. Another criticism is that the gospel accounts contradict each other. They do not. Each gospel has a distinct audience and purpose, therefore each emphasizes certain people, actions, and words. The arrangement of material was deliberately made according to the purpose of the gospel. "All three of them [the Synoptics — Matthew, Mark, and Luke] accurately related the events of Christ's career and the words of His mouth, even though they included only what was pertinent to their particular approach." (*Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason Archer 314). For example, look at photographs of a room taken from different angles. Each picture gives a different perspective and each picture is a little different, but each is accurate and records the same room. Students who take class notes record different things in different ways and each will include details that another may not have or at least has not been recorded in the exact same way. Neither the different photos nor the notes will be wrong. The gospels present a stereophonic view when they harmonize the facts. Even law courts harmonize the testimony and other evidence in order to arrive at the correct verdict.
6. Yet another criticism of the Bible is the claim that since men are imperfect, they cannot write an inerrant Bible. The resulting Bible is one that has errors and if it has errors it is not trustworthy. Again, we can go to the Bible for the answer. The Bible tells us that men wrote only as God directed or inspired them. The lack of error was due to God, not man (2 Peter 1.20-21; 2 Timothy 3.16).
7. Miracles are rejected by many people; some say that God does not exist while others say that God does not act in human events. Some claim that miracles are simply different acts of nature. If God exists, then miracles are genuinely possible, since God is the cause of miracles.

8. Some erroneously claim that the truthfulness of the Bible depends on how you interpret the Bible. In response, remember that there are not that many parts of the Bible that present differing interpretations. Orthodox doctrine has been consistent. There are some difficult areas to interpret, but these are few. The problem is often with the interpreter who does not want to hear what the Bible says or who will not study to find the meaning. The few very difficult areas do not affect orthodox doctrine.

External evidence

1. External evidence is support from sources other than the writings under consideration. This evidence comes from such fields of knowledge as history, archaeology, science, and literature. The question here is "What does other provable data say about the statements made by the writing under discussion?"
2. For example, external evidence supports the Bible prophecies about the fall of great cities of the past—for example, Tyre (Ezekiel 26), Nineveh (Nahum), and Babylon (Isaiah 13.19-22; Jeremiah 51.24-26) were destroyed exactly like the prophets predicted. Josh McDowell, in Volume 1 of *Evidence Demands a Verdict*, quotes many different historians and archaeologists as they comment about the fall of these cities (Tyre, 274-280; Nahum, 296-302; Babylon, 302-309). The quotes are fascinating.
3. Ancient history and archaeology confirm the way of life described in the Old Testament—the Bible account of Moses' adoption and training was consistent with Egyptian practice at that time. Just compare Acts 7.22 with the story of Moses in the book of Exodus.

4. External evidence better supports the Bible account of origins than the naturalistic evolutionary theory of origins. Fossils and the lack of any intermediary forms, the laws of thermodynamics, the formation and function of enzymes, mutations, genetics, the absence of "cross-kind" reproduction, and the basic question of "How did life begin?" all lead to the conclusion of a creator and designer. The Bible is the one accurate record of the work of the creator and designer.
5. Other ancient writings tell about events and people that the Bible includes within its pages. Several non-biblical writers refer to Jesus Christ:
 - Josephus lived c. AD 36-100. He was a Pharisee, a military commander, and was attached to Roman military headquarters in Jerusalem. He interpreted for General Titus. He later settled in Rome and wrote the *History of the Jewish War*, *Against Apion*, *Jewish Antiquities*, and *Autobiography* (*Antiq* 18.3.3; 20.9.1).
 - Pliny the Younger lived c. AD 61-112. He wrote ten volumes of correspondence; he was also governor of Bithynia (*Epistles* 10.96-97).
 - Cornelius Tacitus lived c. AD 56-115. He was a Roman senator, governor of Asia, and a historian. He wrote *Annals* (*Annals*, Loeb ed., 15.44).
 - Suetonius lived c. AD 69-130. He was a Roman historian and annalist (*Life of Claudius*, 25.4).

Suggested Reading Resources

There are many resources where you may get help for questions related to the text of the Bible, internal evidence, and external evidence for the Bible.

To begin, you might consider the following books:

- *A Ready Defense* by Josh McDowell, Here's Life Publishers, 1990;
- *Evidence Demands A Verdict*, Volume 1 and 2, by Josh McDowell, Here's Life Publishers, 1979 and 1981;
- *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* articles by F.F. Bruce, "Transmission and Translation of the Bible," in Volume 1, pages 39-57, Zondervan, 1979;
- *The New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable?* By F.F. Bruce, Eerdmann, 1960 revised edition;
- *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* by Gleason Archer, Moody, 1964;
- *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* by Gleason Archer, Zondervan, 1982; and *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* by Norman Geisler, Baker Books, 1999.

As for references and organizations about divine creation, there are many. One good organization, the Institute for Creation Research, holds to direct creation by God and a young earth. You can find much good information in their books and on their website (<http://www.icr.org>).

Intelligent design is the theory that "a designing intelligence is required to account for the complex, information-rich structures in living systems." (*Signs of Intelligence*, Edited by William A. Dembski and James M. Kushiner, Introduction by William Dembski, Brazos Press, Baker, 2001, page 8). This theory is not a religious theory, but does demonstrate that an intelligent designer is evident.

Another eye opening book on the detail of God's creative work is *More Than Meets the Eye, Fascinating Glimpses of God's Power and Design*," by Richard A. Swenson, M.D., NavPress, 2000.

Part IV.
Gathering Evidence
Three General Kinds of Evidence

Introduction

1. There are three general kinds of evidence that people use to determine the truth:
 - Oral evidence.
 - Written evidence such as a letter, or a piece of pottery with writing or a picture.
 - Other kinds of evidence such as a gun, a finger-print, blood, the presence or absence of body, a photograph, a chariot wheel, the walls of a city, a grave, a buried city, and similar evidences that one may produce.

With the Bible we are primarily concerned with written evidence and archaeological evidence. We have no oral witnesses, since the events and writing occurred centuries ago.

2. There are also two primary methods for gathering and examining evidence:
 - The scientific method.
 - The legal-historical method.
3. With the Bible, as with most of what the world accepts as true, the legal-historical method is the method of choice. Most of the biblical events cannot be reproduced because of the distance in time, lack of technology and recording, and the miraculous nature of the events. Furthermore, mankind was not present when God created the heavens and the earth.

The Scientific Method

1. The job of science is to find facts, make a theory about what the facts mean, and then through repeated testing of the theory reach an accurate interpretation of the facts. The same conclusion must be reached each time the experiment is conducted. This line of proof is the one most people think they depend upon. It is very limited. The scientific method is based upon repeating the event in the presence of the person questioning.
2. In the scientific method you observe, collect data, make an hypothesis, and test and demonstrate the hypothesis by experiment.
3. The successful application of the scientific method should result in the same results each time the same experiment is run.
4. The steps in the scientific method:
 - One observes something and the observation brings up a question or problem.
 - State the problem and gather facts that bear on the problem.
 - Form an hypothesis or an estimate that might explain the problem. This hypothesis must fit the data and be stated in a form that can be tested. Continue to gather data that might explain the problem.
 - Experiment to test the hypothesis. Here you observe, measure, predict, and experiment again.
 - Organize and record the data and the results of the observation, hypothesis, and experimentation.
 - Draw conclusions. Very often the conclusion are based upon philosophical or ideological beliefs, not upon the scientific method. In science, though it claims to be objective, the scientists often guide themselves by their agenda.

- Verify the conclusion or truthfulness of the hypothesis by repeated experimentation. If the hypothesis and conclusions are correct, the experiment ought to give the same results each time.
- Summary:
 - ◆ Observe
 - ◆ Question
 - ◆ Gather facts
 - ◆ Hypothesize
 - ◆ Gather facts
 - ◆ Experiment
 - ◆ Organize and Record
 - ◆ Conclusions
 - ◆ Verify conclusions by repeating the experiment

The legal-historical method

1. The legal-historical method demands that one show beyond a reasonable doubt that something is true based upon the evidence. Much of what we believe to be true is based upon this type of proof.
2. This method is used to prove if George Washington lived; was Robert Lee the commander of the Army of Virginia; who won the first Super Bowl; did Jesus live; do you have a job; and for the demonstration of most knowledge of people, places, and events.
3. As with the scientific method, the legal-historical method requires a certain procedure.
 - You observe, collect, and question evidence.
 - There are three types of evidence that are admitted: oral, written, and exhibits (a gun, a bullet, a notebook, a jar, a manuscript, a drawing).
 - This method depends upon the reliability of the evidence. For example, to prove that you were in church: people saw you; you have the notes and bulletin; or the pastor remembers seeing you.

Part V.

Conclusion — How does the evidence for the Bible affect our faith?

1. The Christian faith rests upon the truthfulness of the Bible, and the laws of evidence applied to the Bible demonstrate beyond a reasonable doubt the Bible's authenticity and authority.
2. Critics who reject the Bible, yet accept documents and events that have less demonstrable evidence, are not properly applying the laws of evidence.
3. We can have confidence in the Bible and therefore in the "faith once for all delivered to the saints."
4. In the final analysis, though "the faith" rests upon historic events accurately recorded and transmitted, we enter relationship with God and all that goes with that relationship by faith.



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