

## *Our Bible - The Word of God*

### *Can We Trust the Bible?*

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1. The centrality of Scripture and the importance of God's Word.
2. "Canon" of scripture – how did we get the Bible?
3. Can we trust the Bible?
4. What about different Bible translations? Which is the best Bible?
5. Bible study basics, Bible "helps", resources.

Resources: [Wisdom of the Ages mp3 on our website.](#)  
[KJV comparison to NIV pdf on our website.](#)

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Charlie Campbell: Can We Trust the Bible? 9 reasons.  
Don Stewart: 10 Reasons to Trust the Bible.  
Dr. Norman Geisler. Inerrancy & Defending Inerrancy:  
Volumes written on this subject.

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**2 Timothy 3:16-17** <sup>16</sup>All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup>That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

- Basic question: How do we know that the Bible is true? Why should I believe it?

M. A. P. S.

1. Manuscripts.
  2. Archeology.
  3. Prophecy.
  4. Son of God.
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1. [Manuscripts:](#)

- A manuscript is a handwritten copy of a text, sometimes referred to as an autograph. Before the invention of the printing press in the fourteen hundreds, all books were handwritten / copied.
- Large numbers of New Testament and some Old Testament manuscripts survived from the first few centuries B.C. up until the fifteen hundreds.
- The first book of the Bible (Job) was written some 3,500 years ago while the last books of the Bible were written about 2,000 years ago.
- They were written on perishable writing surfaces like vellum (animal skins) and papyrus forming an early paper like product, usually rolled or packaged in scrolls. The copy of the Isaiah scroll discovered in Qumran when it was unrolled measured over 55 feet.

- There are no original manuscripts left in existence, only copies of copies. Some of the older copies of these manuscripts or fragments thereof are on display in the Smithsonian in Washington and in the British Museum in London.
1. There are over 10,000 partial or complete copies of the Old Testament (Masoretic Text) that date back as far as the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. There are 24, 633 partial or complete manuscripts of the New Testament alone the oldest of which date back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.
  2. The Old Testament was preserved by the Jews, by the scribes who were very meticulous. They believed and acted like they were copying the very word of God and so they were not only very careful, they took precautions to ensure accuracy. The scribes responsible for the accurate copying of the scriptures were referred to as the “Sopherim” or “counters”.
  3. These scribes were given this name because of the manner in which they checked the accuracy of the text they were copying. These “counters” counted the number of letters in each completed copy and the number of words in each section of scripture and compared them to the originals.
  4. When the Dead Sea scrolls were discovered in 1947 they were eventually compared to the copies already on hand – and they were found to be virtually identical.
  5. With over 24,000 manuscript copies of the NT in different languages spread over 3 continents there is plenty of literature to compare to each other and over 95% of these texts from oldest to newest agree with each other and they form what we call the Received Text, or Textus Receptus, sometimes called the Syriac or Byzantine Text.
    - The fact that these copies all agree with each other means they were transmitted accurately over the many centuries.

The early church fathers wrote extensively:

- They wrote back and forth to each other sharing what copies they had and requesting copies of others that they didn't have.
  1. Clement of Rome was a Bishop of Rome (A.D. 91-100) was an early believer and was a contemporary of both the Apostles Peter and Paul, and may have had contact with the Apostle John.
  2. Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John and an early church leader.
  3. Both of these men wrote extensively and many manuscripts of their writings have been found.
    - Others like Justin Martyr quoted the Gospels 268 times.

- Clement of Alexandria quoted the Gospels 1,017 times.
  - Tertulian quoted the Gospels 3,822 times.
4. If you add these up and others like them, the Gospels are quoted over 19,368 times – and with the rest of the NT over 86,000 times.
  5. There are enough quotations to reconstruct the entire New Testament except for 11 verses.
- With all these different ways of going back and checking the various manuscripts against each other and the writings of the early church fathers they are able to confirm that the copies that we have today match the earliest copies in existence – it's the same Bible penned by the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles.
  - This is best appreciated when compared to the other ancient writings of the world:
  - No one doubts the words of the philosopher Socrates (450 BC), yet there are only 6 partial manuscripts of his works, written some 1,100 years after his death.
  - Homer's works were written at approximately 900 BC with the earliest known copies being dated at 400 BC, 500 years after the originals with only 600 copies in existence – but his works are not in doubt.
  - There are over 24,600 manuscript copies in existence, originally written within 50 years of the life of Jesus.

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2. [Archeology attests to the accuracy of the Bible:](#)

Dr. Nelson Glueck, probably the greatest modern authority on Israeli archeology:

*"No archeological discovery has ever controverted (overturned) a Biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical description has often led to amazing discoveries."*

- There have been over 25,000 discoveries within the Bible lands that have confirmed the truthfulness of the Bible.
1. Pilate Stone: For many years Bible critics denied the existence of Pontius Pilate because he is not mentioned outside of the Bible.
- In June of 1961 an Italian team of archaeologists found what is known as the Pilate stone in the ruins of an ancient Roman theater near the port city of Caesarea that once served as the Roman capital of Palestine.

- The inscription reads “Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea, has presented the Tiberium to the Caesareans.” Basically Pilate’s name appears as part of the dedication to the theater that he donated to the Caesareans during the reign of Tiberius.
2. Nineveh: Modern day Iraq is the home of the ancient Assyrian capital of Nineveh. The city is mentioned numerous times, including the story about Jonah being swallowed by a great fish or whale and the call to repentance.
- Bible critics had long thought Ninevah to be an imaginary place. In 1845 the city was discovered in modern day Iraq and some of the remains are on display in the British Museum and can be seen on the internet.
3. Caiaphas’ bones: The Bible tells us that the Jewish High Priest at the time of Jesus’s crucifixion was Caiaphas – he was said by some to be a “make-believe” character.
- In 1990 Caiaphas’ family tomb was accidentally discovered during a construction project in Jerusalem. They discovered 12 ossuaries (limestone bone boxes) containing the remains of various individuals. On the outside of the most beautifully decorated of the ossuaries was inscribed “Joseph son of Caiaphas.”
  - The historian Josephus records that the actual full name of the high priest who arrested Jesus was “Joseph son of Caiaphas”. The archaeologists found the remains of a 60 year old male, the actual bones of Caiaphas.
4. King David: Some liberal scholars denied the historical existence of king David and that a united kingdom preceded the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel.
- 1993 & 94 - Tel-Dan in Northern Israel they discovered some stone fragments with an inscription in Aramaic referring to the house of David.
  - 1995 Time Magazine ran a story that stated “The skeptics claim that King David never existed is now hard to defend.”
    - a. Hezekiah’s tunnel.
    - b. The pool of Siloam.
    - c. The pool of Bethsaida.
    - d. The synagogue at Capernaem.
    - e. The gates of Dan to which Abram chased Chedorlaomer...
  - In every instance where the Bible can be, or has been checked out archaeologically, it has been found to be 100% accurate.
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3. Prophecy: The Bible is the only “holy book” that dares to predict the future – and it does so with 100% accuracy.

**Isaiah 46:5, 9-10** <sup>5</sup>“To whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that we may be alike?” – <sup>9</sup>“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and

there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, <sup>10</sup> declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

- The Bible is filled with hundred of specific, detailed prophecies that were written hundreds of years, in some cases over a thousand years before their fulfillment.

1. **The bible predicted the destruction and dispersion of the nation of Israel:**

**Deuteronomy 28:15, 64** “<sup>15</sup>But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day...”

“<sup>64</sup>And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one of the earth even unto the other; ...”

2. **The Bible predicted the re-gathering of the people and the restoration of the nation of Israel:**

**Ezekiel 37:21-22** “<sup>21</sup>... thus saith the Lord God; behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: <sup>22</sup>and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel...”

- The book of Daniel predicts the great empires of the world: Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires before any of them existed or were thought of.
- Ezekiel goes on to describe the confederation of states that would one day rise up against Israel: Gog / Russia, Gomer / Turkey, Persia / Iran, Cush, Put, Ethiopia / Egypt all of which are doing so as we sit here tonight.

There are over 300 prophecies about Jesus alone:

- The Bible predicts / describes His ancestry in **Genesis 12:1-3, 22:18**. That He would be of the seed of Abraham.
1. **Genesis 49:10** Tribe of Judah:
  2. **2 Samuel 7:12** House of David:
  3. **Micah 5:2** That He would be born in Bethlehem:
  4. **Malachi 3:1** That He would be born before the temple was destroyed:
  5. **Isaiah 7:14** That He would be born of a virgin.
  6. **Isaiah 35:5-6** That He would perform miracles.
  7. **Psalms 118:22** That He would be rejected by the Jews.
  8. **Daniel 9:24-26** Details exactly when Jesus would enter Jerusalem being proclaimed as the Messiah – to the day.
  9. **Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, Zechariah 12:10** all describe how Jesus would die, even before crucifixion was even invented.
  10. **Psalm 16:10** Describes how Jesus would rise from the dead.

4. [Son of God](#): The life changing power of Jesus Christ working in the lives of men.
  - We can all offer our personal testimonies as proof.

**Philippians 2:9-11** “<sup>9</sup>Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: <sup>10</sup>That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; <sup>11</sup>and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

- Millions of lives have been changed, transformed, renewed in Christ Jesus.

**Hebrews 4:12** “For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

**2 Corinthians 5:17** “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

- The Apostles, ignorant fishermen, tax collectors, rebels – teachers, followers, martyrs.
- The Apostle Paul: Saul the Pharisee wreaking havoc on the church, life changed and transformed to become the church’s most prominent advocate.
- Antagonists, opponents, skeptics – converted to changed lives.
- Degenerate men who’s wretched lives have been forever changed.

**John 13:35** “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

- And the best is yet to come!

**1 John 3:2** “Beloved, now are we the sons of god, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-17** “<sup>16</sup>For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: <sup>17</sup>Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”